

## NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: John Shultz 913-758-6165  
E-mail: shultz35@stmary.edu



# University of Saint Mary Launches Cheerleading Program

(Leavenworth, Kan.)—With the announcement of the program’s sponsor, Admissions Counselor and former cheerleader Morgan Parris, the University of Saint Mary has officially launched its first-ever cheerleading program.

USM Athletic Director Rob Miller hopes to have a squad of 10 to 15 cheerleaders ready to take the field for athletic events this coming fall.

“It’s a great step forward for our athletics program. This will truly add new excitement to the games for fans and athletes,” Miller said, noting that the new cheer squad comes on the heels of the 2008 opening of the university’s first home field for the Spires Football team. “Every step we’ve taken in the last year is another step toward fully legitimizing this athletic program,” Miller added.

Previously, USM was the only school in the Kansas Collegiate Athletic Conference (KCAC) without a cheer squad, he said.

Miller said that dozens of prospective students had expressed interest in a USM cheering program, a sentiment echoed by USM Director of Admissions Brandon Johnson.

“There was enough interest among our students to indicate a cheerleading program would thrive,” Johnson said. “We want to add more spirit and energy to the campus, and a cheerleading squad would do just that. With the highest enrollment the main campus has seen since 1974, along with the anticipated increase in the number of students living on campus with the opening of our new “apartment-style” residence hall this fall, the need for these kinds of student activities will continue to pop up.”

The cheerleading squad would serve only as athletic and university spirit boosters. They will not be a competitive squad, Miller said. The cheerleaders will be expected to perform at football and basketball games and will act as ambassadors of USM and its athletic department at other community events.

*The University of Saint Mary is a Catholic applied liberal arts university founded and sponsored by the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth. The University of Saint Mary is located at 4100 South 4th Street, Leavenworth, Kan., with additional locations in Overland Park, Shawnee, and Kansas City, Kan. Visit [www.stmary.edu](http://www.stmary.edu) for more information.*

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