

NEWS RELEASE

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University of Saint Mary Bestows Honors on Students and Faculty at Spring Convocation & Hooding

(Leavenworth, Kan.)—In anticipation of May 8’s commencement ceremony, the University of Saint Mary has recognized the many remarkable efforts of the undergraduate class of 2010 as well as the good work of the Saint Mary faculty at USM’s annual Spring Convocation Honors and Hooding Ceremony held on Tuesday, April 27, in Annunciation Chapel.

Leavenworth native Michaela Forge won the top student service honor—the Mother Mary Ancilla Award. During her time at USM, Forge’s name became synonymous with student participation. She took part in, among other efforts, the Student Government Association and carried out several mission trips to Jamaica, Denver, and Kentucky.

“Michaela is an intellectual with a heart for service and is truly a credit to the university,” Academic Vice President Dr. Bryan Le Beau said. “She has a passion for social justice.”

Michaela is a third-generation Saint Mary graduate. She majored in history and secondary education, and plans to teach abroad after college in underserved areas. The Ancilla Award carries with it an additional honor: Forge will deliver the invocation prayer that opens the commencement ceremony on Saturday, May 8.

On the faculty side, Assistant Professor of English Sister Rosemary Kolich won the Sullivan Award for Teaching Excellence. The award, plus \$1,000, is presented to a full-time faculty member who has made a distinct difference in the teaching climate at USM. The Sullivan Award was created in 1990 and named for the late Sister Mary Louis Sullivan, former academic dean. The winner is nominated by students, faculty, and staff. Sr. Kolich is a 1980 Saint Mary graduate.

Dr. Le Beau said comments made in support of Sr. Kolich’s nomination included “her teaching is amazing,” and “the way she taught each lesson made me starved to learn more.”

Sister Kathleen Wood, retiring chair of USM’s theology and pastoral ministry department, was also honored at the ceremony, earning distinction as a USM Professor Emerita of Theology. Sr. Wood is a past winner of USM’s Sullivan Award, and a 1970 Saint Mary graduate. She’s taught at the school for much of the past 28 years.

“If there is one among us who is born to teach, it’s Sister Kathleen,” Dr. Le Beau said.

Sister Susan Rieke, chair of the department of languages and literature, was also named as holder of the Sister Mary Janet McGilley Faculty Chair in Liberal Studies. The holder of the recently endowed chair is expected to exemplify USM’s commitment to liberal arts education. This is the first official fully endowed faculty chair for Saint Mary. Sr. Rieke will be installed as the McGilley Chair holder at Fall Convocation on Sept. 10.

Other USM student awards presented at Spring Convocation included:

- **Students Appreciating Students Award:** Kristen Owsley
- **“E” Award** (*given to USM sophomores intending to major in English*): Patrick Peterson and Jillian Warman
- **The Chase Student Award in Biology:** Theresa Baumstark
- **Outstanding Business Student Award:** Larissa Brown

- **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*):

Theresa Baumstark, Departmental Honors in Biology and All-University Honors

Daniel Blank, Departmental Honors in Political Science and All-University Honors

Michaela Forge, Department Honors in History and Political Science and All-University Honors

Mary Ann Snyder, Departmental Honors in History and All-University Honors

USM is one of the few universities in the country who continues the time-honored tradition of hooding its undergraduates. The hoods are worn over the graduation robes and denote a student's specific academic discipline.

"It's one of the things that make us unique," said Dr. Bryan Le Beau, USM's academic vice president.

"Very few colleges and universities have a hooding ceremony for undergraduates. In fact, many reserve hooding for Ph.D. candidates."

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.

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