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Fall 2018

### Gold & Blue Law, Fall 2018

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GOLD & BLUE LAW EDITION

# SCHOOL *of* LAW ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY

FALL 2018

## *Chief of Chief Justices*

Fourth Court chief justice leads  
statewide committee of chief justices



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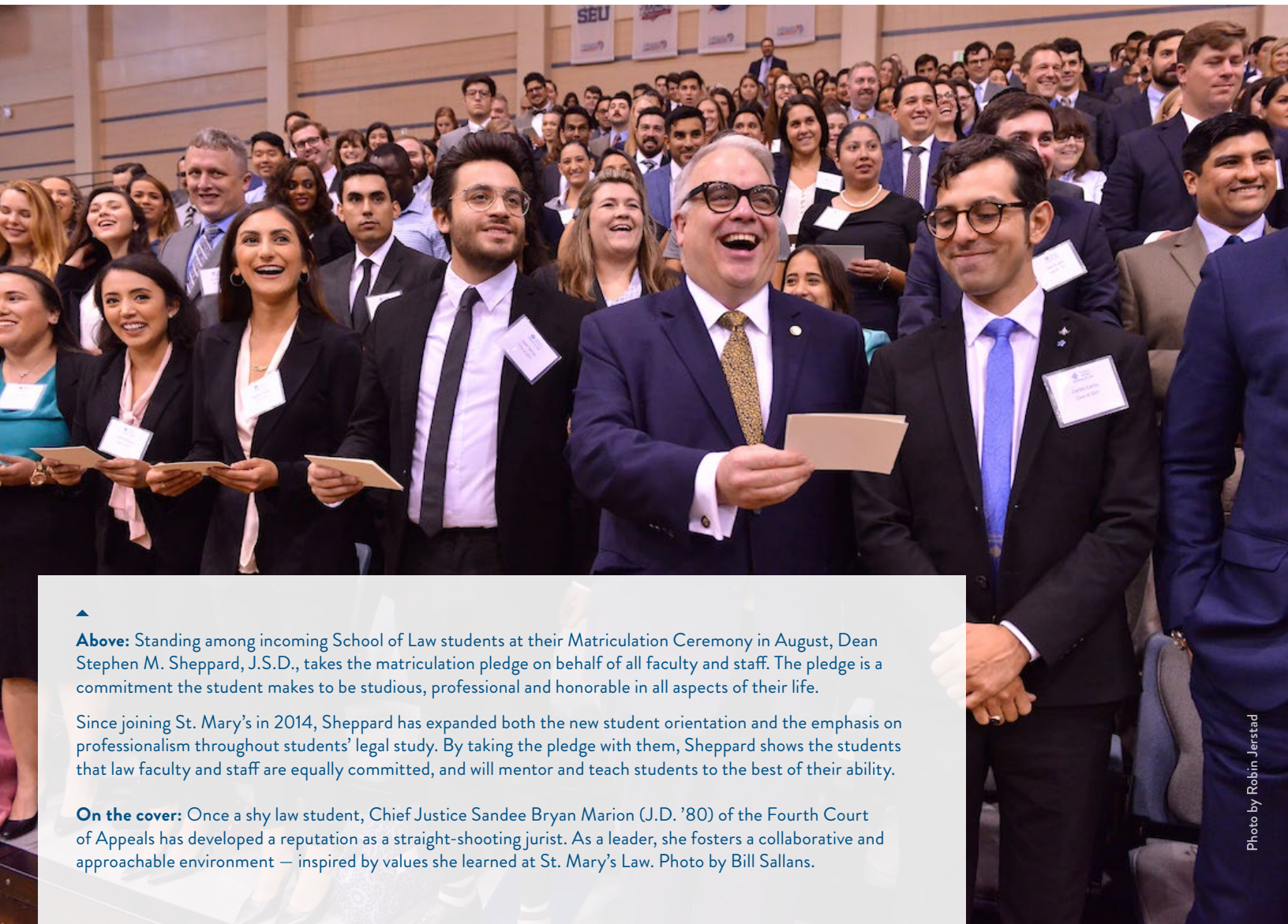
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**Above:** Standing among incoming School of Law students at their Matriculation Ceremony in August, Dean Stephen M. Sheppard, J.S.D., takes the matriculation pledge on behalf of all faculty and staff. The pledge is a commitment the student makes to be studious, professional and honorable in all aspects of their life.

Since joining St. Mary's in 2014, Sheppard has expanded both the new student orientation and the emphasis on professionalism throughout students' legal study. By taking the pledge with them, Sheppard shows the students that law faculty and staff are equally committed, and will mentor and teach students to the best of their ability.

**On the cover:** Once a shy law student, Chief Justice Sandee Bryan Marion (J.D. '80) of the Fourth Court of Appeals has developed a reputation as a straight-shooting jurist. As a leader, she fosters a collaborative and approachable environment — inspired by values she learned at St. Mary's Law. Photo by Bill Sallans.

# Lifting barriers

## *Clinical Associate Professor of Law leads law students in immigration courts and detention centers*

by Jasmine DeLeon (B.A. '11, M.A. '15)

Arguing cases in immigration court. Visiting clients detained by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Filing court motions. Building evidence. Reuniting families. Understanding the human beings behind the immigration debate.

Students in the St. Mary's University School of Law's semester-long clinic course on immigration and human rights taught by Erica B. Schommer, J.D., get firsthand experience with these legal concepts and much more.

As a Clinical Associate Professor of Law, Schommer takes J.D. students into immigration courts and detention centers to work with asylum seekers by serving as attorneys.

"Immigration law is very complex," Schommer said. "Many do not understand how difficult it is for people to seek asylum in the U.S."

For Schommer, educating law students and the public is key to navigating this convoluted legal ground.

While media outlets continue to report on immigration issues along the U.S.-Mexico border and Archbishop of San Antonio Gustavo García-Siller, M.Sp.S., calls for immigration reform, Schommer works to make a difference inside the classroom and beyond.

Each case offers new lessons from which to learn, including the most recent family separation cases she worked on this summer.

Schommer's interest in immigration sparked during her own immigration clinical experience as a University of Texas at Austin law student.

For her entry into immigration law, Schommer helped a woman from Africa with her asylum case.

"I was able to prepare her case, interview her and get a decision, all within one semester," Schommer said. "I saw the immediate result of the impact on an individual that the work could have."

That first client kept in touch with Schommer, sharing her milestones — from becoming a citizen to seeing her daughter graduate.

Schommer also remains involved by sharing her take on immigration law with various media outlets from PBS's *NewsHour* to the Texas Observer, while also teaching students to find their vocations.

Third-year St. Mary's J.D. student Pilar Martinez said her impactful first-year clinic experience inspired her to continue.

"I applied for clinic because I want to help people, especially those who cannot afford legal representation," Martinez said. "I feel more prepared for practice than I would have been had I spent the year working as a law clerk researching immigration law issues and drafting memoranda."

After the clinical program, students often remain involved by dedicating their profession to immigration law or supporting organizations, Schommer said.

"Educating law students — allowing them to be a part of detained cases firsthand and serve the community — matches the University's mission," she said. ■



# Legal leap

## *D.C. attorney wields sanctions expertise*

*by Frank Garza*

From his sanctions law practice perched on Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, D.C., Erich Ferrari (J.D. '06) is always upfront with his clients, even if he knows they won't always be happy with what he has to say.

This has lost him clients before, but Ferrari doesn't want to give unrealistic expectations.

"There are too many lawyers who will do whatever clients tell them to do, and that's a bad approach. I don't make up the facts," Ferrari said. "All I do is take the information available and package it in a way that is presentable to the (federal) government and puts their position forward in the best light possible."

Ferrari has been a sanctions lawyer for almost 12 years. He has represented U.S. and foreign corporations, financial institutions, exporters,

insurers and private individuals in trade compliance, regulatory licensing matters, and federal investigations and prosecutions.

Typically, clients fall into one of three areas: they are on a sanctions list; need representation after dealing with embargoed countries like Iran, Cuba or Syria; or want help navigating a policy.

These cases are frequently heard before the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control, the U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of Industry and Security, and in federal courts throughout the country.

About 80 percent of Ferrari's work requires him to travel outside the U.S., so he is abroad nearly every week to places such as Colombia, Mexico, the United Kingdom, Germany, Myanmar and Lebanon.

“*You don't have to go the traditional route. There's risk involved, and it's hard. But it's also exciting and fun, and I wouldn't trade the way I did it.*”

"I view my job not as trying to get clients out of trouble, but making sure they only get punished if the law finds liability and the consequences are appropriate," Ferrari said. "I can't change the facts, but I can make sure the government follows every rule they are supposed to in doing their job."

