

NEWS RELEASE

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Graduates Receive Honors, Academic Hoods at University of Saint Mary Annual Convocation

(Leavenworth, Kan.)— As a tribute the members of the University of Saint Mary community, USM faculty, staff, students and the graduating class of 2006 came together for a Saint Mary honors celebration, Spring Convocation Tuesday, May 2 in Annunciation Chapel. The message during the ceremony was clear—it was time to recognize the changes of the members of the class of 2006 as they prepare for life after college in just a short few weeks.

“We gather this spring in celebration, and pause. We pause to recognize the achievements of our graduates. To recognize the changes you experienced since you have been at Saint Mary,” USM President Sister Diane Steele said during the opening address. “Education is not about the accumulation of data, but the formation of the human person. A profound transformation has occurred within each of you—a transformation and growth that is not visible to the naked eye. You are now Saint Marians and you will make the world a better place.”

While there were plenty of awards to be given out, the highlight of Spring Convocation was the hooding of the graduates. Hooding of the graduates is a ceremonial ritual in which USM graduates are donned with cloth hoods to recognize their new degrees. The wider the velvet trim is on the hoods, the higher the degree. The ritual dates back to the original graduation dress of 12th and 13th Century Europe, but according to Dr. Sandra Van Hoose, vice president and dean for academic affairs, hooding all graduating seniors is a rare distinction.

“At most colleges and universities, the hooding of graduates is only for Ph.D. graduates. At Saint Mary, the hooding is for all our graduates.” Van Hoose said. “We hope it will make your experience that much more special.”

Receiving a hood was not the only honor one USM student received. Sarah Winders, a political science major from Liberty, Mo., was awarded the Mother Mary Ancilla Award for Service. The Mother Mary Ancilla Award is presented annually to a graduating senior who has demonstrated concern, commitment and Christian humanitarian service for others. USM students nominate recipients by writing a 500-word essay about why their peer deserves the award. A panel of USM staff makes the official decision. By winning the Mother Mary Ancilla Award, Winders will also deliver the invocation at Commencement, the opening prayer that officially begins the ceremony, Saturday, May 13.

Winders’ collegiate resume speaks for itself. She was a four-year member of campus ministry, a court appointed special advocate (CASA) volunteer, worked with local prisons preaching Christianity, and even found time to assist with two separate alternative spring break mission trips during her four-year USM career.

One of Winders’ professors was also recognized for his service to the university. Ken Mulliken, professor of political science and history, was awarded the Sullivan Award for Teaching Excellence as well. The Sullivan Award for Teaching Excellence was created in the spring of 1990 to recognize superior teacher achievement at Saint Mary. The award is given to a full-time faculty member based

on the recommendation from fellow faculty, staff and students. Along with the distinction of being one of the university's top professors, Mulliken was also awarded \$1,000 by the university as part of the award.

There were plenty of other awards earned as well. The following awards were given out during Spring Convocation:

- **Student Employee of the Year** (given to a USM student worker): Candice Hermreck
- **Students Appreciating Students Award:** Ben Grubb
- **“E” Award:** (given to a sophomore for Excellence in English): Hank Layton
- **Outstanding Business & Accounting Award:** (given to a senior business administration/accounting major): Kenya Harp
- **All University Honors:** (*requires a 3.70 cumulative grade point average, participation in honors work within the major and in Honors Seminar, and Recommendation of the Honors Council for All-University Honors*)
 - Jennifer Cook**, Departmental Honors in Psychology and All University Honors
 - Brenton Jayatilaka**, Departmental Honors in Pastoral Ministry, All University Honors
 - Ashley Kowalewski**, Departmental Honors in Math, All University Honors
 - Amy Schaffer**, Departmental Honor in English, All University Honors
 - Rena Springe**, Departmental Honors in Biology, All University Honors
 - Sarah Winders**, Departmental Honors in Political Science, All University Honors

The University of Saint Mary is a private, co-educational applied liberal arts university founded by the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth. The University of Saint Mary is located at 4100 South 4th Street, Leavenworth, Kan., with additional locations at 11413 Pflumm in Overland Park and inside Providence Medical Center at 8929 Parallel Parkway in Kansas City, Kan.

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