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# GOLD & BLUE

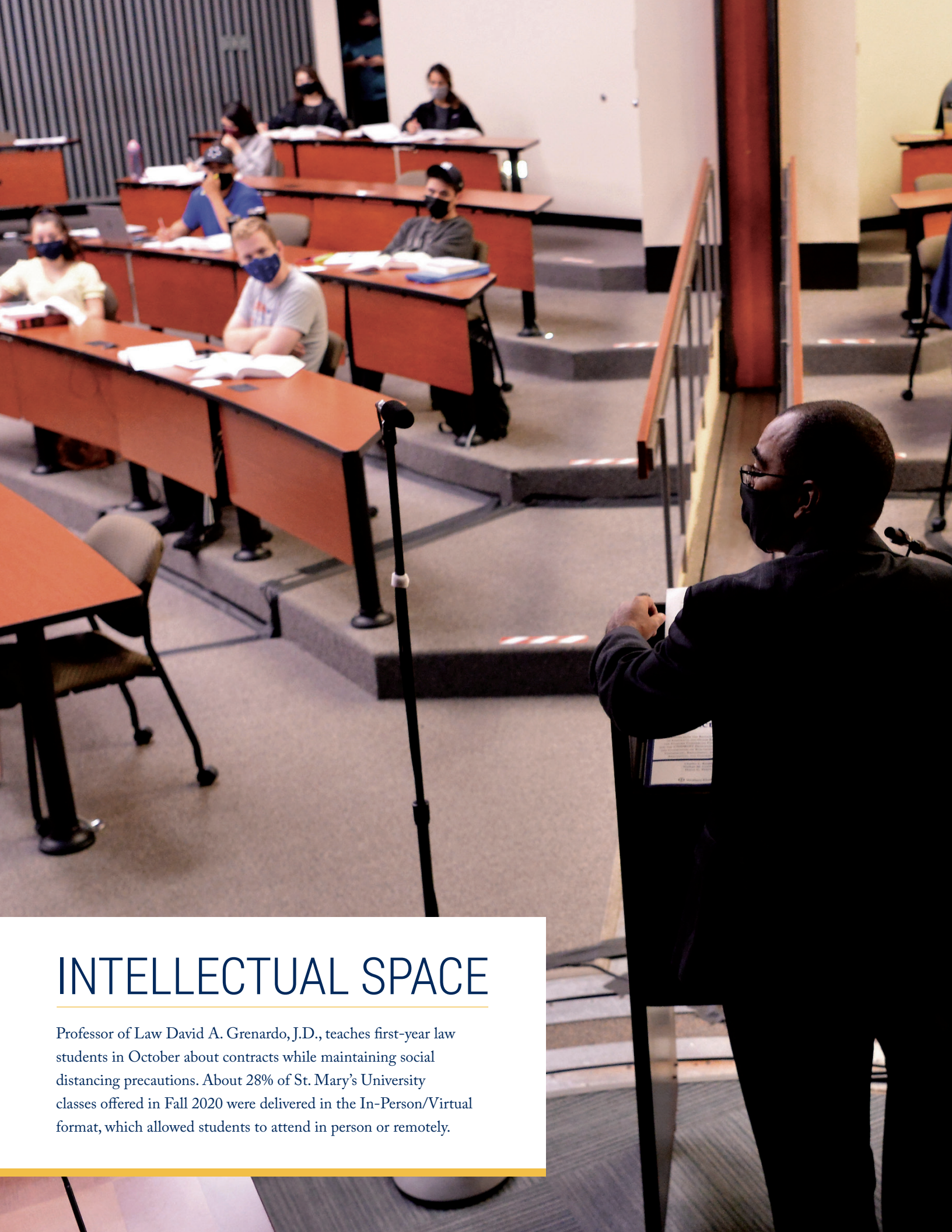
ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY

FALL 2020/WINTER 2021



## Pivoting with *excellence*

The St. Mary's community adapts in response to pandemic



## INTELLECTUAL SPACE

Professor of Law David A. Grenardo, J.D., teaches first-year law students in October about contracts while maintaining social distancing precautions. About 28% of St. Mary's University classes offered in Fall 2020 were delivered in the In-Person/Virtual format, which allowed students to attend in person or remotely.