At the St. Mary's University School of Law, Ferrari said he had the freedom to explore the topics he was interested in, namely national security law.

After graduation, Ferrari moved to Washington D.C., where he felt he had the best chance of practicing it. Instead, he ran into a lawyer from Texas who hired him to do sanctions work.

Then, in 2009, Ferrari took a leap of faith.

"I decided I wanted to create my own sanctions-specific practice, so I left my job. You don't have to go the traditional route. There's risk involved, and it's hard," he said. "But it's also exciting and fun, and I wouldn't trade the way I did it." ■





# Lawyering in paradise

## Assistant AG sets legal precedent in Saipan

by Matthew Barsalou

When Jonathan Robert “Robby” Glass Jr. graduated from the St. Mary’s University School of Law in 2012, the last place he thought he would end up was on an island in the middle of the Pacific Ocean.

Today, Glass finds himself moving seamlessly between practicing law and developing a community’s legal system. Thankfully, he can wear sandals to work — just not in court.

“We have the opportunity to address legal questions in an effort to make the islands better for generations to come,” Glass said.

Glass said he “never intended to be working in criminal law.” Yet he now fully appreciates the lessons he learned in his criminal law course and the topics discussed in the federal criminal procedure course while at law school.

After working for three years as an assistant district attorney in Huntsville, Glass packed up and moved to Saipan, the largest island of the Mariana Archipelago, where he’s served as an assistant attorney general for the past two years.

Established in 1977, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands includes 15

islands. Due to the Commonwealth’s relatively young age, Glass has a unique vantage point from which to practice law and to observe how a region develops and establishes its own case law.

Glass recalled few opportunities to affect such change during his time working in Texas, with its firmly established case law and legal precedent.

In just two years on the islands — in between taking full advantage of the island’s natural offerings — Glass has appeared many times before the Supreme Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to argue the government’s position.

Through his legal work, Glass also has firsthand experience in understanding the importance of reconciling different cultures and perspectives.

“It is important to understand the culture in which you practice the law. You have to really look at and understand the community environment to be an effective prosecutor,” Glass said. ■



Robby Glass’ activities on the island range from taking in the natural beauty of the islands, sailing and joining a new church to becoming a triathlete and setting legal precedent.

Images courtesy of Robby Glass.

# Chief of Chiefs

Fourth Court Chief Justice leads statewide committee of chief justices

by Frank Garza

In her first year of study at the St. Mary's University School of Law, Chief Justice Sandee Bryan Marion (J.D. '80) of the Fourth Court of Appeals almost dropped out.

She had awful anxiety about public speaking.

"I began to think I had made a mistake about coming to law school," Marion recalled. "When I was called on to speak, I would shake from head to toe."

But her father encouraged her to stay, and she ended up doing well on her final exams. She finished her first year, learning a valuable lesson in the process.

"It taught me the importance of preparation," she said. "If you do all the right work, fear shouldn't stop you."

The shy law student has developed a reputation as a straight-shooting jurist who is meticulous in her interpretation of the law and as a leader of the Fourth Court of Appeals, which hears civil and criminal cases from lower courts in 32 counties spanning South Texas and the Hill Country.

This past spring, Marion was also elected the chair of the Council of Chiefs, or the "Chief of Chiefs," as it is more commonly referred to by the council. The council — composed of the chief justices of all 14 Texas appellate courts — meets bimonthly to discuss court budgets, court management and legislative needs. The chair is appointed by the council for a two-year term and serves as their spokesperson before the Texas Legislature.

"It's a whole new area for me," Marion said. "It's very different work from what I've been doing all these years."

School of Law Dean Stephen M. Sheppard, J.S.D., was unsurprised when he learned of her new role.

"Sandee Bryan Marion is exceedingly accomplished at helping people who are awfully bright work together with a minimum of fuss and conflict," he said.

Former Fourth Court of Appeals Chief Justice Catherine Stone (J.D. '82) also served as "Chief of Chiefs" from 2011 to 2013 and said it is quite an honor to be selected.

"Since there are only 14 people who make the decision, I think it's pretty well-vetted," Stone said. "They want someone who can communicate well with their fellow chiefs and put their trust in you."

Marion has spent more than a decade on the Fourth Court of Appeals and was elected Chief Justice in 2015. During her tenure, she has been part

of a relatively rare all-female appellate court three times.

"I think I've been very lucky. There were a lot of doors opened by women before me," Marion said. "Everyone has an obligation to reach back and try to help someone else along."

Stone was on the court for two of those breaking-the-glass-ceiling moments too.

"It was rewarding for citizens to see that we were doing our job and ... doing it well," Stone said. "It felt good to meet younger women lawyers and have them be inspired by this."

St. Mary's Law graduates like Marion, Stone and former Fourth Court Chief Justice Alma Lopez (J.D. '68) have perpetuated the culture of leadership and cooperation on the court, Sheppard said.

"This is a position that sets the judicial agenda for law in our area. To have someone not only trained in law as a St. Mary's lawyer, but instilled with an underlying sense of justice and care because of what we believe, is significant," Sheppard said. "Each and every one of them has demonstrated these values on the bench."

Lopez said the values she learned from St. Mary's Law formed a big part of her professional life.

"The law school taught us to always be ready and, most importantly, to be good stewards to the community and to do the best we can," Lopez said.

Marion's desire to help others prompted her and her husband, Homero R. Garza, to establish the William F. Bryan Endowed Law Scholarship at St. Mary's Law in 2009. They created the scholarship — named in honor of Marion's father — to help students of lower socioeconomic backgrounds attend law school.

But before Marion created the endowment, she was already quietly trailblazing a path for others.

Right out of law school, she was offered a job in Boerne. Marion said the position for a woman attorney was a first in Boerne and Kendall County.

Unsure of the challenge that would pose, she asked Professor Emeritus of Law Aloysius Leopold, J.D., "Do you think they're ready for a woman lawyer?"

"They are ready for you," she remembers him answering.

With nothing but gratitude for the career that's followed since, Marion said, "I've followed some pretty big heels, and to be able to serve after Chief Justice Catherine Stone and Chief Justice Alma Lopez after having learned so much from them is a gift." ■

The Hon. Sandee Bryan Marion in the Bexar County Courthouse's Double Height Courtroom in which she was sworn in as chief justice in 2015. ▶



“ —————  
There were a lot of  
doors opened by women  
before me. Everyone  
has an obligation to  
*reach back and try to  
help someone else along.*  
————— ”





# Healing art

## *Law student's art book project seeks to help refugee children*

by Frank Garza

When the Syrian refugee crisis seemed to reach its peak, future St. Mary's University School of Law student Annie Bright felt compelled to do something.

One particular scene shown on the news struck her: a mother and her children gathering necessities from the remains of a bombed-out apartment. One child came to her mother with her arms full of stuffed animals. But her mother made her put all but one back because they weren't hers.

"It just broke my heart on the part of the mother and the child. The news also showed scenes of some older children teaching the younger kids as if they were in school," said Bright, a second-year J.D. student. "The kids just want to do normal kid things — play and learn — and the parents want the same for them."

Learning more about the Syrian crisis moved her to create an art book for them titled, *I Made This*.

"I thought about what I liked when I was a kid and what I was capable of offering them. I am nothing near an artist, but I've still always loved sketchbooks and journals, like most kids," Bright said. "I also thought about the importance of having your own little treasures when you're young — the things that you work on, that belong to you."

Before coming to St. Mary's University, Bright taught at a high school in Spain, and then worked in television production in Los Angeles. She quit

her job to work on the art book full time.

A friend introduced her to Adobe Illustrator. A UCLA Psychology professor advised her on which activities would be best for building a child's self-esteem. Three artists, California-based visual artist Allison Kunath, Brazilian illustrator Thiago Bianchini and French graffitist ZDEY, donated their work. A University of Texas student translated the book into Arabic.

Bright raised more than \$3,000 on CrowdRise, a fundraising website, enough to print 100 books in English and 50 in Arabic. She split them between the Refugee and Immigrant Center for Education and Legal Services and the Refugee Services of Texas. To have a lower-cost option available to share, she also made a digital version.

As she was working on the book, Bright became more in-tune with what was occurring in the world around her. When the U.S. announced it was going to take in only 10,000 Syrian refugees in 2016, she realized she could do even more than the book project to help — and set her mind to attend law school.

"I was putting too small a Band-Aid on a wound that needs surgery," Bright said. "I thought, 'Knowledge of the law would really help these people.'" ■



**Grow Your Garden**  
Color the flowers.  
Add your own dirt,  
grass, plants, and  
seeds to make your  
garden full.

Drawings courtesy  
of *I Made This* by  
Annie Bright.



