

NEWS RELEASE

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University of Saint Mary Confers Degrees, Bids Farewell to Graduates at Commencement 2005

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(Leavenworth, Kan.)—As part of the culmination of a day-long celebration, the 246 students of the University of Saint Mary class of 2005 will receive the fruits of their hard work, as they graduate at 1 p.m. Saturday, May 14 in McGilley Field House. The historic class becomes the second to graduate from the new era of education at the University of Saint Mary. Graduates have received degrees at Saint Mary since 1923, when the school was known as Saint Mary College. Saint Mary College expanded to meet the demands of the 21st century student, becoming the University of Saint Mary in July 2003.

The class of 2005 does have a unique distinction to its credit. The 2005 commencement ceremony will be the first-ever held in McGilley Field House. Traditionally commencement has been housed in Ryan Sports Center. McGilley Field House, however, should offer graduates and their guests a better commencement experience. Completed in the summer of 2004, McGilley Field House's state-of-the-art construction offers better acoustics and greater seating capacity (approximately eight to 10 more guests per graduate) than Ryan Sports Center.

Of the 246 2004-2005 degree candidates, 98 will receive bachelor's degrees and 148 will receive master's degrees. Traditionally, three student speakers address those in attendance. This year's speakers include undergraduate Student Government Association (SGA) President Bridget Flynn and Overland Park campus undergraduate Mamie Mebane. Christy Zwenger, master's of art in teaching (MAT) candidate will deliver the graduate student address.

According to University of Saint Mary President, Sister Diane Steele, Ph.D., commencement is a special time for graduates and their families. This, she said, is their moment to shine. "Commencement is that special time our graduates have been waiting years to attain. For all their hard work, dedication and desire to get to the top, our community at Saint Mary is proud to provide that platform to shine for our graduates," she said. "They've all earned the applause, cheers and smiles from their family and friends, but most of all the degree. That's going to take them places."

Commencement also marks the end of the careers of two professors. Dr. Terry Brungardt and Dr. George Steger, both from Leavenworth, will retire at the end of the academic school year. Both, however, will be acknowledged with the university's top honor for professors. With their retirement, Brungardt and Steger will be conferred with professor emeritus status, which is bestowed by the Board of Trustees on recommendation of the academic vice president, president and academic affairs committee of the Board. Only tenured faculty who have at least 15-years of full-time distinguished service are considered for the professor emeritus honor.

Chair of the psychology and sociology department, Dr. Brungardt retires after 35 years of service to Saint Mary. A career highlight, Brungardt co-authored a textbook, "*Juvenile Misconduct and Delinquency*," in 1982. As his legacy to Saint Mary, Brungardt established the Dr. Terrance Brungardt Endowed Scholarship, which will be awarded annually to an upper-level student planning to work in the criminal justice field.

Steger, chair of the history and political science department, taught history, political science and global studies for 22 years at Saint Mary following a decorated military career. A retired Colonel and former Battalion Commander, Steger spent 26 years working in the U.S. Army in military intelligence before coming to Saint Mary. He plans to take a little time off on the sandy beaches of Mexico after the school year.

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