



ST. MARY'S
UNIVERSITY

Digital Commons at St. Mary's University

Gold & Blue

Gold and Blue

Spring 2005

Gold & Blue, Spring 2005

St. Mary's University- San Antonio, Texas

Follow this and additional works at: <https://commons.stmarytx.edu/goldblue>

Recommended Citation

St. Mary's University- San Antonio, Texas, "Gold & Blue, Spring 2005" (2005). *Gold & Blue*. 73.
<https://commons.stmarytx.edu/goldblue/73>

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Gold and Blue at Digital Commons at St. Mary's University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Gold & Blue by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons at St. Mary's University. For more information, please contact egoode@stmarytx.edu, sfowler@stmarytx.edu.

St. Mary's Gains National Recognition for Graduation Rates

ST. MARY'S

Gold & Blue

The End of an Era

PRESIDENT

Charles L. Cotrell, Ph.D.
(B.A. '62, M.A. '64)

UNIVERSITY ADVANCEMENT

VICE PRESIDENT

Thomas B. Galvin
(M.P.A. '04)

CHIEF OF STAFF
AND COMMUNICATIONS

Dianne Pipes

EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Candace J. Kuebker (B.A. '78)

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Anastasia Cisneros-Lunsford
(B.A. '92)
Rob Leibold
(M.A. '03)

PUBLICATIONS DIRECTOR

Steve Weed

PHOTOGRAPHY

Melanie Rush Davis
Andy Hill
Tommy Hultgren
Sara Peete

CONTRIBUTORS

Pat Abernathy
Tim Bowman, Web Director
Will Elliott (B.A. '93)
and Karen Persyn,
Advancement Services
Tai Ingram, Student Intern
Stacy Maloney

Gold & Blue is produced for alumni
and friends three times a year by the
University Communications staff.

Contents © 2005 by St. Mary's
University. All rights reserved.

ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY



One Camino Santa Maria
San Antonio, Texas 78228-8575
www.stmarytx.edu

**Personal Attention.
Powerful Programs.**

CONTENTS



2

Outstanding Teachers Affect Student Achievement

by Charles L. Cotrell, Ph.D., President

3

News from Around the Grove

8

A Legacy of Civic Engagement

St. Mary's Role in the Civil Rights Movement (1954–1975)

by Patricia Mejia

10

St. Mary's Nationally Recognized for High Graduation Rates Quality Teaching, Involved Students Yield Greater Success

12

The End of An Era

St. Mary's Celebrates Meyer's Career

by Candace Kuebker and Pat Abernathy

14

Cheerio from London

Travelogue of the Writer's Adventures Abroad

by Francisco Vara-Orta

16

Benjamin F. Biaggini

Friends Honor Lessons Kept for a Lifetime

by Melissa Valek

18

Class Notes and Notables

On the Covers

On the front cover, one of the many poignant moments in Buddy Meyer's 27 years as St. Mary's head basketball coach was captured at the conclusion of the Rattlers' successful weeklong pursuit of the 1989 NAIA National Championship, when Meyer tearfully hugged senior post Zachary Lawson.

On the back cover, Memorial Plaza sits between St. Louis and Chaminade halls, and honors former St. Mary's students and graduates who lost their lives in World War II, and the Korean and Vietnam wars.

From the Editor

Throughout St. Mary's history, there have been events, people and eras that have shaped the University we know today.

Beginning in the 1950s, St. Mary's students and their professors became intensely involved in the emerging civil rights movement. Their commitment during that era to social justice was carried through the sometimes turbulent 1960s and 1970s, and has formed the cornerstone of modern students' dedication to civic engagement and service.

You'll read about the roots of St. Mary's passion for student engagement, the influence of which is recognized in today's students. Results of the National Survey of Student Engagement reinforce our belief that involved students are successful students.

That premise is confirmed by The Education Trust, which praises St. Mary's for its graduation rate among all of its students and acknowledges that engagement plays an important role.

In the early 1960s, the Buddy Era began at St. Mary's. Herman A. Meyer Jr., "Buddy" to all who know him, enrolled at St. Mary's in 1961. His more than 40-year ride as player, teacher, mentor, athletics director and head coach will end when he retires in May. Buddy is a St. Mary's and San Antonio icon, and we will miss him.

Before World War II a young man attended St. Mary's to study mathematics. The lessons he learned from the Marianists while a student here launched him into a life of leadership that has resulted in the Benjamin F. Biaggini Endowed Chair at St. Mary's University.

Current students are exposed to many more opportunities than their predecessors. Study abroad programs were introduced at St. Mary's 15 years ago, and you'll get a firsthand look at one student's experience. And, three of our four Class Notables give you a glimpse of the quality and diversity of our current students. They and their peers, and the events of their generation, are forming another chapter in St. Mary's history.

—Candace Kuebker

Outstanding Teachers Affect Student Achievement

by Charles L. Cotrell, Ph.D., President

St. Mary's University's graduation rates are a testament to student achievement and our commitment to the enduring Marianist mission of academic excellence. It is my pleasure to announce that the University has garnered national recognition for high graduation rates from The Education Trust, a nonprofit research and advocacy organization based in Washington, D.C., that recently cited St. Mary's as a national model of success.

What makes this national recognition significant is how St. Mary's compares to other public and private colleges and universities in Texas. Among these schools, St. Mary's has the 10th highest graduation rate, but when looking at the various criteria among the top 10 institutions in the state, the fact is that

It is my pleasure to announce that the University has garnered national recognition for high graduation rates from The Education Trust

St. Mary's is the only majority minority institution, and it succeeds with far fewer financial resources.

The Education Trust study particularly focused on St. Mary's continued success in graduating minority students at the same rate as non-minority students. Surpassing the rates of other peer schools and Hispanic Serving Institutions, St. Mary's has an overall graduation rate of 63.3 percent (see story on page 10).

Foremost among our responsibilities at St. Mary's is to ensure that our students succeed. Challenging our students academically, focusing on quality teaching, as well as



involving them in service learning activities are chief among the reasons why St. Mary's students graduate on time.

How St. Mary's does its job

For 153 years, the Marianist legacy of scholarship, service and community has served the University well. We continue to connect these traditions with a culture of service and engagement on campus and in the larger community.

We know that student success involves much more than classroom lectures, tests and grades. Reports from The Education Trust and the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) connect student success, including higher graduation rates, with social and academic engagement. This is what St. Mary's does best.

From providing students with personal attention and quality teaching to linking them globally with technology and study abroad programs, from building homes for the poor to feeding the homeless, from registering area residents to vote to mentoring high school students at risk of dropping out, the University community is called to direct what is learned in the classroom as a response

to public service.

St. Mary's offers a wide variety of service-learning courses, opportunities and programs to educate engaged and responsible students. This kind of support not only encourages students to finish college, but also helps students make a difference in the community after they graduate.

Challenges ahead

Student success also hinges on other factors—accessibility and affordability. State-financed support like the Tuition Equalization Grant (TEG) continues to impact the lives of students who seek an affordable education at a private institution in Texas.