# Marathon man

## *Law Assistant Dean races in every state*

by Frank Garza

After finishing his first marathon in 2002, St. Mary's University School of Law Assistant Dean Mike Barry, J.D., swore he would never run another.

"It was absolutely painful and crazy. But then three days later, I wondered, 'If I trained differently, what could happen?'" Barry said. "And that led to another, which led to 67 marathons."

Sixteen years later, he's achieved a goal that only 1,416 other members of the 50 States Marathon Club have accomplished and, even more impressive, he ran each in less than four hours. That's a feat only 144 members of the even more elite 50sub4 Marathon Club can claim.

Along the way, he's run nearly 19,000 miles. Some marathons were smooth runs — as smooth as running a marathon can be — but others, especially the ones in high altitudes or with bad weather, proved more difficult.

"There are things you can control, like preparation and your attitude," Barry said. "But there are things you can't control, like weather. You just have to figure out how to get through it."

In May, Barry finished marathon No. 49 in Maine and the final one in Vermont.

He may be finished with this goal, but Barry is always looking for the next crazy challenge. And it can't be something he can complete quickly.

"I don't like short-term goals. God has given each of us a set of gifts and, if we're doing it right, we should be using them over a lifetime, not for a brief period," Barry said. ■



# LAWCAMPUSNEWS

## Law Alumni Association honors distinguished graduates

The St. Mary's University Law Alumni Association honored three graduates — John M. Vaught (J.D. '78), the Hon. Jennifer A. Rymell (J.D. '91) and Javier L. Herrera (J.D. '10) — at its annual Distinguished Law Graduate Dinner in October at the Grand Hyatt San Antonio.

The Association hosts the event to fund scholarships and student services.

Vaught is senior counsel at Wheeler Trigg O'Donnell LLP in Denver and president of the Colorado Bar Association. Rymell has served as judge of Tarrant County Court at Law No. 2 in Fort Worth since 2003. Herrera is an attorney with the Herrera Law Firm in San Antonio.

## St. Mary's Law leads task force reviewing Texas Bar Exam

The St. Mary's University School of Law is leading the effort to examine the effectiveness of the Texas Bar Examination.

In October, the Texas Supreme Court announced its intention to adopt a rule under which Texas is likely to commence exams through the Uniform Bar Examination (UBE) in February 2021.

This was one of the key recommendations the Task Force on the Texas Bar Examination issued in their May report. Adopting the UBE would benefit law graduates seeking to practice in multiple jurisdictions without having to retake the bar.

Among many conclusions, the report also advised the court that Texas should encourage its law schools to experiment with alternative licensing programs.

"There's a national understanding that the current approach to the entry of the profession of law is, at least, antiquated, but



Photo by Robin Jerstad

perhaps counterproductive," said Stephen M. Sheppard, J.S.D., Dean of the School of Law and chair of the task force.

"Licensure has to be more effective in determining fitness and character," Sheppard said.

## St. Mary's Law professor elected president of regional association

Colin P. Marks, J.D., Director of the Master of Jurisprudence Program and Professor of Law at the St. Mary's University School of Law, will serve as president of the Southeastern Association of Law Schools (SEALS) board of trustees starting in July 2019.

SEALS hosts an annual meeting each summer at which law professors learn from each other through various panels, discuss teaching methods and present research.

"I'm honored to be serving in this capacity and representing St. Mary's," Marks said.

## Docket Call

Law students got to know the School's 20-plus registered organizations at the Student Bar Association's annual Docket Call event held in the Sarita Kenedy East Law Library in September.

## Family Day

The St. Mary's School of Law Office of Law Success invited the families and loved ones of first-year law students to attend a special Family Day program in the Law Courtroom in September.



Photo by Robin Jerstad

MARATHON MAN | DEFYING GRAVITY | CRUISING LIFE'S HIGHWAY | CHINA YOGI | HOMEGROWN GENEROSITY

# GOLD & BLUE

## ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY

FALL 2018

### Silent *No Longer*

Drama professor resurrects  
silent film star through research

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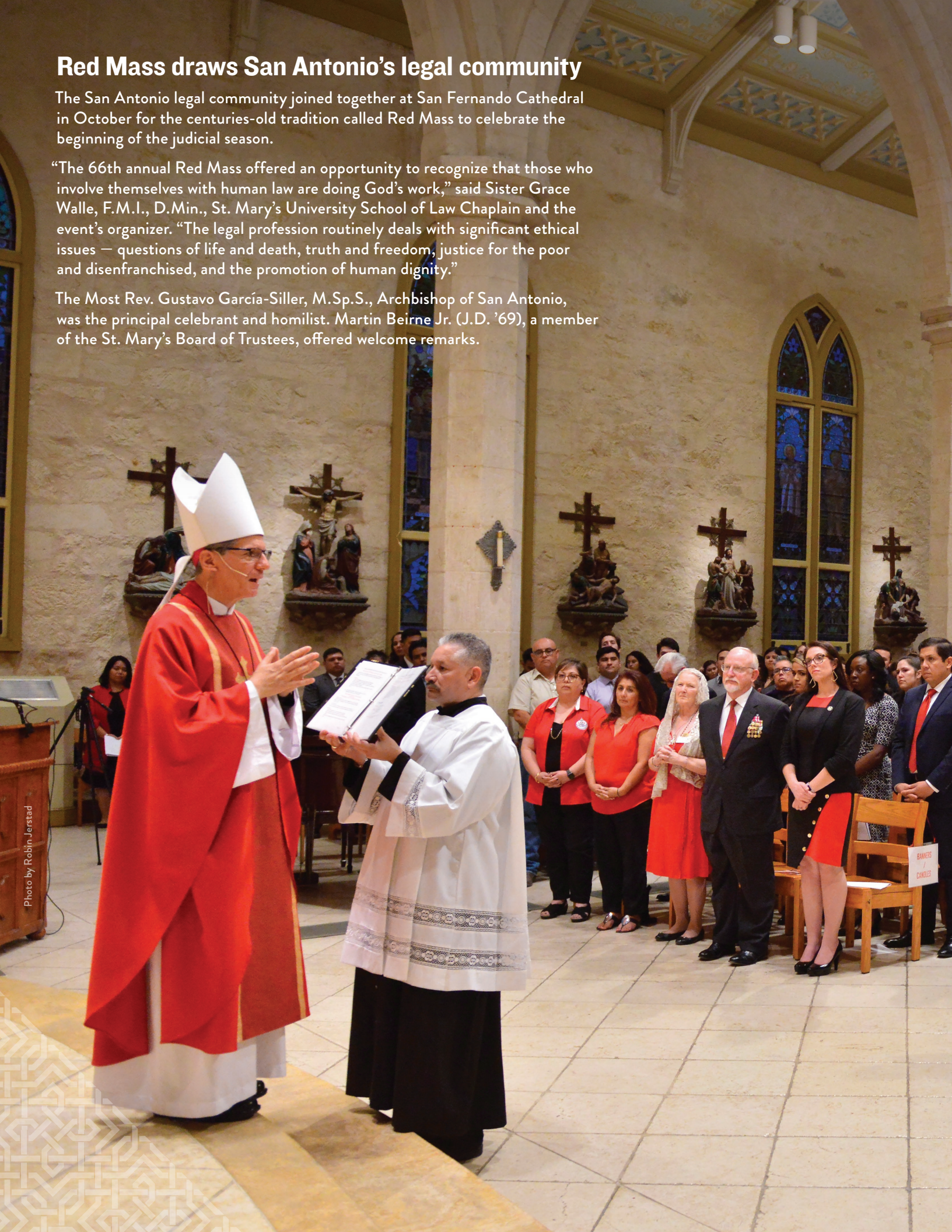


## Red Mass draws San Antonio's legal community

The San Antonio legal community joined together at San Fernando Cathedral in October for the centuries-old tradition called Red Mass to celebrate the beginning of the judicial season.

“The 66th annual Red Mass offered an opportunity to recognize that those who involve themselves with human law are doing God’s work,” said Sister Grace Walle, F.M.I., D.Min., St. Mary’s University School of Law Chaplain and the event’s organizer. “The legal profession routinely deals with significant ethical issues — questions of life and death, truth and freedom, justice for the poor and disenfranchised, and the promotion of human dignity.”

The Most Rev. Gustavo García-Siller, M.Sp.S., Archbishop of San Antonio, was the principal celebrant and homilist. Martin Beirne Jr. (J.D. '69), a member of the St. Mary’s Board of Trustees, offered welcome remarks.



# GOLD & BLUE

ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY

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*(Denotes degree from St. Mary's University)*

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[www.stmarytx.edu/magazine](http://www.stmarytx.edu/magazine)

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## MISSION

St. Mary's University, as a Catholic Marianist University, fosters the formation of people in faith and educates leaders for the common good through community, integrated liberal arts and professional education, and academic excellence.