Photo by Robin Jerstad

# GOLD & BLUE

ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY

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

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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



@StMarysU

# WHAT'S INSIDE

**4** CAMPUS NEWS

**6** SIGN LANGUAGE ODYSSEY  
Alumna signs *The Odyssey* on video

**8** GAME CONTROLLER  
Varsity Esports Program signs its first coach

**10** PIVOTING WITH EXCELLENCE  
St. Mary's acts as one in response to the pandemic

**20** PUBLIC HEALTH PROFESSOR  
Co-Director helps launch Public Health certificate

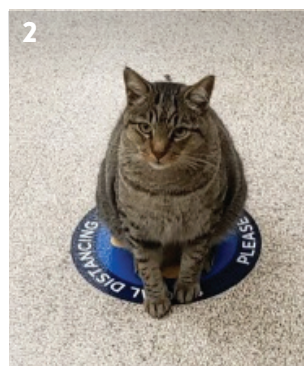
**21** CURIOUS CASE OF COUNSELING  
Students flock to study counseling

**22** BASEBALL TO PH.D.  
Ballplayer transitions to research scientist

**24** CLASS NOTES

**27** FRIENDS WE'LL MISS

**On the cover:** Francisco Olivas Carmona, an Industrial Engineering senior, left, and senior Regina de la Parra, a double major in International and Global Studies, and Environmental Science, are members of the Mask Squad. The Mask Squad is a group of students who have worked to stem the spread of COVID-19 on campus this fall. The Mask Squad is one of many efforts taking place across campus and beyond to keep the St. Mary's community and the public safe. Read more on Page 10. Photo by Josh Huskin.



## @StMarysU Social

1. Family, friends, faculty and staff proudly support the St. Mary's Class of 2020 with a unique Diploma Pickup Day in June.
2. PD, the University Police Department cat, shows how to properly practice social distancing while indoors.
3. Rattlers celebrate Spirit Thursday.
4. Men's Soccer Head Coach Johnny Clifford, left, celebrates a goal against senior midfielder Ollie Wright during the St. Mary's Spectrum Esports Arena grand opening gaming livestream on Sept. 18.

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

## *Appreciating challenging times*

In St. Mary's University's Gateway Strategic Plan, which was adopted more than seven years ago, we said, "Responding and adapting to higher education's changing environment will require bold courageous action and innovation." I'm sure we didn't have a worldwide pandemic in mind in 2013, but those words ring true today. Through bold courageous actions and innovations, we are ensuring that our students — today, tomorrow and long into the future — will continue to receive an education that leads them to a life of professional success and dedication to the common good.

At this time last year, it would have been difficult to imagine what we have experienced these past 10 months — as a society, as a community and, certainly, as a campus. The students who graduated in Spring 2020 were the first to graduate while experiencing this level of upheaval, challenges and change that we have all experienced from the COVID-19 pandemic. This fall, we welcomed a new group of incoming students who began their St. Mary's University educational journey under similar conditions.

Through this all, St. Mary's University — our faculty, staff, students and alumni — have come together to support each other and our community. During the spring semester, we pivoted to an online format for virtually all classes and services. Over the course of the summer and fall semesters, our faculty used the time to perfect the art of virtual classrooms, many signature events continued (online, of course), and our staff was innovative and

persistent in their efforts to ensure the campus and our community had what it needed to continue to operate with excellence. Meanwhile, alumni and friends stepped up generously to ensure students who were experiencing financial difficulties as a result of the pandemic could continue their education.