In terms of enrollment and graduating students on time, private institutions meet the public need as well, saving the state millions of dollars. The key to those savings is the TEG, which was established to help close the tuition gap between state-supported schools and schools like St. Mary's.

The purpose of the TEG is two-fold. It provides students access. It also is a tool that leads to success, to graduate on time. And higher graduation rates are what make independent institutions like St. Mary's attractive and distinctive to prospective students; however, further cuts to TEG funds will thwart the "closing the gaps" effort, and block educational opportunities. So, to maintain current funding of the TEG program, the St. Mary's community and other independent colleges and universities across the state are working hard, encouraging legislators to act in support of the grant program.

To secure the future of all our students and the generations to come, I pray that state representatives and senators will accept our challenge, which is nothing less than a successful future for our state. ■

NEWS

FROM AROUND THE GROVE



■ Short Subjects

Alumni making a difference in TEG funding

Last October St. Mary's alumni residing in Texas were invited to contact their legislators to seek support for the Tuition Equalization Grant (TEG) program. The last Legislature cut the grant for Texas residents attending one of the state's 40 private colleges and universities by more than 14 percent.

As the second largest TEG recipient in Texas, cuts to the program resulted in a \$1.5 million loss of funds for St. Mary's students over a two-year period.

Alumni have responded to our appeal in great numbers. Unique visits to the St. Mary's University TEG Web site, www.stmarytx.edu/teg, have surpassed 1,500 and of those contacts, there have been more than 1,000 downloads of sample and printable letters, and fact sheets about the TEG.

University community leads efforts for tsunami relief

The St. Mary's community, along with other area colleges and universities, joined together to make donations as part of the worldwide relief efforts for the victims of the Dec. 26 tsunami disaster in Southern Asia.

Cash contributions exceeding \$3,000 were collected around the campus and presented at a Sunday Mass in Our Lady of Guadalupe Chapel. Humanitarian relief efforts support St. Mary's mission as a Catholic and Marianist institution.

'Eyes Wide Open' on Campus

Nearly 1,500 visitors and volunteers attended "Eyes Wide Open: An Exhibition on the Human Cost of the Iraq War" at St. Mary's in February. The exhibit, sponsored by the American Friends Service Committee, displayed some 1,500 pairs of boots honoring each U.S. military casualty in Iraq since 2003 at Chaminade Field, along with 1,000 pairs of shoes representing a portion of the Iraqi civilian deaths in the conflict. The exhibition provided a reflective space to consider each life lost in the Iraq War.



Students Lobby for TEG

St. Mary's students traveled to the State Capitol in February where they met with legislators and their staffs to discuss the importance of their continued support of the TEG. From left, beginning in the front row, are Myra Salinas, Carla Aguilar, State Representative Carlos Uresti (B.A. '85, J.D. '92), Sally Pretorius, Carlos Cuellar, Arthur Bryan II, Evita Ayala, Selena San Miguel, Valeree Villanueva, David Peña, Monica Morales, Rocio De Los Santos, Jesus Garza, Vanessa Cobarrubias, Lydia Endel and Alan Perez.

New alumni directory is in the works

St. Mary's is partnering with Harris Publishing to produce the 2005 Alumni Directory, an exciting and invaluable resource that will include personal, academic and business information about your classmates. Don't miss your opportunity to be part of this important project. If you haven't completed your directory questionnaire, take a few minutes to update your information—and be sure your friends will know what's happening with you.

Law Journal is third most cited by courts

St. Mary's Law Journal ranks third among legal periodicals most frequently cited in state and federal court cases from 1997 to 2004, according to a survey released by Washington and Lee University.

This is the third straight year the journal has been ranked in the top 10 by the survey. Now in its 36th year of publication, the St. Mary's Law Journal improved from last year's survey when it was the fourth most cited legal periodical. It ranked 10th in 2002.

The St. Mary's Law Journal was cited 136 times by courts throughout the country. That number was surpassed only by the Harvard Law Review and the Columbia Law Review.

Service marks Mary monument 50th anniversary

A special prayer service Dec. 8 at the fountain and monument of the Virgin Mary in front of the main entrance to St. Mary's commemorated the 50th anniversary of the dedication of the monument and the Feast of the Immaculate Conception.

The monument and fountain are one of the highlights of the Gateway to Historic St. Mary's University beautification project.

Debate Watch engages students

Last fall, some 650 students gathered on campus to watch the three presidential debates and to scrutinize the political communications process.

Students completed a pre-debate survey and a post-debate survey, which were sent to the Commission on Presidential Debates, the official sponsor of the national Debate Watch program since 1996.

After the debates, students also participated in an Internet-based discussion with students at sister Marianist universities, Chaminade University in Honolulu and the University of Dayton.

International Education Week celebrates Neruda

The theme of International Education Week was "International Understanding through Literature," and honored the centennial of the birth of Chilean Poet Pablo Neruda, who won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1970.

The symposium was co-sponsored by Universidad de Valparaiso, Chile; Instituto de Mexico—Hemisfair Plaza,

San Antonio; and St. Mary's University. The weeklong schedule of activities included cultural events, concerts, documentary films, literary presentations, and art and photo exhibits, all dedicated to Neruda.

PPC spring program targets sexual dialogue

Sex and gender color our daily interactions with others, so the President's Peace Commission's bi-annual program of lectures, panel discussions and presentations focused on sexual dialogue.

Healthy dialogue about sex and sexual issues helps one understand how another views the world we share, which is crucial to creating peace. The PPC programs annually attract hundreds of students, and members of the faculty and staff.



Paul Bonin-Rodriguez (M.A. '91), a nationally recognized artist, writer and performer, received the Art of Peace Award from the President's Peace Commission in March.

■ Newsmakers

Trustees recognized for outstanding leadership

St. Mary's trustee Bill Greehey (B.B.A. '60), chairman of the board and CEO of Valero Energy Corp., was awarded the San Antonio Chamber of Commerce Quarterly Distinguished Leader Award.

Trustee Nancy Brown Loeffler, and her husband, the Hon. Tom Loeffler, were honored with the naming of the Loeffler Atrium at The University of



Justice Wainwright Leads Discussion

The St. Mary's University Black Student Union sponsored a "Coffee and Politics" discussion Feb. 28 featuring Texas Supreme Court Justice Dale Wainwright. The event was part of the Black History Month campus celebration that focused on "Who Are We in the Year 2005?"

Wainwright, who has a long history of public service, was elected to the Supreme Court of Texas in 2002 after serving as presiding judge of the 334th Civil District Court in Harris County.

Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio's new Children's Cancer Research Institute. Nancy also was recognized for her advocacy of volunteerism and community service by Texas Lutheran University's Excellence in Leadership award.

Board of Trustees secretary Maj. Gen. Alfred Valenzuela received the 2004 Albert Peña Lifetime Achievement Award from the Mexican American Unity Council. The award recognizes those whose tenacious spirit works tirelessly to improve the lives of the Hispanic community.

Calling all hoarders

Brother Robert Wood, S.M., curator of Special Collections and University Archives at the Louis J. Blume Library, is looking for lost treasures.

The collection of *The Rattler* student newspaper is complete from 1924 to present, except for the year 1943-44. World War II was in full swing, but evidence indicates *The Rattler* was published. Yet, there are no copies anywhere of any of the issues.