## CONNECT WITH US



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## @StMarysU Social

1. Rattler Battalion Cadets in Washington, D.C.
2. Maryam Khezri of the Enactus program in India
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4. St. Mary's 2018 Student Government Association shows Rattler pride.

**On the cover:** Chair and Associate Professor of Drama Bernadette Hamilton-Brady, M.F.A., dresses as the subject of her research — silent film star Pola Negri — and stands in the Menger Hotel where Negri stayed during her first visit to San Antonio in 1957. Costume design by Ronald Kolodzie, the late major fashion house designer and former St. Mary's University guest lecturer of interior design. Photo by Josh Huskin.

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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## *A defining moment for* **St. Mary's University**

*by Thomas M. Mengler, J.D., St. Mary's University President*

It is striking to hear the common threads in how our alumni talk about their own St. Mary's University experiences — faith, community, service, leadership, excellence, to name a few.

So, while each St. Mary's student follows a unique academic and personal path while here, the experience of attending St. Mary's is strongly informed by our most distinctive characteristic: We are a Catholic and Marianist university.

As a community, we recognize the power of this unique and defining characteristic of St. Mary's, and our collective obligation to ensure the University has the resources necessary to continue our mission well into the future.

For more than 165 years, our Marianist brothers and lay faculty and staff have ensured that the education our students receive is more than the sum of their classes, preparing graduates with generous spirits and humble hearts, who view their careers as vocational journeys — their opportunity

to become leaders in their professions and communities. You can turn the pages of this issue to read just a few of their stories.

One year ago, we announced the public portion of the \$130 million Defining Moment Comprehensive Campaign — the largest in our history, six times over — and the key to achieving our strategic vision of becoming, as a Catholic and Marianist University, one of the finest private universities in the Southwest.

Now, with three years still remaining in the campaign, I am proud that together we have raised \$120 million. This is our moment to ensure that St. Mary's University will remain relevant and rooted in the values and educational goals of the Marianists as we prepare men and women to lead purposeful lives grounded in faith.

Our vision for the future of St. Mary's University is within our grasp. ■



Photo by Josh Huskin



# CAMPUSNEWS

## U.S. News ranks St. Mary's second in West for quality, value

St. Mary's University was ranked second in the West region in the Best Value Schools rankings by *U.S. News & World Report*, which released the 2019 edition of its annual *Best Colleges* guide.

This category uses a calculation that takes into account the school's academic quality and several cost factors, which include the 2017-2018 net cost of attendance for a student receiving an average level of need-based financial aid. As *U.S. News* puts it, "The higher the quality of the program and the lower the cost, the better the deal."

"St. Mary's successfully strives each year to offer the highest quality education to our students of all backgrounds — one that will provide a lasting value throughout their careers and lives," said President Thomas M. Mengler, J.D. "These rankings provide further evidence of our commitment to making academic excellence accessible to tomorrow's leaders."

In the *Best Colleges* ranking, St. Mary's tied for 15th of 140 universities in the West for academic quality, especially student outcomes. The University has been included in the list of top-tier regional universities for 25 consecutive years.

This year, St. Mary's also tied for eighth among the Best Colleges for Veterans in the West, which includes schools that take part in federal initiatives to aid veterans and active-duty service members in funding their education. St. Mary's University is a Yellow

Ribbon School and opened a new Veterans Center in Fall 2017.

*U.S. News* also ranked the University's Engineering and Greehey School of Business undergraduate programs.

*Money Magazine* also recently ranked St. Mary's fifth in Texas in its Best Value Colleges ranking.

## University receives \$1M gift for Accounting scholarships

A \$1 million gift from an alumnus from Webb County, who wishes to remain anonymous, will establish an endowed scholarship in Accounting at St. Mary's University.

The gift will provide scholarship awards to undergraduate Accounting students in the Greehey School of Business who are preparing to enter this challenging and fast-growing profession.

"This generous gift from one of our esteemed alumni will propel the studies and careers of Accounting students for generations," said President Thomas M. Mengler, J.D. "Having endowed scholarships, such as this one, is integral to ensuring outstanding students have opportunities to experience their own defining moments at St. Mary's."

Funding will support scholarships for those who demonstrate financial need and meet academic qualifications, with preference given to students from Webb, Zapata and Jim Hogg counties.

## Robust incoming St. Mary's class marks academic gains

This fall, St. Mary's University welcomed 640 new freshmen — among the largest classes in University history and among the most academically gifted.

"Our mission is to offer students an opportunity to come, learn, discover their passion and go out and change the world," said Rosalind Alderman, Ph.D., Vice Provost for Enrollment Management. "Having strong classes back-to-back allows, not only for those students to have an excellent education, but also for the institution to continue to provide a really high-quality experience."

The academic qualifications of incoming freshmen have continued to trend upward. The average SAT score for incoming freshmen rose to 1168 in Fall 2018, which is a 3.5 percent increase since Fall 2015. The average GPA for incoming freshmen rose to 3.6 in Fall 2018, an increase of about 4.7 percent since Fall 2015. The number of students entering the Honors Program nearly doubled this fall.

## St. Mary's awarded \$405,000 to study cardiovascular disease

The National Institutes of Health have awarded St. Mary's University a research grant of \$405,000 to study the cells that can exacerbate the hardening of the arteries, commonly known as atherosclerosis.

Sponsored by the National Institute of General Medical Sciences, the grant will provide \$135,000 annually for three years and fund a project led by principal investigator Verónica Contreras-Shannon, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Biological Sciences. It will also allow her to offer more research opportunities to students, dedicate a significant amount of her time to the project, and work with a team of mentors in different disciplines.

"Cardiovascular disease risk disproportionately affects Hispanics, impacting the families and communities to which many of our students belong, both here at St. Mary's and at home," Contreras-Shannon said.

The grant stems from the Support of Competitive Research (SCORE) Program which seeks to build research capacity at universities that have not traditionally received research funding.

## Law Weekend and Reunion

Law alumni, save the date to join the St. Mary's University School of Law on **Friday, March 29, and March 30, 2019.**

This year's event will include the *St. Mary's Law Journal's* 50th Anniversary Dinner at **6:30 p.m., Saturday, March 30, 2019, in the Bill Greehey Arena.**

## St. Mary's recognized for student volunteer efforts

St. Mary's University's Office of Civic Engagement was recently recognized by Communities in Schools as its 2017-2018 College Partnership of the Year.

Communities in Schools' mission is to empower at-risk students to stay in school and provide them with education- and community-based resources. Each semester, the St. Mary's Office of Civic Engagement facilitates student volunteers who mentor students at Longfellow Middle School and Memorial High School, both near the University.

"We are fortunate to find in Communities in Schools a community partner committed to both the success and development of the middle and high school students served through the program and to the holistic, experiential education of our St. Mary's students," said Clare Acosta Matos, Director of Civic Engagement.

## San Antonio Business Journal honors business dean, alumnae

The San Antonio Business Journal announced the winners of its 2018 Women's Leadership Awards — a list that included Greehey School of Business Dean Tanuja Singh, D.B.A., and four St. Mary's University alumnae in different fields.

The Business Journal annually recognizes "women who are leaders in their fields and in our community, what many would call agents of positive change."

One-third of this year's 15 honorees, who were recognized at an August luncheon, have ties to St. Mary's. In addition to Singh, the honorees affiliated with St. Mary's include:

- Erika Gonzalez-Reyes, M.D. (B.S. '98), of South Texas Allergy and Asthma Medical Professionals
- Debra Guerrero (B.A. '88) of the NRP Group LLC
- Catherine Stone (J.D. '82) of Langley & Banack Inc., former Chief Justice of the Fourth Court of Appeals
- Margaret Vera, J.D. (B.A. '84), of Law Offices of Margaret M. Vera

## St. Mary's Accounting Professor receives outstanding educator award

Professor of Accounting Suzanne Cory, Ph.D., was recently named a recipient of the 2018 Texas Society of CPAs Outstanding Accounting Educator Award.

The statewide award honors Texans who have demonstrated excellence in teaching and distinguished themselves through active service to the accounting profession. Criteria for judging includes instructional innovation, student motivation, the pursuit of learning

opportunities for students, involvement in student and professional accounting organizations, and research accomplishments and publications.

Cory, who has published more than 25 peer-reviewed papers and presented at numerous regional, national and international conferences, has taught at St. Mary's University since 1991.

## Biologist, theologian discuss coexistence of faith and science

Biologist Kenneth R. Miller, Ph.D., led a St. Mary's University audience through a discussion of whether science and religion can coexist or whether the two approaches are destined to remain at odds.

