

NEWS RELEASE

May 9, 2007

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Graduates Honored At University of Saint Mary Spring Convocation

(Leavenworth, Kan.)—The University of Saint Mary paid tribute to one of its most tenured professors while honoring the Class of 2007 during Spring Convocation and Honors Ceremony May 1.

Sister Susan Chase, professor of biology at USM, is retiring from teaching after more than 30-years at USM. At Spring Convocation, Chase basked in the glory of personal achievement, as she was honored with the Sullivan Award for Teaching Excellence, the university's highest teaching honor.

Chase will also be honored at Commencement, 1 p.m., Saturday, May 12, as she will be conferred with professor emerita status, a life-long honor, given to distinguished full-time faculty upon retirement.

“Sister Susan Chase has been both a demanding and dedicated professor,” USM Vice President and Academic Dean Dr. Sandra VanHoose said. “She has played an important role over the years in preparing USM pre-med students for acceptance into medical school, evidenced by our 95% acceptance history.”

The Sullivan Award for Teaching Excellence was created in 1990 to recognize teacher achievement at Saint Mary. Named in honor of the late Sister Mary Louis Sullivan, the award recognizes a full-time faculty member who creates a unique distinction in the teaching climate at Saint Mary. The recipient is determined by faculty, staff, and student nominations.

Spring Convocation was also a special day for USM's Class of 2007. The class was “hooded,” during a ceremonial ritual in which cloth hoods are placed over their graduation robes by university President Sister Diane Steele, to recognize their new academic degrees.

The afternoon was extra sweet for graduate Josh Nikes. Nikes was awarded the Mother Mary Ancilla Award, the university's top honor for service and community leadership. His service resume speaks for itself. In addition to working with Big Brothers & Big Sisters, and Habitat for Humanity in the Leavenworth area, Nikes twice helped deconstruct houses in New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina, and also helped construct homes for elderly and poor in Appalachia, Kentucky.

By virtue of winning the Ancilla Award, Nikes will deliver the invocation prayer that opens commencement, Saturday, May 12.

Other USM awards presented at Spring Convocation included:

- **Students Appreciating Students Award:** Kara Wells

- **“E” Award** (*given to USM sophomores intending to major in English*): Kathryn Lowe, Chelsea Voorheis, Jerrad Willis, and Christina Grande
- **Outstanding Business & Accounting Award:** (*given to a senior business administration/accounting major*): Colin Aldrich
- **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*):
 Erin Casey, Departmental Honors in Biology, All University Honors
 Rebecca Forge, Departmental Honors in English, All University Honors
 Chad Hendrix, Departmental Honors in Chemistry, All University Honors
 Andrew Chadwick, Departmental Honors in Political Science, All University Honors
 Rebecca Myhand, 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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