Alumni, or their descendants, take a moment to check your attic or basement. Donations to the archives of that year's issues are being sought, or copies of originals can be made to complete the collection. If you can help, contact Brother Wood at (210) 431-2126, or e-mail rwood@stmarytx.edu.



Rifkin Shares a 'Dream'

Jeremy Rifkin, founder and president of The Foundation on Economic Trends in Washington, D.C., shared "The European Dream: A

New Vision for a Globalizing Society," to open the 2005 Lin Great Speakers Series. Rifkin spoke about the differences between the American and European dreams, and why the European way of life has begun to eclipse the American way.



Couple nets International Business Leader award

The Center for Global Business Studies at the School of Business and Administration announced the recipients of the 2004 International Business Leader Award, which honors an international business leader in the San Antonio area that has been an instrumental force in expanding international focus.

The honorees were Jerry and Kathy Gore, president/CEO and executive vice president of Gore Designs Completions Ltd., a leading supplier of custom aircraft interiors. The San Antonio-based company performs design, engineering, manufacturing and installation of interior components for customers worldwide.

Two re-join board of trustees

The St. Mary's University Board of Trustees added two members in November. Rosemary Kowalski, San Antonio's premier full-service caterer and Vincent L.Y. Lin, Ph.D. (B.S. '66, M.A. '68), chief financial officer of Linbro, a wholesale importer of food products based in San Rafael, Calif., both served previously as University trustees.

Kowalski, a distinguished businesswoman who is well-known for her philanthropic efforts in San Antonio, has been creating memorable events since 1946, when she and husband Henry bought a small diner serving mostly students from nearby St. Mary's. HemisFair '68 put Catering by Rosemary indelibly on the local entertainment map. Her son, Greg, now owns the company, The RK Group.

Lin, the son of a Taiwanese businessman, is the co-founder, along with his brother George, of Linbro

Inc., where he serves as the chief financial officer.

In 1990, with his mother, Chang Le-Chiao Lin, and family, Lin established the Lin Great Speakers Series at St. Mary's in honor of his late father, Shu-Chi Lin. A dual graduate of St. Mary's, Vincent played a key role in establishing the Taiwan Alumni Scholarship Fund.

He also taught economics at St. Mary's from 1973 to 1977 before Linbro was founded in 1978.

Marian award honors Cigarroa

Former St. Mary's trustee Francisco G. Cigarroa, M.D., president of The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio, received the



Marian Health Care award at an on-campus banquet Feb. 25.

Cigarroa, a nationally renowned pediatric and transplant surgeon, received the Marian Health Care Medallion for his outstanding record as a health care professional, making a substantial contribution to his field and his unselfish dedication to the health care of the community.

All proceeds from the banquet supported the Marian Health Care Scholarship Endowment at St. Mary's.

Marianist Heritage and Distinguished Faculty awards announced

During a Eucharistic celebration on Jan. 20, Larry Hufford, Ph.D., professor of political science and international relations, and Kurt Weber, Ph.D., staff psychologist at the University's Counseling and Testing Center, were recognized with the Marianist Heritage Award for their dedication and faithfulness to the Marianist charism, and in supporting and promoting the Catholic and Marianist education mission and tradition at St. Mary's.



Recognized during the Faculty Appreciation and Awards Dinner for outstanding teaching and community service were, from left, Steve Neiheisel, Dan Higgins, Michele Trankina, Margaret Langford, Jose Cimadevilla and Lee Lytton. Gerry Poyo is not pictured.

Recipients of this year's Marianist Heritage Student Leadership Award were seniors Luis R. Guerra and Fred Esteban Hemphill. The Carl Fitzgerald Memorial Scholarship was awarded to juniors Meagan Brorman and Henry Van de Putte III.

Faculty members honored by the St. Mary's Alumni Association in January at the 2005 Faculty Appreciation and Awards Dinner were:

Margaret Langford, Ph.D., management, School of Business and Administration; Gerald Poyo, Ph.D., history, and Steve Neiheisel, Ph.D., political science, School of Humanities and Social Sciences; Jose M. Cimadevilla, Ph.D., biological sciences, School of Science, Engineering and Technology; Dan Higgins, Ph.D., education, Graduate School; and Lee Lytton, law, School of Law. Michele Trankina, Ph.D., professor of biology, received the President's Community Service Award.



Kurt Weber, left, and Larry Hufford shared the honor of being named this year's recipients of the Marianist Heritage Award.



Greehey Accepts Chair

St. Mary's Board of Trustees Chairman Jack Biegler (left) and University President Charles L. Cotrell, Ph.D., present Bill Greehey, chairman and CEO of Valero Energy Corp., with a custom-made chair in honor of the Bill Greehey Chair for Business Ethics and Corporate Responsibility. The endowed chair was established by \$1.5 million in contributions from employees, retirees and board members of Valero.

■ Good Deeds

Endowment surpasses \$100 million

For the first time in the school's 153-year history, the University's endowment has grown to more than \$100 million. The market value of the endowment surpassed \$103 million as of Feb. 28, 2005.

The almost \$2 million in income generated by the endowment each year is used to provide scholarship assistance to students.

University reaps \$3.5 million from three major gifts

St. Mary's has made some major advances in developing private institutional support. Recently the University received a combined \$3.5 million, some of which will be used to win the legal war on terror, and the remainder will build our endowments and recruit the best and brightest faculty.

Contributions include:

- \$1 million from an anonymous donor to the Center for Terrorism Law at the School of Law. The center will widen its offerings of legal courses and

seminars in terrorism law, and expand office space and staff.

- \$1 million toward the creation of the Benjamin F. Biaggini Chair in the School of Science, Engineering and Technology (see story on page 16). The holder of the chair will engage in academic research in addition to other professional duties.

- \$1.5 million from employees, retirees and board members of Valero Energy Corp. for the Bill Greehey Chair for Business Ethics and Corporate Responsibility. The chair specifies that St. Mary's teach one course each semester in Business Ethics and Social Responsibility.

Gift from Marianist Province helps students

The Marianist Province of the United States recently gave a gift totaling \$145,500 to support St. Mary's various projects and programs including the Marianist Leadership Program, the annual St. Mary's Fund, operations and several scholarships.

Thanks to their support and a matching gift from an alumnus, the Brother Ralph E. Thayer, S.M. Scholarship has reached full endowment and will be awarded to students majoring in history.

USAA Scholarships focus on service to community

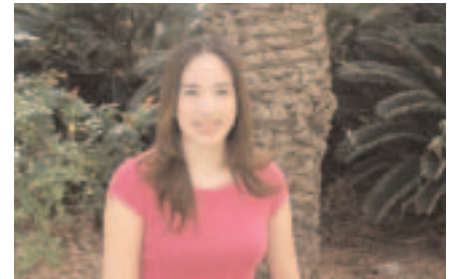
St. Mary's University is honored to have recently received a generous contribution from the USAA Foundation, A Charitable Trust in support of scholarships. This is the fifth year the Foundation has supported scholarships, which are awarded to students who exemplify the Marianist ideals of academic excellence and a demonstrated commitment to community service.