Miller presented "Darwin, God and the Cosmos: Is Faith Still Relevant in a Scientific World?" as part of the MacTaggart Catholic Intellectual Tradition Lecture Series on Sept. 19.

John F. Haught, Distinguished Research Professor of Theology at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., was slated to continue this discussion on Nov. 7 with a lecture titled "Evolution and Faith: What is at Stake?"

This free, annual lecture series features men and women who have shaped the Catholic Intellectual Tradition, which is at the heart of the educational experience at St. Mary's. The theme for 2018's lectures is Faith and Science.

## Gorman Foundation President Schott to lead trustees

St. Mary's University welcomed Michael A. "Mickey" Schott (B.B.A. '68) as the new chairman of its Board of Trustees at a regular meeting in September.

Schott, a certified public accountant and president of the Gorman Foundation, officially began his term as chairman of the St. Mary's University Board of Trustees on June 1.

"I am honored to have been elected as chairman of the St. Mary's Board of Trustees. It provides an opportunity to give back to the Marianists, who have played such an important role in so many of our lives, and to work toward the success of our Defining Moment Comprehensive Campaign," Schott said. "We must continue to focus on our mission as a Catholic and Marianist University that helps form our students as well-qualified professionals and ethical leaders in their communities."

The University has also named a new chancellor, the Rev. Oscar Vasquez, S.M., who is the provincial of the Marianist

Province of the United States, and nine additional new trustees.

"These additions to our Board of Trustees will contribute to the momentum St. Mary's is experiencing," said President Thomas M. Mengler, J.D. "As we continue to expand a culture of academic excellence based on our Catholic and Marianist mission, the wisdom Mickey, Father Oscar and these leaders will bring to the University will leave a lasting impact."

The University reappointed Leticia Contreras (B.A. '89), executive vice president of Texas Security General Insurance Agency, as vice chairperson of the Board of Trustees and welcomes Christopher R. Martinez (B.B.A. '00), president of Central Electric Enterprises & Co., as a new vice chairperson.

Additional new trustees include:

- Brother Bernard Ploeger, S.M., assistant provincial, Marianist Province of the United States
- Paula Gold-Williams (B.B.A. '84), president and CEO, CPS Energy

- George Hernández Jr. (B.A. '74), president and CEO, University Health System
- Ellen Manzullo, M.D. (B.S. '82), deputy division head of Internal Medicine, M.D. Anderson Cancer Center
- Michael "Terry" Martin (B.B.A. '81), owner and president, Anodyne Wool, Inc.
- Gastón Sosa de la Torre (B.A. '92), chairman, Aktiva Capital SC
- Michael "Mike" Martinez (B.A. '85), corporate director of quality assurance, C.H. Guenther & Son, Inc.
- Brother Thomas "Tom" Giardino, S.M., assistant for special projects, Marianist Province of the United States
- Sister Laura Leming, F.M.I., Ph.D. (B.A. '79), Associate Professor, University of Dayton

## CEO of HOLT CAT kicked off Business Week 2018

The Greehey School of Business celebrated its 43rd Business Week in October with the theme “Future of Work.”

Opening Business Week was Peter John Holt, CEO and general manager of HOLT CAT, who delivered the La Quinta Keynote Lecture titled “Values Work.”

Thomas W. Horton, the former chairman and CEO of American Airlines who is now senior adviser at Warburg Pincus, was the Forum on Entrepreneurship Breakfast Series keynote speaker.

“The commitment to bring the real world into the classroom is a tradition in the Greehey School of Business,” said Tanuja Singh, D.B.A., Dean of the Greehey School of Business. “It has now grown to become a celebrated annual occasion with a focus on consequential experiential learning with extensive industry involvement.”

## St. Mary’s awarded \$69K for robotics camp scholarships

The Texas Workforce Commission selected St. Mary’s University as one of 13 universities and community colleges to receive a grant providing student scholarships for STEM summer camps.

The St. Mary’s award totaled \$69,515, which covers 80 scholarships for middle and high school students interested in attending the two-week Pre-Engineering Robotics and Java Summer Camp.

“This camp opens the door to the engineering and science field for many youths who would otherwise never have the opportunity to explore advanced topics in robotics, programming and operations research,” said camp director Wenbin Luo, Ph.D., Professor of Computer Engineering.

## ATHLETICSNEWS



### Coleman named new Athletics Director

St. Mary’s University named Robert Coleman the new Athletics Director in August.

Coleman, previously the Executive Director of Athletics and Special Assistant to the President at Whittier College in California, comes to St. Mary’s with 28 years of comprehensive athletics administrative experience with a student-athlete focus. His vision for Rattler Athletics includes building a values-driven culture.

“We will aspire to win conference and national championships,” Coleman said. “But we will also work to prepare our student-athletes for life after sports through academics, social responsibility and spiritual growth.”

### StM[UBER] golf-cart service a hit

St. Mary’s students can now ride to games from their rooms using StM[UBER].

Rattler Athletics launched the golf-cart shuttle service as part of a theme night surrounding the Men’s Soccer home opener in September. So popular, it has evolved into a service that is now available for nearly all home games — and has played a key role in attracting record student crowds to Sigma Beta Chi Varsity Soccer Field.

The tricked-out rides feature fun extras such as charging stations, the ability to sync tunes and spray misters to beat the heat.

Best of all? StM[UBER] rides are also available as redeemable prizes in the FANGcentives app prize store, as students can request on-campus rides to class, residence halls and Diamondback Café.

### Men’s Soccer nearly cracks top 10

St. Mary’s Men’s Soccer wrapped up one of its best seasons in recent memory, having earned its first-ever home playoff game as a member of the NCAA.

Ranked as high as No. 11 this fall, the Rattlers got off to a hot start with key victories over No. 8 Colorado School of Mines and St. Edward’s University. The latter marked the Rattlers’ first victory over St. Edward’s in seven years. St. Mary’s finished the season with a 10-5-3 record.

### Gonzalez earns more honors

All-American Emilio Gonzalez of Men’s Golf, a junior, earned back-to-back Heartland Conference Golfer of the Week honors to start the fall season.

Returning to the course where former Rattler Jamie Amoretti won the individual national championship in 2006, Gonzalez posted three impressive rounds at the NCAA DII National Preview, carding scores of 68, 69 and 69 to finish second on the individual leaderboard.



# Flocks for peace

## *Marianist brother spreads origami cranes*

by Amanda Bustos (B.A. '18)

Each day, Brother Brian Zampier, S.M., handcrafts an origami crane, decorated with colorful designs, and places it somewhere on the St. Mary's University campus to be discovered by someone as a gift.

After completing a 30-day challenge from the *Steal Like an Artist Journal*, an interactive journal published in 2015, Zampier was inspired to continue the challenge, commonly known as the Abz Crane Project, to promote world peace.

"I have possibly folded 1,000 origami cranes in my life. The plan is to give away at least one crane a day for 1,000 days," Zampier said.

Zampier has been a Marianist brother for 32 years and resides on campus in the Casa Maria Marianist Community. He has worked as an archivist for three years, transferring Marianist photographs and historical records from around the country to the National Marianist Archives building adjacent to St. Mary's. Zampier also has extensive experience as a graphic designer and artist, having worked as an artist's assistant for 10 years at the Marianist Press and at a publishing company in Utica, New York.

But he's been constructing paper cranes even longer — since he was in fifth grade.

"One year, I made 65 cranes with white parchment paper for our family Christmas tree," Zampier said. "The process of folding a crane can be very meditative and relaxing. I can remember it taking me quite a while to figure out the directions from a diagram in an origami book. Then one day, I figured it out."

The paper crane is symbolically given as a wish for peace. In Japan, some believe that folding 1,000 paper cranes will make one's wish come true.

Zampier's interest in creating origami cranes grew from reading the story of Sadako Sasaki, a Japanese girl who lived in Hiroshima when the atomic bomb was dropped there in 1945. In 1955, when Sasaki was 11 years old, she was diagnosed with leukemia, most likely an aftereffect of the bomb. While in a hospital, Sasaki began folding paper cranes until she died a year later, leaving behind a legacy of her pursuit for world peace.

Even though Zampier doesn't always know what happens to his crane creations, he plans to continue advocating for peace through his project.

He hopes the project will encourage students, faculty and staff at St. Mary's to create their own paper cranes and other artwork from paper they would normally throw away.

"My theory is if more people fold and give away origami cranes, everyone would be reminded of the need for world peace and we would stop wasting valuable time and money on war, fighting and gun violence," Zampier said. ■



Photo by Amanda Bustos (B.A. '18)

# Defying gravity

## *Engineer and former Air Force pilot sees the future in space*

by Alex Z. Salinas (B.A. '11)

In Washington, D.C., within the walls of the Federal Aviation Administration headquarters, Ravi Chaudhary, D.L.S. (M.S. '99), is tasked with a job as big as the sky.

