

NEWS RELEASE

May 13, 2008

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University of Saint Mary Graduates 275 Saint Marians at Commencement 2008

(Leavenworth, Kan.)—Despite the threat of rain and a tornado warning to the south, the newest class of Saint Marians was able to make the traditional outdoor procession across the Leavenworth campus on Saturday, May 10, and graduate before a crowd of 2,000, the largest commencement crowd to date at McGilley Field House.

Of the 275 students graduating this year, 130 received bachelor's degrees, 144 received master's degrees, and one received an associate's degree. 155 participated in the commencement ceremony. Three graduates, Jay Arthur, Lynda McClelland, and Bonaventure Fon Ndifor, offered student reflections on their Saint Mary experience.

"Fear is the only enemy I will ever face," said McClelland, of Kansas City, Kan., who represented the undergraduate degree-completion students. "My prayer is that [we] never have fear to prevent us from reaching our God given potential," she added.

This was the first time since 1994 that Saint Mary graduated nursing students. The Bachelor of Science in Nursing program was launched in 2006 to help address the nation's critical nursing shortage. Thirty-four nursing students comprised USM's Nursing Class of 2008. In April, the nursing program received a five-year accreditation from the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE).

One graduate stepped foot on the Leavenworth campus for the first time, having completed her Master of Arts in Teaching degree completely online from Anaheim, Calif. Resident international students from Brazil, West Africa, Canada, Great Britain and Trinidad and Tobago also graduated.

The University of Saint Mary also honored a faculty member and administrator during commencement. Dr. Patricia Carnahan, associate professor of education, received the Sullivan Award for Teaching Excellence, the university's highest teaching honor.

A special honor was bestowed upon retiring Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs Dr. Sandra Van Hoose. Dr. Van Hoose was named professor emerita of education, a life-long honor, given to distinguished full-time faculty upon retirement. She has worked at the University of Saint Mary for 28 years, serving the past decade as academic vice president and dean. Her previous posts include interim president, chair of the education department, graduate faculty, professor of education, associate academic dean, assistant dean for records and adult programs, and registrar. Dr. Van Hoose retires on June 30, 2008.

The University of Saint Mary is a Catholic applied liberal arts university founded and sponsored by the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth. The main campus is located at 4100 South 4th Street in Leavenworth, Kan. Saint Mary offers accelerated graduate and degree-completion programs at three additional locations in Overland Park, Shawnee, and Kansas City, Kan. Visit www.stmary.edu for more information.

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