To qualify for the scholarship the students must undergo a rigorous application process where they present evidence of a history of community service as well as maintaining a minimum 3.0 grade point average. Students from all academic disciplines are eligible to apply for this prestigious scholarship, which encourages students to be involved and concerned citizens in their communities.

Doing her part: Student helps raise awareness for St. Mary's Fund

From Feb. 28 through April 28 students will call alumni nationwide asking for their support of the St. Mary's Fund. Monies raised for this annual fund support a variety of University priorities including scholarship assistance, academic programs, campus maintenance and technological enhancements.

Janeth Huizar, a transfer student from El Paso, and a key caller for the St. Mary's Fund, shares with readers why she's involved.



Why did you decide to participate in phonathon?

Because I found it a great way to be involved, and being a transfer student, it really helped me learn more about St. Mary's University.

What has your experience been while talking to donors?

At first I was nervous but as time went on I gained confidence. I'll never forget talking to one alumna who graduated more than 30 years ago. She was so nice and really interested in my major and the professors I had. She even gave me advice on what classes to take.

What do you think is most important about the St. Mary's Fund?

It helps continue the cycle of education. As phonathon callers, we talk to former students who were once in our shoes – we get to tell them our stories and how their contributions will allow us to reach our goals.

If you would like to support the annual St. Mary's Fund, you may make an online gift at our secure Web site, www.stmarytx.edu, or by calling (210) 431-8089.

The beauty and magnificence of the new Gateway to Historic St. Mary's University shines through in this view of St. Louis Hall.



'Hippo' Garcia fund grows

The San Antonio Bar Foundation has made a \$10,000 contribution to the Judge H.F. "Hippo" Garcia Endowed Scholarship Fund. Monies were awarded from the scholarship for the first time this spring to a first-year law student.

Socrates slithers on the scene

Several thousand young alumni received a different kind of message this year as the St. Mary's Fund unveiled Socrates, the newest addition to the St. Mary's community. Socrates or "Soc", a hand puppet designed to look like the University's rattler mascot, is part of a marketing campaign which highlights the various student activities supported by the St. Mary's Fund.

In his appeals to young alumni, Socrates describes the importance of supporting the University. In the new and exciting pieces created for young alumni, Soc emphasizes the idea that every gift, no matter the size, does make a difference.

For more information, please call (210) 436-3303 or visit online at www.stmarytx.edu.



Out-of-State Alum Assists His Alma Mater in a Special Way

Alumnus David Ronzani (B.A. '78), right, a former public justice student, provided funding for new police mountain patrol bicycles. His support will ensure that St. Mary's police officers, including Officer Angel Acuña (left), are able to carry out their duties more effectively.



■ Sports Corner

Men's Basketball

The Rattlers ended the regular season 21-6 overall and 11-1 in Heartland Conference play, tying them for first place in the conference with Drury University. The Rattlers also won the conference tournament.

The Rattlers made their fourth NCAA tournament in five years, but lost in the first round to No. 3 seed Pittsburg State University.

J.J. Edwards captured Heartland Conference Player of the Year honors and Joe Allen was named conference Freshman of the Year. "Manny" Hernandez joined Edwards on the All-Conference first team, while Billy White was named to the second team.

Women's Basketball

The Lady Rattlers' ended a disappointing season with an overall record of 12-15 and 5-7 in Heartland Conference play, were not eligible for post-season play.

Baseball

The Rattlers are off to a fast start with a 14-4 record as of March 15. Conference play commenced March 4 and today the team stands at 8-0 in

Heartland Conference play. Senior catcher Jerry Verastegui and junior outfielder Jared Natho are leading the team in hitting.

Softball

The Lady Rattlers are on fire, starting the season with a 23-4 record as of March 15 with conference play yet to start.

Senior third baseman Roni Garcia, an All-American in 2003 and 2004, leads the team in hitting, and by March 8 had already earned a third-consecutive Heartland Conference Hitter-of-the-Week award.



Jim Koett (B.B.A. '63) retired as the public announcer of the men's basketball games at the end of the 2004-2005 season. Koett began his 27-year "labor of love" in 1978 when his friend Buddy Meyer was named head coach. "The Voice of the St. Mary's University Rattlers" was inducted into the St. Mary's Athletics Hall of Fame in 1992.

'Snake Pit' a hit

Live Internet broadcasts of St. Mary's athletic events are in full swing. Home games of men's and women's basketball, baseball and softball are broadcast live on www.rattlerathletics.com, and feedback has been positive.

Check the "Sounds from the Snake Pit" link on the athletics Web site for broadcast schedules and to listen to games.

To catch the latest scores, sports news, schedules and more, check out www.rattlerathletics.com.

A Legacy of

Civic Engagement

St. Mary's Role in the Civil Rights Movement (1954-1975)

by Patricia Mejia (B.A. '01, M.A. '04)

In February 1961 students from St. Mary's University took a moral stand outside the property line of the Majestic Theatre in downtown San Antonio. Along with their brothers and sisters across the land, they were part of a larger movement that swept the nation to end segregation.

On the celebration of Abraham Lincoln's birthday, two dozen white and brown students worked in pairs with black students in an attempt to purchase tickets through the theater's main entrance. After being denied admission, they simply moved to the end of the line to renew the process. The idea was to tie up business, bringing attention in a nonviolent

manner to the issue of unequal treatment of blacks.

A similar event took place at Joske's of Texas department store later that decade, when again St. Mary's students, including then-student body president, Lionel "Lone" Castillo (who later was appointed under the Carter Administration as the first Latino to serve as director of the Immigration and Naturalization Service), participated in a sit-in demonstration to desegregate the store's restaurants.

The challenge of change

These were not isolated events. Instead, for generations, St. Mary's has nurtured and developed leaders who are committed to making a difference in their communities. When ordinary citizens were fighting to make the promise of equality true for all people, St. Mary's University was there.

Whether some viewed their actions as controversial, or even confrontational, the result is a legacy of inspiring students who are committed to positive change for our state and the nation.

To document the contributions of St. Mary's student leaders who accepted the challenge of advancing civil rights, the University organized the Legacy of Civic Engagement Project in 2002.

Service learning and civic engagement at St. Mary's is founded on our mission, which calls us to be involved in and serve our community and society at large. The Legacy of Civic Engagement Project aims to build a bridge from the past to the present by capturing the participation of St. Mary's faculty, staff and students who have played an important role in the civil rights movements of Texas and the United States.

St. Mary's students participate in a sit-in demonstration at Joske's of Texas department store in the 1960s.



The project's purpose is to capture a snapshot of our history, particularly from 1954 to 1975, to recognize and honor the commitment of those individuals who made history with their service to the larger community, while better understanding the tradition of civic engagement that guides our actions today.

Learning from the actors

The civil unrest that gripped the rest of the country also shaped student life at St. Mary's as students questioned political and social changes of the time. From civil rights issues to the war in Vietnam to Vatican II, the University was open to challenging conventional wisdom, even providing a forum for speakers such as Cesar Chavez, Dick Gregory and Saul Alinsky.