Much like spring before it, the fall semester was nothing as expected. But our goal as a Catholic and Marianist University — our mission — remains steadfast.

One day, we may all come to appreciate that these challenging times, while disruptive, made each of us stronger, more committed to our faith, and closer to our classmates, professors and coworkers. I believe that we will become even more sure of the importance of a St. Mary's education, which develops graduates who are well grounded in the liberal arts, formed in faith and centered as ethical leaders prepared for their vocation.

Throughout this issue, you will read the stories of the students, employees and alumni who have used their talents to help in a time of crisis in many ways, great and small. They are all a part of the effort to pivot with excellence that we are experiencing. ■



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

“  
Through this all, St. Mary's University — our faculty, staff, students and alumni — **have come together to support each other and our community.**  
”



Photo by Robin Jerstad

# CAMPUSNEWS

## St. Mary's awarded \$1.3 million grant to help underserved students

St. Mary's University will receive more than \$1.3 million for a TRiO Student Support Services (SSS) grant from the U.S. Department of Education to help retain and graduate first-generation and low-income students and students with disabilities.

The \$1,309,435 grant will fund support services for 140 students each year for the next five years. The goals include at least 81% of program participants returning for the next academic year or graduating, and 86% maintaining good academic standing.

Forty-seven percent of the St. Mary's student body is classified as first-generation and 40% of undergraduates in 2019 were Pell Grant eligible, an indicator of exceptional financial need. National graduation rates for students in these demographics are traditionally lower than those of other demographics.

The SSS program at St. Mary's includes study skills development, academic advising, financial aid coaching, cultural enrichment activities, financial literacy coaching, career and graduate preparation and more. The program includes three full-time staff members.

## New drone lab flew toward completion in Fall 2020

Construction is complete on the new Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) Laboratory — or Drone Lab — at St. Mary's University.

The \$600,000 lab, located behind the Richter-Math Engineering Center, was funded by the Title V – Building Capacity for Excellence in STEM Education grant, as well as support from the Albert and Margaret Alkek Foundation, and Union Pacific Foundation.

"This is an opportunity to add programming that will launch St. Mary's graduates into a fast-growing emergent industry," said Winston Erevelles, Ph.D., Dean of the School of Science, Engineering and Technology.

The facility will house new summer camps for high school students and also support the new UAS concentration under the B.S. in Engineering Science program.

## U.S. News ranks St. Mary's fourth in West for value, top in SA for social mobility

St. Mary's University ranked fourth in the West region in the Best Value Schools rankings by U.S. News & World Report, which released the 2021 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 2019-2020 net cost of attendance for a student receiving an average level of need-based financial aid.

The St. Mary's ranking rose to tie for the eighth spot out of 127 universities in the West for academic quality, especially student outcomes. The University has been included in the list of top-tier regional universities for 27 consecutive years.

U.S. News introduced a ranking for Top Performers on Social Mobility in 2019 to evaluate which schools best serve underrepresented students. St. Mary's tied for No. 25 in the West and also ranked first in San Antonio in this analysis for the second year in a row.

St. Mary's also rose to tie fifth 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.

## Spectrum Enterprise powers new esports arena for St. Mary's University

St. Mary's University has teamed with Spectrum Enterprise to power the cutting-edge new home of the Rattlers' varsity Esports program. The partnership establishes the Spectrum Esports Arena, which opened on Sept. 18, and expands the role Spectrum Enterprise services have played on the campus for nearly a decade. Spectrum Enterprise has provided the arena with a dedicated Fiber Internet Access (FIA) circuit to meet the demands of data-intensive video-streaming applications and optimize the gaming experience.

"Spectrum Enterprise's support aids us in continuing our Catholic and Marianist mission for future generations of Rattlers through this exciting new medium of

education, connection and competition in esports," said St. Mary's President Thomas Mengler, J.D.

Read more about the Esports team and its head coach on Page 8.

