

NEWS RELEASE

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University of Saint Mary Fundraising Gala SpireFest Shines the Spotlight on Local Talent *5 p.m. Saturday, April 24, McGilley Field House*

(Leavenworth, Kan.)—SpireFest, the single biggest annual fundraiser for University of Saint Mary student scholarships, returns to Leavenworth this year with a brand-new format—a talent competition that will highlight local performers.



SpireFest 2010, dubbed “Saint Mary Has Talent,” starts at 5 p.m. Saturday, April 24, in McGilley Field House on USM’s Leavenworth campus, 4100 South 4th Street. Tickets are \$100 per person or \$1,000 for a table of 10. Call (913) 758-6137 or go to www.stmary.edu for tickets.

The gala event includes cocktails and dinner along with the talent competition. Attendees can vote for their favorite acts, as Saint Mary shines the spotlight on a bevy of local talent.

This year’s SpireFest features a wide variety of skilled area performers, from talented tykes and gifted amateurs to pros who have played some of the Kansas City metro area’s biggest stages. Local acts include Leavenworth’s own Motown singing sensation Bill Robinson; Xavier Elementary fifth grader Larkin Reilly, who promises to wow with her singing and dancing; Falcon Punch, a pop/rock quintet of Lansing, Kan. high schoolers who played Kansas City’s well-attended Jiggle Jam Family Festival; Leavenworth native and Saint Mary sophomore Jillian Warman will melt hearts with the sweet sounds of her violin; and local singer, songwriter, and storyteller Tom Jacobs will be vying for the top votes. Several Sisters of Charity will also be performing, including Sister Anita Sullivan, Sister Anne Callahan, Sister Peg Johnson, and Sister Gloria Solomon.

Area news anchors Elizabeth Alex of NBC Action News KSHB-TV and WDAF-TV Fox 4’s Kathy Quinn will be among the competition’s all-star panel of judges.

SpireFest, previously held in a charity auction format, raises tens of thousands of dollars each year for student scholarships, said Mike Alex, USM’s vice president for development.

“This year, we’re looking to surpass our previous efforts,” said Alex, “SpireFest gives people the chance to greatly aid young men and women in financial need, and help make their dreams of a quality college education possible.”

Contact USM’s development office at (913) 758-6137 for more information or register for the event online at www.stmary.edu. Advance votes for SpireFest talent acts may also be cast online.

The University of Saint Mary is a Catholic co-educational 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 for more information.