The Legacy of Civic Engagement Project showcases the spirit of civic engagement so prevalent during that period in our country's history. Invited back to St. Mary's were a number of individuals involved on our campus during that two-decade span. Fortunately some of them are still part of the St. Mary's community. St. Mary's President Charles L. Cotrell, Ph.D. (B.A. '62, M.A. '64), professor Tom Hoffman, Ph.D. (B.A. '73), former professor Ken Carey, Houston Chronicle columnist Rick Casey (B.A. '68), among many others, shared stories through personal oral histories.

Each participant recalled that one of the most unique parts of the Marianist tradition is building community, which came alive through meetings among faculty members such as professors Carey and Bill Crane, politicians, and graduate and undergraduate students, which allowed them to make direct connections between government and everyday life.

Casey articulated one particularly memorable session included an inspiring discussion with Texas Sen. Barbara Jordan, who gave students the insight to learn about political office from practical experience.

Alongside conversations on equality, students demonstrated their advocacy by standing up for justice. Carey recounted a trip to the State Capitol where students saw first hand how government really worked. As part of the tradition, the students, one of whom was black, gathered to share a meal at a nearby restaurant. But the restaurant manager would only serve them if the black student ate separately in the doorway. When the plates for all 50 students were ready to be served, Carey initiated a walk out with his students to stand against inequality.

A message to the future

It was an amazing time in the history of the University when the classrooms were blessed with a dynamic group of students such as Castillo; Casey; Willie Velasquez, founder of the Southwest Voter Registration Education Project; Jose Angel Gutierrez, author and professor of political science at the University of Texas at Arlington; Ernie Cortes, Southwest coordinator for Industrial Areas Foundation; and many others. These great leaders set an example—establishing values of service for a new generation of change agents.

The newest participants in the University's Marianist Leadership Program are some of the first students to benefit from the mining of this extraordinary history. Earlier this year these students embarked on a "freedom ride" across San Antonio to get a personal look into our legacy of civic engagement. Through their experience, they began to understand in a different light their civic responsibilities as active students.

The St. Mary's students of the new millennium coordinated Debate Watch, which brought some 600 fellow students together to hear the Presidential candidates lay out their platforms for the future. Others drove 22 hours in vans to Colorado to block walk for candidates in some of its poorest neighborhoods, and others transported fellow citizens to the polls to exercise their voting rights. They organized a campaign that registered,



Today, students are carrying forth the legacy of civic engagement. Last year, activities included Debate Watch, registering students to vote, and an election rally.

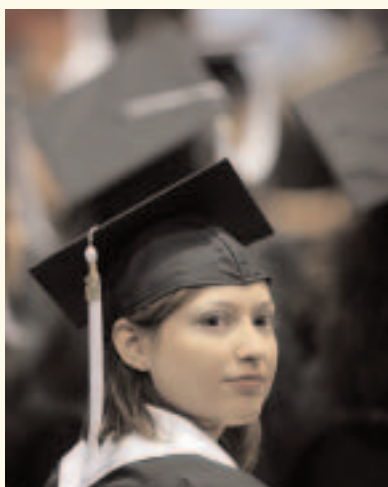
educated and got more than 60 percent of St. Mary's students to the polls.

The Legacy of Civic Engagement Project celebrates a rich and meaningful tradition, one that remains at the core of St. Mary's mission. Today's students are exploring the best ways to use their gifts and talents for the benefit of others, to become change leaders of the 21st century, to continue the legacy. ■

Patricia Mejia, the associate director of the 21st Leadership Center, is a dual graduate of St. Mary's University, receiving her Bachelor of Arts degree in 2001 and Master of Arts degree in political science in 2004.

St. Mary's Nationally Recognized for High Graduation Rates

St. Mary's University is a high-performer nationally for its success in graduating students, according to findings released recently by The Education Trust. The report is the first to analyze government statistics collected from the trust's new database, College Results Online (www.CollegeResults.org). The interactive Web tool allows users "to select any four-year college or university in the nation, and compare its graduation rates to other, similar institutions."



Schools can be looked at using the same performance criteria and the result, according to the trust, is that "...some colleges and universities simply stand out from the crowd, consistently graduating more students than their peers, year after year." St. Mary's stands out, too, because a gap in the graduation rates between white and minority students does not exist.

Quality Teaching, Involved Students Yield Greater Success

Established in 1990 by the American Association for Higher Education as a special project to encourage colleges and universities to support K-12 reform efforts, The Education Trust is a nonprofit research and advocacy organization based in Washington, D.C., whose mission is to make schools and colleges work for all of the young people they serve.



Education Trust report highlights minority success

In its report, "Choosing to Improve: Voices from Colleges and Universities with Better Graduation Rates," The Education Trust highlighted St. Mary's for its continuing success in graduating minority students at the same rate as non-minority students. In fact, with a 63.3 percent overall graduation rate, St. Mary's performs better than most similar schools. Striking when

compared nationally is that the University's majority minority student population graduates at almost the same rate—63.1 percent—which far surpasses other Hispanic Serving Institutions.

St. Mary's studied the information put forth by The Education Trust—which uses factors such as race, ethnicity, gender, size, selectivity, SAT scores and the percentage of students with Pell grant eligibility when assessing institutions—and found that we have the 10th highest graduation rate among the public and private colleges and universities in Texas (as shown in the "Graduation Rates at Texas Institutions" chart). Within those top 10 schools, several of which compete directly with St. Mary's for students, ours is the only majority minority institution among them.

With almost 72 percent of our



undergraduate students from an under-represented minority, including 68.5 percent who are Latino, St. Mary's overall graduation rate of 63.3 percent and correspondingly high rate among minorities, is deemed exemplary.

"Providing educational opportunity for all students regardless of their background is central to St. Mary's enduring mission," said President Charles L. Cotrell, Ph.D. The recognition by The Education Trust is

Graduation Rates at Texas Institutions

Institution	Median SAT	Student-Related Expenditures/FTE	Percent Pell*	Percent Undergraduate Minority	Graduation Rate
Rice University	1410	\$38,509	12.5	18.3	90.5
Texas A&M University	1185	\$12,147	14.4	12.3	75.2
Trinity University	1300	\$17,820	11.1	12.6	74.8
Austin College	1230	\$16,340	24.5	11.9	74.4
Southwestern University	1245	\$19,899	13.1	18.2	73.5
Southern Methodist University	1200	\$17,130	15.9	14.8	71.7
University of Texas at Austin	1230	\$10,328	18.1	18.5	70.5
Baylor University	1145	\$12,474	15.9	14.9	70.3
Texas Christian University	1160	\$14,049	13.2	11.8	65.2
St. Mary's University	1065	\$11,827	37	71.9	63.3

Source: "College Results Online" The Education Trust

*Federally-funded, need-based grant program

"...a result of our commitment to quality teaching in the classroom, as well as involving students in co-curricular and service learning activities," he said.

Student success at St. Mary's is attributed to the University's focus on teaching and an emphasis on engagement. And, according to The Education Trust, "High-performing institutions have found that when they build strong ties to their students, engaging students with the institution, their graduation rates improve. Simply put, the more students are connected, the less likely they are to disconnect."