As director of Advanced Programs and Innovation in the Office of Commercial Space Transportation at the FAA, Chaudhary is responsible for looking into the future of commercial space transportation and all that comes with it: conducting analysis, research and pushing forward creative concepts to enable the success of his industry — meanwhile ensuring the safety of the public and foreign policy interests of the United States.

And for Chaudhary, a man with a direct line to the president, not a day goes by during which the lessons he learned as an Industrial Engineering graduate student at St. Mary's aren't on his mind.

"I was blessed to have (Professor of Industrial Engineering) Rafael Moras invest heavily in my development and guide me through a challenging graduate engineering degree," Chaudhary said. "Over time, Dr. Moras became more than an academic adviser; he became a good friend and mentor."

Chaudhary said, in addition to learning the technical intricacies of engineering, Moras' "calm demeanor and high ethical principles set the standards of conduct I would follow as a pilot and leader — principles I apply today at the FAA."

### **FLIGHT DREAMS**

Growing up in the suburbs of Minneapolis as the son of immigrants, Chaudhary doesn't remember a time he didn't want to fly.

"People regularly commented on how courageous it was to pursue a career considered 'non-traditional' in the Asian-American community," he said. "Yet, in many ways, my choice pales in comparison to the courage of my parents, who chose to give up everything they knew, loved and that was familiar to them, to pursue the American dream."

Upon graduating from the Air Force Academy, one of his first assignments as an officer was to help launch Delta II rockets into space carrying the first GPS satellites.

When he landed in San Antonio, at what was then Kelly Air Force Base, Chaudhary grew

intrigued by the skill sets of some of his colleagues. He looked to further his education and heard about St. Mary's.

"Looking back, going to St. Mary's was one of the best decisions I could've made," he said.

His mentor would agree.

"Ravi is someone who just shines," Moras said. "He's well-spoken and eloquent, yes, but more importantly, he's authentic, he's a good person, and that gives us — a Catholic and Marianist University — reason to celebrate."

“ ————— ”  
**The experience taught me that true leaders ensure everyone has a voice.**

While at St. Mary's, Chaudhary was selected for a NASA scholarship to research on-orbit space damage and repair for the International Space Station — think the movie *Gravity*. Chaudhary's master thesis project involved developing materials that could withstand the extreme rigors of space to serve as patches in case of asteroid damage. At Johnson Space Center's Neutral Buoyancy Laboratory, he trained astronauts on repair techniques.

"Here I was, a graduate student at St. Mary's, at the bottom of a diving tank with the nation's top astronauts, and one of them turned to me and asked, 'What do you think we should do?'" Chaudhary said. "All I could think was, 'Dude, are you serious, you're the astronaut!' The experience taught me that true leaders ensure everyone has a voice."

### **SERVICE ORIENTATION**

Chaudhary joined the Air Force in the wake of the Space Shuttle Challenger disaster, and after graduating from St. Mary's in 1999, the country he was serving was soon swept into war.

"In the days after 9/11, the lessons from St. Mary's, both analytical and leadership-wise, served me well while optimizing combat mission efficiency, and even coordinating critical rescue operations in Iraq," Chaudhary said.

As director of personnel recovery, Chaudhary would often stay awake for two or three days straight, which he said taught him “that jobs related to service have to be devoid of personal pride and interest, especially when the safety of my colleagues, or the public, is at stake.”

Chaudhary’s military career lasted 21 years, with 760 of his more than 3,000 flight hours logged in combat. As a C-17 pilot, he conducted flight operations across the globe.

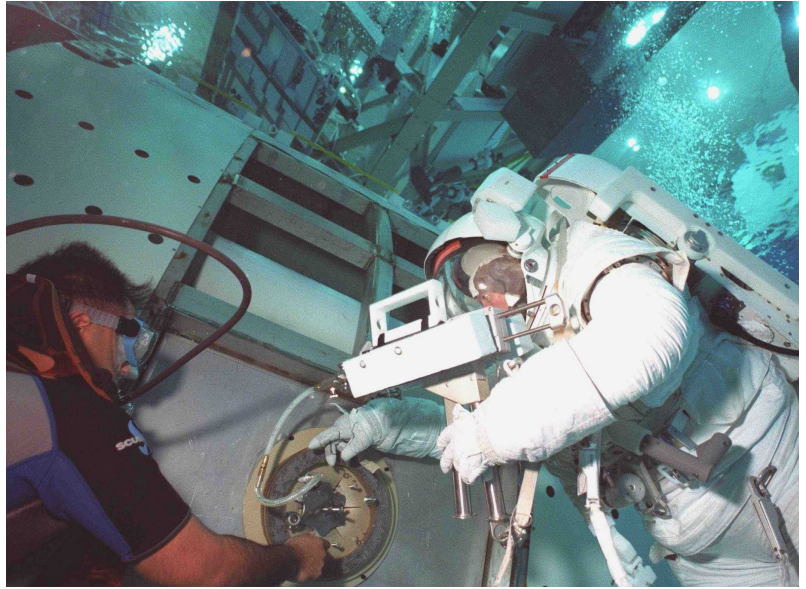
While serving at the Pentagon in 2011, Chaudhary, a practicing Hindu, was offered the chance to lead the establishment of new chaplaincy programs to support Asian-American faith traditions. After launching the programs, the White House called him to serve as a member of the President’s Advisory Commission on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI).

Chaudhary personally advised President Barack Obama on executive branch efforts to improve economic and community development, public and private sector collaboration, health, education and veteran support for the AAPI community.

Upon retiring from the military in 2015, Chaudhary was hired by the FAA as executive director for Regions and Center Operations, overseeing a \$254 million budget.

Now, in addition to safeguarding launch and re-entry of commercial flight activities, Chaudhary also manages the issuance of licenses to commercial space transportation companies like SpaceX, Blue Origin and Virgin Galactic.

“My colleagues at the FAA inspire me to no end,” he said. “Thanks to them, every day is a learning experience filled with excitement, new ideas and possibilities.” ■



▲ In a simulation at the Johnson Space Center’s Neutral Buoyancy Laboratory in Houston, Ravi Chaudhary trains an astronaut on repair techniques from asteroid damage. As a young officer in the U.S. Air Force, Chaudhary was selected for a NASA scholarship to research on-orbit space damage and repair for the International Space Station.

▲ Chaudhary in the National Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C.



# Career stretch

*International magazine writer becomes well-known yogi in China*



by Anndria Flores (B.A. '12, M.A. '16)

In the late '90s, Richard Baimbridge (B.A. '91) lived in New York City leading a life many young writers dream of, writing for magazines such as *Conde Nast Traveler*, *Wired*, *Maxim*, *GQ* and *Elle*.

While impressive to most, Baimbridge's success doesn't come as a surprise to his former mentor, Richard Pressman, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus of English and Communication Studies.

"He was a plugger," Pressman said. "Well, not at first. For many people — myself included — it takes time to develop, to make the leap from so-so producer to the world-beater Richard Baimbridge is today."

Before attending St. Mary's, Bambridge — a lifelong surfer — went to school in Southern California for his first year of college but spent far more time riding waves than in class.

"So I decided it was probably best to study in a less distracting environment," Baimbridge said.

He made a clean break from the California waves and followed his sister Lynn's (B.B.A. '84) footsteps to St. Mary's.

"One day, between his sophomore and junior years, Richard woke up," Pressman said. "He wanted to excel because his soul had awakened."

Baimbridge began building his portfolio before graduating, working as a freelance writer for weekly newspapers in San Antonio.

"Dr. Pressman was one of the very special people I can point to as someone who helped me recognize that I had talent and helped me believe in myself and take life more seriously," he said.

Upon graduating, Baimbridge landed a job with the San Antonio Light newspaper.

Then, in 1999, the Corpus Christi native and former editor of *The Rattler* took a writing assignment that more permanently planted him across the globe. At the time, he was already living in Beijing and writing.

Unlike his many adventures — backpacking solo across Mexico as a teenager, living in the jungles of Bali for a year, taking a one-way ticket to Europe and landing on his feet as a magazine writer in Prague — after arriving in China, Baimbridge never really left.

Because of his interest in martial arts and Buddhism, he left his job as a journalist and went deep into the mountains near Tibet. He lived in a small monastery for a year with no electricity or running water, practicing martial arts about eight hours a day and studying Buddhism.

"The 'shifu' (master) of the temple is like a father to me now — though we rarely speak since there's not even a telephone there," he said.

