

NEWS RELEASE

Date

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Former University of Saint Mary President Inducted Into Education Hall of Fame

Sister Mary
Janet McGilley

Former President of the University of Saint Mary, Sister Mary Janet McGilley, will be inducted into the Mid-America Educational Hall of Fame this Saturday, November 3, 2007 in a ceremony at Kansas City Kansas Community College.

"We are so proud of Sister McGilley," said Sister Diane Steele, president of the University of Saint Mary. "Under her leadership and guidance, there were many changes and innovations that strengthened Saint Mary."

The late Sister McGilley, who passed away in September 2003, served as USM President from 1964 to 1989. She guided the college as it engaged the civil rights movements for minorities and women, the Vietnam War, and the ebb and flow of the economy.

"She bore unusual witness to the influence of bred-in-the-bone integrity, practical idealism, and fidelity to principle," said Sister Marie Brinkman, who served on the faculty during McGilley's tenure. "Even when the student body was more than 600 students, she made the effort to know all the students by name."

"She encouraged each student to develop a 'thinking heart.' She wanted students with intelligence that was informed by compassion," Brinkman added. "With her deep faith in God, she had the unique ability too develop an authentic community at Saint Mary."

McGilley graduated from Saint Mary College in 1946. She joined the English department in 1956. Her mastery of teaching was lauded by students and colleagues. She was known for her charisma, her poetry, and her visionary leadership. In an era when most institutions were led by men, she was universally respected by educators throughout the region.

To name just a few of her accomplishments, she encouraged the development of an international student exchange program and developed a prison program, directed by the college, to reach out to the men and women inmates who were interested in pursuing their education. McGilley helped establish the first degree completion program for adults in Kansas City, Kansas.

The University of Saint Mary is a private, co-educational applied liberal arts university founded by the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth.