

NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: John Shultz (913) 758-6165
Email: shultz35@stmary.edu



University of Saint Mary to Hold Annual SpireFest Fundraising Gala for Student Scholarships

5 p.m. Saturday, April 16, McGilley Field House

(Leavenworth, Kan.)—All University of Saint Mary friends and supporters are invited to support student scholarships and attend SpireFest, the university's single biggest annual scholarship fundraiser, at 5 p.m. Saturday, April, 16, in McGilley Field House on USM's main Leavenworth campus, 4100 South 4th Street.

The 2011 edition of SpireFest will continue the theme debuted at last year's event—"Saint Mary Has Talent," a talent competition that will both entertain and shine the spotlight on local performers.



The gala event also includes cocktails and dinner along with the talent show, and attendees can vote for their favorite acts and help fund much-needed and much-appreciated scholarships in the process. Tickets are \$100 per person or \$1,000 for a table of 10. Call (913) 758-6137 or go to www.stmary.edu/spirefest for tickets.

This year's SpireFest features a wide variety of skilled area performers. Among the local talent in the entertainment spotlight: Savannah Miller, a Kansas City, Mo., baton-twirling master; local crooner Frank Cherrito; Leavenworth native, USM security officer, and jazz saxophone player Mel Lister,; a singing duo from Cristo Rey Kansas City; Kansas City ladies barbershop quartet 4's Company; Saint Mary senior Jenna Schwinn, an alto soloist; area comedian David Kious; and Michael Jackson impersonator Christian Robinson. Sister Anita Sullivan of the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth will also sing *Danny Boy* for the competition.

Two returning acts from last year will help facilitate the evening's event. Leavenworth's own Larkin Reilly, the Xavier Elementary schooler who won last year's SpireFest, will serve as a judge for the evening's event; and Leavenworth Motown singing sensation Bill Robinson will perform at the close of competition.

Motivational speaker Cathy Newton, author of several books including *It Takes Character* and *Living in Full Swing*, will serve as the evening's emcee. Newton is also a Saint Mary alum.

SpireFest, previously held in a charity auction format, raises tens of thousands of dollars each year for student scholarships.

"Every year, the needs of our students grow, and every year, we look to surpass our previous efforts at SpireFest," said Sister Diane Steele, president of the University of Saint Mary. "The gifts of our friends and supporters are invaluable to our students. These donations aren't just numbers. They represent goals attained and dreams realized."

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

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