St. Mary's student engagement surpasses peers

Student engagement comes in many forms, the trust said, from the ways students connect socially to their academic experience in their chosen field of study. Student success is a function of both elements and St. Mary's students—like their counterparts around the country—are more likely to succeed academically and graduate when they are so engaged.

A notable effort to build on the engagement model of higher education success is the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), which is conducted by the Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research in Bloomington. St. Mary's students, like 163,000 first-year and senior students at 472 different four-year colleges and

“(St. Mary’s) is a place where they really care about you. You get this feeling of community—that everyone, your professors, the staff, everybody—wants you to succeed and will help in every way they can.”

Michelle Gonzales
 Student Government Association President
 Senior corporate finance major



universities, answered questions on the 2004 NSSE report (“Student Engagement: Pathways to Collegiate Success”) that gauge the nature and frequency of participation in a range of academic and social activities that are related to student success.

Results indicate that students at St. Mary's are challenged more academically, are more involved in collaborative learning, and interact more with faculty than students at colleges and universities across the nation. The fifth annual survey also showed that St. Mary's students have more and better enriching college experiences and have a more supportive environment.

Individual schools can benchmark their own level of student engagement among first-year and senior students against other schools. In these national comparisons, St. Mary's benchmarks for first-year students and seniors were higher than similar Master's-level schools and higher than the national averages in all five categories. The five

key areas of educational performance include: level of academic challenge, active and collaborative learning, student-faculty interaction, enriching educational experiences, and supportive campus environment.

The benchmarks give schools an idea of how well their programs and services are working.

The NSSE study is a leading instrument used by colleges and universities to compare themselves with each other and to target their efforts toward quality enhancements. The premise of NSSE is that students learn more when they devote their efforts to educationally purposeful activities, and the survey helps to establish the connection between college quality and student engagement. ■

“After playing professionally in Europe, and being away for a few years, saying hello to Buddy was one of the top things on my agenda when I returned to San Antonio. Most players and coaches have a bond for life. I’ve played basketball on three levels, and he, by far, has been the best of them all.”

—Larry Gooding (CL '77),
post player 1975-77

“Coach Meyer has always had his players’ best interests at heart, and his passion and motivation for the game of basketball and in life sets the standard of excellence for winning on and off the court.”

—Lacy Hampton (B.B.A. '98,
M.B.A. '01), starting point guard
1993-97

“Coach has a system. It took me awhile to listen to what he says and not how he says it. He knows what he wants to do, and if you go out and do it, it works. He’s a great coach.”

—Billy White, four-year starting
wing who will finish his degree this
summer

The End of an Era

St. Mary’s Celebrates Meyer’s Career

by Candace Kuebker, Editor, and Pat Abernathy, Sports Information Director

For 27 seasons men’s basketball Coach Buddy Meyer has roamed the sidelines of Alumni Gym and Bill Greehey Arena.

At times he’s paced like a pent-up tiger and at others sat quietly at the end of the bench. Always his goal has been to make his Rattlers better, as players and as individuals. With his decision to retire at the end of the 2004-2005 basketball season and academic year, the Buddy Era will come to an end.

Meyer’s is the story of a life shaped and defined by basketball, family and St. Mary’s. Herman August Meyer Jr.—or Buddy as just about everyone knows him—began playing ball as a youngster in Davis, W.V. After starring on his high school team, he enlisted in the U.S. Air Force and spent four years as a communications specialist and basketball standout.

That’s how he was discovered by St. Mary’s Coach Mel Barborak who was scouting a couple of military teams at one of the local bases.

Buddy’s St. Mary’s No. 44 jersey has deservedly been retired for his stellar exploits as a point guard, but it is his coaching that arguably has had the biggest lasting effect on St. Mary’s University and its athletics program.

Since arriving at St. Mary’s as a student-athlete in 1961, Buddy has set his sights high. Whether pursuing his future wife Anna Hibberd, or scouring the country for the best small college athletes as assistant coach to Ed Messbarger, or rebuilding a flagging basketball program when he took over

head coaching duties, or moving St. Mary’s sports programs forward while serving for more than 20 years as athletics director and head coach, Buddy has committed his life to bettering himself, his sport and his University.

Once he got to St. Mary’s, Buddy left only once—for three years—to coach at local Antonian High School where he led his Apaches to a state title. But St. Mary’s was home, and he returned as quickly as he could.

Meanwhile, Anna and Buddy started a family and welcomed daughters Suzanne, Mary Beth and Jennifer. By the time Buddy was appointed head coach in 1978, their

Meyer's Legacy

- 17 conference championships
- Seven district titles
- 1989 national championship
- 16 NAIA and NCAA tournament appearances
- Hit 500-win mark on Jan. 22, 2004
- Eight-time Conference Coach of the Year
- 1989 National Coach of the Year
- Four NCAA tournament appearances in five years of post-season eligibility
- 17 All-American recognitions for his players
- 40+ All-Conference players
- 530-253 career record
- 1983 St. Mary's University Alumni Association Distinguished Alumnus
- No. 44 player jersey retired in 2004

"He would say stuff in the huddle like, 'This is fun, isn't it?' ... just make a little wisecrack like that. We'd be laughing and go out and do what we had to do. It seemed to help because he wasn't nervous."

—Anthony Houston (B.A. '89), starting point guard 1985-1989, in a March 1, 2005 Sports Illustrated.com article



On Feb. 12, 2005, at the last regular season conference home game Buddy Meyer would ever coach, some 2,800 friends and fans—including almost 100 former players—paid tribute to the man who has defined Rattler basketball for decades.

fourth and last child, Herman August "Bubba" Meyer III—who would play the point as a Rattler 18 years later—had arrived.

Guided by Buddy, the Rattler program built on its winning traditions and the program thrived. Year after year, St. Mary's won conference titles in the Big State, Heart of Texas and Heartland conferences. More often than not, the team headed to Kansas City for another NAIA National Tournament or, more recently, to NCAA Regionals.

In 1980, athletics director was added to Buddy's title and responsibilities, and during the next 21 years, he orchestrated the expansion of all sports at St. Mary's, and transitioned the

University from the NAIA to the NCAA.

A long-held dream came true in 1989 when the Rattlers won the NAIA National Championship. That accomplishment, certainly, is the pinnacle to which all coaches and players aspire and Buddy's no exception. There's something else, though, that he's even more proud of when he looks at his career.

What his players are and become off the basketball court after competition ends strikes a chord with Buddy. In the men's locker room hundreds of name plates are mounted to the walls. Each one carries the name of a student-athlete who has graduated

from St. Mary's and that, according to the coach, is the most important thing his players can do.

Buddy is much more than basketball. He is a mentor. He is a teacher. He is a key and tireless supporter of St. Mary's. He is an icon on campus and in the San Antonio community.

Does Buddy have any regrets after more than 40 years at St. Mary's? Not really. He'll tell you St. Mary's is where he met his wife and where his children earned their degrees. He'll also tell you he treasures most the relationships he has with athletes and alumni. And, he'll tell you he's not leaving St. Mary's entirely. It's home. ■



Cheerio from London

Travelogue of the Writer's Adventures Abroad

by Francisco Vara-Orta

2004 London Study Abroad program student and Editor-in-chief of *The Rattler*

There is no typical day in the life of a student studying abroad in a city such as London. The historical significance of what was once 'the center of the world' permeates everything students from South Texas and beyond do while in London.