In the temple, Baimbridge said he built relationships with the monks and met a world-

champion martial artist from Israel. Together, they embarked upon a business venture in the cone-shaped mountains of Yangshuo.

"We opened China's first retreat center for yoga, meditation and martial arts," Baimbridge said. "At that time, yoga didn't really exist in China. But, along with everything else fashionable in the West, yoga soon became very popular in China."

According to yujia.com, a Chinese yoga industry news site, Baimbridge received his AcroYoga certification in 2009, becoming the first person to share the practice in China.

After selling his part of the business, he now lives in Wuxi, Jiangsu Province, and is one of a handful of Westerners who can teach yoga in fluent Chinese — a skill Baimbridge said requires deep knowledge of anatomy, yoga philosophy, Buddhism and the Sanskrit language.

"Even people who have university degrees in Chinese and English can't translate a course like that," he said. "It takes years of experience. So I found a very specialized niche."

“ ————— ”  
**There is really very little  
stopping you from *living*  
*your dreams*, other than  
fear and laziness.**

“ ————— ”  
The acclaimed yogi said he has witnessed China's evolution from poverty to wealth, which has also led to the loss of many old Chinese traditions.

"There is a real thirst for deeper meaning in China, as people start to realize that money and luxury cars, clothes, etc., still leave them feeling spiritually empty," he said. "I've been here for that whole evolution and transition, so I know exactly what they're experiencing on a very personal level."

He and his wife, Sara Pei, primarily work teaching monthlong teacher training programs to people who want to become yoga instructors. They also host workshops and an annual retreat in Indonesia.

"We take groups of Chinese people to beautiful places to do yoga, have fun and experience local culture, but we also let them reflect on their lives," he said.

"You don't have to live the life that is shoved in front of you — there is really very little stopping you from living your dreams, other than fear and laziness." ■

◀ Richard Baimbridge meditating in a temple in Beijing.





Photo by Nick Hagen

▲  
John Sieffert in his  
8,000-square-foot  
garage in Troy, Michigan

# Cruising life's highway

*Business alum cherishes car collection and lifetime friendships*

by Melanie Skaggs (M.A. '02)

You can hear the joy in John Sieffert's voice when he talks about his collection of '50s and '60s factory muscle cars, most of which are restored to concours quality — a standard far exceeding mint condition.

Such an impressive stable of horsepower, ranging from a 1957 Chevrolet Bel Air to a heart-pounding 1970 Ford Mustang Mach 1, would license bragging from most. But for Sieffert (B.B.A. '63), it's about enjoying the hobby and sharing a dozen amazing cars with other passionate collectors.

Seeking out like-minded enthusiasts reflects the emphasis on friendship that has propelled Sieffert down life's highway — from the buddies who brought him to study at St. Mary's University to the friends who steered him into the business world.

Relationships have been and continue to be a driving factor in Sieffert's life. This is especially evident with his wife, Peggy Sieffert, who shares his love of collecting cars and maintaining their pristine show condition.

The Siefferts participate in cruise-in nights — social gatherings and information swaps for car collectors — during the week and larger car shows on weekends.

"Often, we will each take a car," John Sieffert said. "It's especially fun when we show up in our matching '67 Pontiac GTOs — his and hers. I drive the convertible and Peggy, the hardtop, because she doesn't want to wear her babushka."

The Siefferts have spent the last two decades accumulating 12 show-stopping cars, but the road leading to this has been even longer.

In 1959, Sieffert's family moved from Kansas City, Missouri, to Detroit because of his father's job in the automotive industry. Sieffert considered going to college in Michigan, but friends from Kansas City who enrolled at St. Mary's encouraged him to come to San Antonio.

"St. Mary's was the right place for me," Sieffert said.

Taking full advantage of the college experience, he studied, worked part time at the bookstore,

joined the Sigma Beta Chi fraternity and enjoyed watching basketball and baseball, making lifelong friends along the way.

Sieffert returned to Detroit after graduating from St. Mary's and was accepted into a graduate training program in Production Control and Purchasing at Ford Motor Company. After four years, he decided to change direction and pursue other opportunities in industrial sales.

In 1967, a casual conversation with two friends — Jack Bruce, an insurance agent, and Chuck Chupick, a machine operator — altered the course of Sieffert's then-fledgling career.

“*It has been a great ride since leaving St. Mary's, but not without a few bumps and potholes along the way.*”

After tossing around the idea of starting their own machine company, Sieffert, Chupick and Bruce decided to dive into business. The trio formed CBS Boring & Machine Company Inc., drawing the name from the first letter of their last names.

“We had one boring machine in a 1,500-square-foot rented space, hardly any capital and no customers,” Sieffert said.

Despite the rough road ahead, they were all hungry to succeed.

After a few struggling years as a small business, CBS Boring & Machine Company Inc. overcame many of its challenges — “increasing sales with long-term contracts from large companies,

acquiring and financing new equipment, expanding a highly skilled workforce and developing a reputation for successfully handling multi-million-dollar contracts,” Sieffert said. The company eventually began machining engines and other large parts for heavy-equipment makers, such as Caterpillar, General Motors and even for U.S. military tanks.

“Since the three of us were single, we were able to devote all our time and energy into getting the company off the ground,” Sieffert said.

This was perfect for him since he did not want to get married until he turned 40. As it turned out, Sieffert married the love of his life, Peggy, on Oct. 21, 1978 — one day after his 40th birthday.

CBS Boring & Machine Company Inc. continued to grow and, after 40 years, the trio sold the business to a group of company managers, who have ensured the business continues to thrive.

“It has been a great ride since leaving St. Mary's, but not without a few bumps and potholes along the way,” Sieffert said. “I never had time for any significant hobbies. But in 1998, I bought my first classic — a beautiful, black 1957 Chevy Bel Air. I had no intentions of ever having more than this one car.”

Eleven cars later, Sieffert relishes his hobby, particularly each car's history.

“Some of the cars were purchased at Barrett-Jackson and Mecum auctions around the country, each with its own unique story. We show them in a competitive environment during the year, at indoor car shows throughout the Midwest and have accumulated numerous trophies and awards,” he said.

“We hope, as we continue to travel through retirement, all the lights are green so we can put the pedal to the metal and enjoy our hobby of classic cars until we run out of gas,” he said. ■

John and Peggy Sieffert with their awards at a car show



▲ Sieffert's stunning red 1957 Chevrolet Bel Air



Courtesy photos



Photo by Josh Huskin

# Silent *No Longer*

**Drama professor resurrects  
silent film star through research**

by Anndria Flores (B.A. '12, M.A. '16)

## ACT I, SCENE I: THE QUESTION OF THE FILM STAR

“Do you know about Pola Negri?”

When the Rev. J. Willis Langlinais, S.M., asked the question of Associate Professor of Drama Bernadette Hamilton-Brady in 1994, the answer was an emphatic and unsurprising “no.” She had yet to meet the dark-haired, sly-eyed beauty who rose to fame as a film star during the silent and golden eras.

She recalled Langlinais saying, “You need to talk to Father Louis Reile about her because she was this huge Hollywood star and was good friends with him.”

Intrigued by the tip to speak with Reile and find Negri’s items and films in the St. Mary’s University archives, Hamilton-Brady wanted to investigate. But she knew she’d need time to commit to researching Negri’s life.

*Continued on next page*



► Bernadette Hamilton-Brady soaks in the Menger Hotel atmosphere next to the key to the City of Lipno, Poland, awarded to her by the mayor of Lipno after she presented research on Pola Negri.

◀ Negri, 1927 (Courtesy of the Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Online Catalog.)



Courtesy photos



▲ Father Louis Reile, S.M., left, introduces Negri, seated right, to St. Mary's students at an annual Hemisfilm event in 1972.

▼ Reile holds the 1968 Hemisfilm Award.

Continued from Page 15

## ACT I, SCENE 2: BEAUTY AND MYSTERY

When Langlainais referred to Negri as a huge Hollywood star, he wasn't exaggerating.

In the early 1920s, Negri entered the United States film arena at the peak of her European film career after starring in the 1919 film *Madame Du Barry*. The Polish actress captivated people with her beauty, mystery, fashion-forward looks and love affairs — making headlines alongside actors Charlie Chaplin and the love of her life, Rudolph Valentino. She starred in films such as *The Cheat* (1923), *Men* (1924), *Forbidden Paradise* (1924) and *Hotel Imperial* (1927).

According to the *New York Times*, just before the crash of 1929, Negri's personal fortune was estimated at \$5 million, a large share of which she would later lose through bad investments by second husband, Georgian prince Serge Mdivani, whom she divorced.