From royal palaces, Big Ben, Parliament and free museums that showcase some of the world's oldest art, to witnessing the impact cultural icons like the Beatles, Sherlock Holmes and the Royal Family have had on society, London is an endless sea of intrigue.

London remains 'center of the world'

I chose the London Study Abroad program to experience something new—and perhaps something slightly familiar—in part because Great Britain and the United States have enjoyed a "special relationship," as so aptly

stated by Sir Winston Churchill after World War II. It may well be a land of royalty, pomp and circumstance, and tea and crumpets, but it's also much more.

London remains a great world city, the largest in western Europe, and is host to many cultures.

"London is a city of everyone and anyone, therefore, things like discrimination shouldn't occur as everyone is mixed up," our tour guide told us on our arrival.

London's post-World War II importance and how it represents Great Britain recently was summed up by BBC radio commentator Robert Elms who said, "(London) is the one city where, at many given points in its history, you would have felt you were at the center of the world, because all the world was here. And in many ways it is still here."

Before the Christmas holidays, another delegation of St. Mary's students in the London Study Abroad program returned to the States after almost four months of soaking up British and European culture.



'Pedagogy of place' is cornerstone of program

The program began 15 years ago under then-Vice President for Academic Affairs Charles L. Cotrell, Ph.D., with about 15 students.

A few years ago,

political science professor Steven Neiheisel, Ph.D., helped form a partnership with the Foundation for International Education (FIE) to enhance the program.

"The FIE program and St. Mary's believe in the 'Pedagogy of Place' requirement so that all courses must be taught as often as possible on site," Neiheisel said. Classes met at the venerable British Museum and Imperial War Museum, historic sites of Westminster Abbey and Parliament, and even theater performances of "Les Miserables" and "Stomp."

The program allows us to take up to 12 hours of classes or we can choose to do an internship. Everyone takes the required British Cultural Class to help better understand the differences between our cultures and how history has shaped modern-day London.

For Chuck Kerr, a junior majoring in music and an award-winning staff cartoonist for St. Mary's University student newspaper *The Rattler*, the trip was an eye-opening experience.





“If you’ve ever wanted to take a break from your job, your work-study, or just need a change of scenery, as I did, then studying abroad is the answer,” Kerr said in his newspaper column. “(It’s) crucial to gain insight into the world we live in . . . Education is about making options for yourself and your future; learning a discipline and ultimately, learning about yourself. Experiences like this teach you all that and more.”

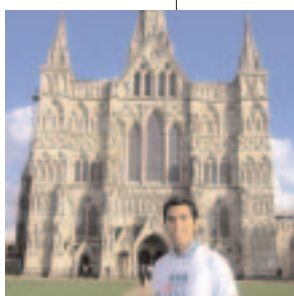
Teachers treasure learning experience

That sentiment is echoed by current and former program participants alike, and by the professors from St. Mary’s who adapt their lesson plans to the context of London.

Leona Pallansch, Ph.D., associate professor of political science, gained much when she taught two courses focused on politics and media in the United Kingdom last semester.

“I feel I have learned as much or more than my students during this past semester,” Pallansch said. “Reading a scholarly analysis of the pros and cons of the British Empire is one thing, but to stand in front of the Prince Albert Memorial is to be witness to one of the most perfect critiques imaginable. And to be a political scientist in London during the U.S. presidential election year is an experience that I will remember for a long, long time.”

Being in a foreign land and hearing how the rest of the world sees my homeland was an eye opener. As an



aspiring journalist, I kept a journal about the presidential election for a media class and saw how the British and European media reflected the growing anti-American sentiment that is surfacing in Europe.

Confronting anti-Americanism and cultural differences between Americans and Britons is part of the overall study abroad experience, and it showed me how two similar cultures with one language can still be dramatically different.

Students immerse themselves in various cultures

Most students in our group took the opportunity to encounter other cultures and languages by venturing to Italy, Greece, Spain, France, Germany and the Netherlands, among others.

London is a springboard to anywhere in Europe. Travel is part of the culture and the Continent is but a brief train ride on the Eurostar. Plane flights are inexpensive, too, and we capitalized on experiencing other parts of the historically rich and culturally diverse continent on a 10-day trip granted to students in the program.



“The key is to immerse yourself in the culture you’ve been thrown into, to make the effort to live like a citizen, not a tourist,” Kerr said. “If all you do is transplant your own American lifestyle,

you’ve missed the whole point of living abroad and should’ve just stayed home.”

While the exchange rate has shrunk many budgets of Americans traveling abroad, and the British accent can be unclear to American ears, waking up and going to bed in London, as well as walking down the streets and seeing centuries-old buildings and people of all backgrounds mingling every day, is a true world-city experience. Coming from Texas, there is a culture shock, to be sure, but the experience is an education



unlike anything that could ever be put in a book.

The London Study Abroad program is a “true life”



experience that brings education to a whole new level is the unanimous opinion of students who attend the program. ■

Flat Stanley Crosses the Pond

St. Mary’s students are encouraging Woodlawn Hills Elementary students to attend college by showing them what life is like studying abroad through an interactive project titled “Flat Stanley.”

St. Mary’s students who studied in London last fall joined Woodlawn Hills Elementary students in their “Flat Stanley” video project. Flat Stanley is a paper doll featured in videotaped messages sent by elementary students to St. Mary’s students in London. They then took Flat Stanley to London elementary schools and videotaped him enjoying school abroad. Upon their return to San Antonio, St. Mary’s students will meet with the Woodlawn elementary students face-to-face, allowing them to return Flat Stanley and share their experiences.

Kathe Lehman-Meyer, director of St. Mary’s Learning Resources Center, and Doug Hall, Ph.D., director of the graduate computer science program, organized Flat Stanley as a community service project intended to encourage elementary students to attend college so that they, too, will one day have an opportunity to study abroad and encounter foreign cultures.

Lehman-Meyer and Hall hope to send Flat Stanley with St. Mary’s students to a variety of countries to teach elementary students the value of education and cultural enrichment.

In the book, “Flat Stanley,” by Jeff Brown, Stanley is squashed flat by a falling bulletin board. An advantage is that Flat Stanley can now visit his friends by traveling in an envelope. The Flat Stanley Project is a group of teachers who want to provide students with another reason to write.

Students make paper Flat Stanleys and begin a journal, which are sent to another school where students treat Flat Stanley as a guest and complete the journal. Flat Stanley and the journal are then returned to the original sender. Students can plot his travels on maps and share the contents of the journal.



Benjamin F. Biaggini

Friends Honor Lessons Kept for a Lifetime

It all started in the spring of 2004. Robert Krebs was visiting with his mentor and friend Benjamin F. Biaggini (B.S. '36) during a trip to San Francisco. Over lunch their conversation focused on making a long-term impact in the community and, afterwards, Krebs began exploring ways he might establish a lasting legacy for a man whose professional endeavors and civic contributions have helped so many. With the support of Biaggini's former colleagues and personal friends, Krebs took steps to establish the Benjamin F. Biaggini Endowed Chair at St. Mary's University.

A foundation is set

It seems Benjamin Biaggini was destined from an early age for great things in the railroad industry. His parents, Benjamin Sr. (an official with the Pullman Co.) and Maggie Switzer, met while on a train trip in Louisiana.

Growing up in a railroad environment it seemed only natural that young Ben would choose to begin his career in that major U.S. industry. While talking with a Southern Pacific executive, Biaggini's father learned the company was looking for college graduates to assist in railway rehabilitation. After graduating from St. Mary's with honors—and at his father's insistence—Biaggini sent off a letter of inquiry. Soon he heard back and began his 47-year career with the Southern Pacific Co.

Biaggini's were humble beginnings. He joined the company as a roddman in the engineering department in Ennis, Texas, working his way through management, and eventually assuming the title of CEO in 1968. He continued to lead Southern Pacific until his retirement in 1983. When asked if there is a secret formula to professional success, Biaggini answers with an emphatic no. "Success is based upon hard work and determination. There is no easy answer."

His successful career is no surprise to anyone, least of all Biaggini. As an extremely focused senior, he noted in his high school annual that his greatest ambition was to become president of a major corporation. To accomplish his goal, Biaggini set his sights on St. Mary's University, where he knew he would receive a quality education. He was an active undergrad, serving as vice president of the Rattler Club, captain of A Company in the ROTC cadet battalion and president of the student council. After classes and activities, he worked on campus digging flower beds and maintaining the horseshoe courts for 30 cents an hour.

Learning life's lessons

Almost eight decades later, Biaggini continues to value his experience. "St. Mary's was a natural choice for me. While academic quality was certainly at the forefront of my decision to attend, it was equally important for me to stay close to home to help my mother and sister while my father was away on business. I am very grateful for the guidance provided by the Marianist instructors. The brothers showed us how to live and contribute to our community. I have kept these lessons with me all my life."

Biaggini's journey has not been one traveled alone. Shortly after starting his first job, he met his future wife, Anne, at a local San Antonio hangout. Biaggini remembers their first meeting well. "Anne was a senior at Incarnate Word at the time. She and her friend were doing their homework and were experiencing difficulty with a math problem. I offered to show them how to work through the problem, and Anne later agreed to see me again even

though I didn't give them the answer." Married for 67 years, theirs is a true partnership of love and devotion.

Respect, gratitude and friendship

After months of secret plans and fund raising, Rob Krebs organized a small gathering on Nov. 15, 2004, to announce the endowed chair. With the help of St. Mary's staff, Krebs invited Biaggini to attend the luncheon under the premise he was meeting with University administrators. After the initial greeting, donors began to share their stories about the impact Biaggini had had on each of them.

And, that impact has been far-reaching. Krebs noted everyone there had their own reasons for supporting this endeavor, but "my interest can be summed up with three words: respect, gratitude and friendship. You have been a mentor, a supporter and an advocate, and I thank you for the difference you have made in my life," he said.

Another close friend, former chairman of Chevron Corp. Harold Haynes, agreed, stating that being a mentor "is the kindest thing one person can say about another." Biaggini was guide and adviser to Haynes when he arrived in San Francisco. He counts Ben among his best friends.

The roles of mentor and leader are taken seriously by Biaggini. "There is a great deal of responsibility when you are charged with directing a company and its employees," he said. "You must develop them to their maximum extent. All experiences help mold a person and shows them where they fit into the whole scheme – as a leader you must inspire people to improve their lives."

Stephen Bechtel, chairman emeritus of the Bechtel Group Inc., reflected, "I know of few people who can combine great business ability with the love of life. Ben has always worked hard, but he has taken time to enjoy his life."

At the close of the luncheon after a short silence, Benjamin Biaggini addressed his friends who, together, honored him by establishing the Benjamin F. Biaggini Endowed Chair at St. Mary's University. "I appreciate the love and friendship shown here," he said, "and I accept with pleasure

St. Mary's University extends sincere thanks to those generous individuals and organizations whose gifts have helped fund the Benjamin F. Biaggini Endowed Chair.

Victor K. Atkins
S.D. Bechtel Jr. Foundation
Burlington Northern Santa Fe Foundation
Lyman H. Casey
Christopher C. DeMuth
Robert B. Gagoisan
Harold and Reta Haynes
Eric L. Johnson
James L. and Kathryn L. Ketelsen
Charitable Foundation
Robert D. Krebs
Lakeside Foundation
Richard G. Landis
MacDonnell Foundation
Mr. and Mrs. Denman K. McNear
The Michelson Foundation
George B. Munroe
Jack and Elaine Parker
Charles M. Pigott
Roberts Foundation
Michael W. Wilsey
Kathryn and Walter Wriston Family Fund

and as much grace as I can summon. This is far from what I expected to happen today. I am extremely grateful, and I will always remember."

Full circle

More than 30 years ago, Benjamin F. Biaggini addressed an audience filled with St. Mary's alumni and San Antonio business leaders when he accepted the 1973 St. Mary's University Distinguished Alumnus Award:

"By now we know that the sands of time run fast. In the end, we see our contribution as but a small part in a long process of development. By now we know that any one man's work in this world is largely unfinished work on which another man may build if he will. What we have done is to accomplish a few things while opening up many more new opportunities for the others to seize in their time."

And so, it would appear that through his significant contributions to his profession and community, a foundation has been established from which many will benefit. Through funds generated by the Benjamin F. Biaggini Endowed Chair, invaluable opportunities for scholarly research and academic endeavors will positively impact St. Mary's students for generations to come. ■

*by Melissa Valek (M.A. '02)
Director of Corporate and Foundation Relations*

“St. Mary’s University was a major influence in shaping my life.”

- Homer Burkett (B.A. '40)

I chose to attend St. Mary’s University over other schools because of its fine reputation. I had a wonderful four years and have such fond memories of the Marianists who were our instructors *and* our mentors. I still feel they are the greatest people I ever met.

I have a soft spot in my heart for the University, and although I could never repay St. Mary’s for everything it has done for me, I felt it was time for me to give back. The annuity is going to support athletics, which I believe are an integral part of a university – they build school pride and provide lessons in teamwork and discipline.

A deferred gift annuity may be an ideal way to supplement your retirement income and make a gift to St. Mary’s. For a minimum investment of \$10,000, you can expect an immediate charitable income tax deduction, guaranteed retirement income, reduced capital gains taxes if you make your gift with appreciated securities, an excellent yield, and membership in the prestigious St. Mary’s 1852 Society.

For more information on planned giving opportunities that will support scholarships and programs at St. Mary’s University, please contact the Development Office at: One Camino Santa Maria, San Antonio, Texas 78228, or telephone (210) 436-3718.

www.stmarytx.edu/development



St. Mary’s University Rattler Football Team
circa 1936



Homer Burkett
Center/Linebacker



St. Mary's University
One Camino Santa Maria
San Antonio, Texas 78228-8575

Address Service Requested

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
San Antonio, Texas
Permit No. 787