Negri was later cast in her first talkie, *A Woman Commands* (1932), which didn't fare well for her financially. However, Negri's vocals in the film attracted a well-paying, cross-country vaudeville gig. At the end of her tour, an exhausted Negri joined fellow film actress Marion Davies at William Randolph Hearst's estate in California. While there, Negri received word of an opportunity to make a film in Berlin titled *Mazurka* (1935).

But her work in Germany was cut short by the onset of World War II, leading her back to the U.S. where she met her good friend, former radio star Margaret West — with whom she lived from 1948 to 1963.

In April of 1957, West brought Negri to San Antonio to visit her family. It was Negri's first time in the city, and she was enchanted by Fiesta.

In Negri's autobiography, *Memoirs of a Star*, she recounted the last day of her visit as she stood on her bedroom balcony at the Menger Hotel viewing the Fiesta Flambeau Parade: "It's all been such heaven. You know, someday, I wouldn't mind living here."

Two years later, after a dull Hollywood party, the two friends were ready for a change of scene and agreed to leave their high-profile Bel Air neighborhood in California for San Antonio.

In her autobiography, Negri referred to her new neighborhood as, "the fashionable suburb of Olmos Park ... that in many ways resembles Beverly Hills."

## ACT 2, SCENE I: REDISCOVERING A STAR

In 1999, while preparing a sabbatical research proposal, Hamilton-Brady, M.F.A., Chair of the St. Mary's University Drama Department, found herself in the University archives Langlainais mentioned, conducting preliminary research and uncovering original film reels, personal correspondence and other items which belonged to Negri.

"I was so intrigued by her life," Hamilton-Brady said. "I also had several connections with her — being Polish, Catholic, our dance backgrounds and, of course, theater."

She also interviewed Reile (B.A. '49) twice to gain a better understanding of Negri's essence. Reile, who passed away in 2002, was Negri's friend and confidant for nearly 20 years — from their introduction just prior to the Hemisfilm International Festival and World's Fair in 1968 until the star's death in 1987.

"She was so successful in her career, but was very unlucky in love," said Hamilton-Brady, whose sabbatical research focused on Negri's life and romances.

Hamilton-Brady culminated her research in 2003 by writing and starring in a one-woman production at St. Mary's titled, *His Polita*. Hamilton-Brady recreated events from Negri's life documented in her autobiography, personal correspondence and documents in the University archives. The performance even drew Negri's lawyer and executor to attend.

Hamilton-Brady dedicated the proceeds from her one-woman show to a St. Mary's scholarship fund

that the generous star had established in her will for St. Mary's students in any field of study. Negri also willed St. Mary's 30 percent of the proceeds from the sale of film rights to her autobiography.

## ACT 2, SCENE 2: A KID IN THE ARCHIVAL CANDY STORE

Last spring, Hamilton-Brady found herself dusting off old research notes to present at the Filmoteka Narodowa-Institut Audiowizualny (FINA) International Conference in Warsaw, Poland, which focused on Negri's private persona.

Her presentation shed light on Negri's life in San Antonio, which is largely unknown in Europe. Through her research, Hamilton-Brady learned of Negri's love for San Antonio's culture, especially its theater performances and symphony.

Hamilton-Brady's presentation in Warsaw was followed by another in Lipno, Poland — Negri's birthplace — at the "Pola i inni" Film Festival. While preparing, Hamilton-Brady found herself back in the University archives making a new discovery.

"I found this little piece of paper that mentioned an unpublished biography written by Father Louis Reile on Pola Negri."

A colleague encouraged her to visit the National Archives of the Marianist Province of the United States, which were relocated to St. Mary's University in 2014.

In the archives, Hamilton-Brady resurrected the unpublished biography titled, *The Lady I Loved*, in which Reile shared 151 pages on Negri's life. Over the course of their 20-year friendship, Negri grew to trust Reile to write her biography.

"I was like a kid in a candy store," Hamilton-Brady said of the find.

Among his personal and professional documents, Reile's archived possessions shed light on his passion for cinema. A pioneer of his time, Reile created and served as the director of the Hemisfilm International Festival and created an impressive 11 cinema courses at St. Mary's.

“  
**We have the opportunity to be the beacon for (theatrical) activity around this area in San Antonio.**  
 ”

In 1968, San Antonio became the official site of the World's Fair and celebrated the 250th anniversary of the City's founding, which Reile tied to Hemisfilm, sponsored by St. Mary's University.

Negri's appearance as an official Hemisfilm "Hemi Award" recipient made headlines.

In an article from 1968 in the San Antonio Light newspaper, Glenn F. Tucker wrote, "The biggest news of the week, perhaps of the year as far as I'm concerned, was the announcement that the great Pola Negri would come out of seclusion this year in San Antonio."

"It took a priest to do it, though, herein lies the hidden beauty of it," Tucker continued. "Except for a brief shot in Walt Disney's science-fiction film, *The Moon-Spinners* four years ago, Miss Negri, who has resided in our city for some years, was virtually a recluse for nigh onto 40 years, practically since the death of Valentino."

Negri was honored to receive the Hemi Award; one she remarkably didn't turn down in 1968 when Reile met Negri for the first time and asked her to be recognized as the greatest star of the silent film era.

In her autobiography, Negri references the receipt of the Hemi Award and the German Film Prize, the highest and most esteemed award in the German film industry, stating, "There were two awards given late in my life by the two countries in which I had achieved the greatest part of my fulfillment and celebration as an artist. How fortunate I considered myself that they both still remembered and acknowledged my contribution."

## ACT 2, SCENE 3: STAR'S RESEARCH DRAWS SPOTLIGHT

When Hamilton-Brady arrived in Lipno, prepared with new findings, her visit attracted the media spotlight. Not only was her presentation televised, but she also attended interviews and received gifts — even the key to the city from Lipno's mayor.

"It was magical," she said.

Hamilton-Brady said the gesture also served as an invitation for both San Antonio and Lipno, which share the same patron saint, Saint Anthony, to connect.

As she finalizes her research this year by penning an essay on her presentations abroad, Hamilton-Brady strives to keep the arts alive, as she has for the past 30 years, by teaching future generations of theater students.

"We have the opportunity to be the beacon for (theatrical) activity around this area in San Antonio," said Hamilton-Brady — just as Reile and Negri and the star's many fans would have wanted. ■

**From left:** 1964 newspaper clipping belonging to Reile advertising Negri's comeback performance in *The Moon-Spinners* (1964), motion picture poster for *The Cheat* (1923), 2003 poster advertising Hamilton-Brady's one-woman production, *His Polita*.



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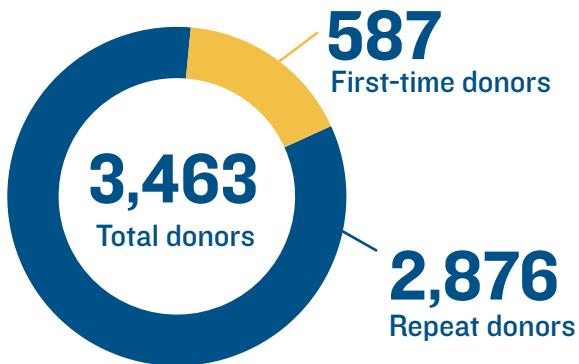
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## Homegrown generosity

by Nikki Harris

Growing up on the West Side of San Antonio, Amelia “Amy” Nieto (B.B.A. ’89, M.P.A. ’97) remembers summer evenings riding her bike from her childhood home on Marquette Street to the St. Mary’s University campus, waving to Brother William J. Hamm, S.M., on his nightly runs.

“St. Mary’s was my backyard,” Nieto said.

Her parents encouraged a Catholic education, enrolling Nieto in Holy Rosary School, where she first met Sister Gretchen Trautman, F.M.I., her former kindergarten teacher, current provincial of the Marianist Sisters and friend to this day.

During her undergraduate years at St. Mary’s, Nieto participated in volunteer projects, but her love of service began many years before, inspired by her father, a civil servant who would donate to schools and organizations while visiting Panama, Mexico and elsewhere.

“It ignited something in me,” she said.

Nieto felt empowered to give back. She began a career in nonprofits and fundraising with positions at the American Heart Association and San Fernando Cathedral.

Nieto’s service-oriented goals eventually led her just down the street from St. Mary’s, to the Archdiocese of San Antonio, and then back to St. Mary’s. While working on her Master of Public Administration, Nieto began to understand how important the Marianist Charism was to her personal and professional goals.

After graduation, Nieto made a habit of donating each month to support scholarships. Seeing the campus grow before her eyes inspired Nieto to give back. She believes even the smallest contribution, whether it be “your time, talent or treasure,” greatly benefits students.

“Look at what the University has enabled you to do,” Nieto said. “See what has inspired you and give to that. It’s easier to give than you think.” ■