## New St. Mary's professorships in Accounting and Law help ensure highest-quality faculty

With the help of generous donors, St. Mary's University created two professorships to help recruit and retain highly accomplished faculty in the areas of Accounting and Law, who will help propel students to academic excellence.

The University named Mark B. Persellin, Ph.D., a faculty member of the Greehey School of Business, to the Ray and Dorothy Berend Endowed Professorship in Accounting. The University also named Michael S. Ariens, J.D., LL.M., a faculty member of the School of Law, to the Aloysius A. Leopold Professorship of Law.

"It only takes one professor to make a lasting positive difference in a student's trajectory," said President Thomas M. Mengler, J.D. "These new appointments demonstrate the lasting effect gifts can have on the faculty of the University and the generations of students they educate and mentor over the course of their careers."

## St. Mary's envisions a more diverse and inclusive society

St. Mary's University continues on the path to creating a more diverse and inclusive society — starting on its campus.

The President's Council on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, which was announced in June and formed this fall, will help develop St. Mary's as a firmly anti-racist university with a focus on dialogue, concrete action and respect for all community members.

Chairing the Council is Professor of Law André Hampton, J.D.

## St. Mary's University partners with Baylor College of Medicine

In a continued effort to increase the pipeline of underrepresented students into careers in medicine, Baylor College of Medicine has partnered with St. Mary's University in San Antonio on a program that will give three qualified students

from the University the opportunity annually to participate in Baylor's Medical Track Program.

The program puts accepted students on track to attend medical school at Baylor College of Medicine once they complete their undergraduate studies at St. Mary's.

Thomas Macrini, Ph.D., St. Mary's Chair and Professor of the Department of Biological Sciences, said that this program will further help students of the Hispanic-Serving Institution who are already accepted into medical schools at a much higher rate than the Texas and national averages.

### St. Mary's President reappointed to another term

Thomas M. Mengler, J.D., was unanimously reappointed to a fourth term as President of St. Mary's University by the Board of Trustees on Friday, Nov. 13, 2020.

Since 2012, Mengler has proven to be one of the University's most successful presidents in its history. In November 2019, St. Mary's reached The Defining Moment Comprehensive Campaign goal of \$130 million — and with two years remaining in the campaign raised the goal to \$150 million. When this goal is reached and exceeded by December 2021, it will be 7.5 times greater

than any previous St. Mary's campaign. With almost \$70 million in endowment funding, including \$40 million in scholarship aid, this campaign will prove to be a turning point for the University.

The Board of Trustees recognized Mengler as having shown extraordinary leadership in managing the University through the pandemic. He led efforts to quickly adapt to changing circumstances, prioritize health and safety, prepare faculty to sustain the teaching mission under new conditions, and protect the University's financial soundness. He worked alongside his leadership team to guide these tough calls with care and confidence.

Mengler's work to strengthen the St. Mary's commitment to its Catholic and Marianist identity is sure to be another of the most significant legacies of his presidency, said Leticia "Leti" Contreras (B.A. '89), Chair of the Board of Trustees.

### Joel Lauer appointed permanent Vice President for Advancement

The Board of Trustees unanimously confirmed the recommendation by President Thomas M. Mengler, J.D., to remove the interim title designation and appoint Joel Lauer the permanent Vice President for University Advancement.

Lauer stepped into the leadership role early in the pandemic and immediately began efforts to connect with alumni and donors and check on their health and safety. He quickly understood the challenges our students are facing in this pandemic, and he led efforts to help address their needs by raising funds for the Rattlers Helping Rattlers initiative.

Already, Lauer has been a leader in the success to date of The Defining Moment Comprehensive Campaign, which is on track to reach its goal of raising \$150 million. He is committed to leading the University to the finish line and preparing for the next comprehensive campaign.

Lauer served as the Executive Director of Advancement for the School of Law before becoming the Assistant Vice President for Development in 2018.



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# Epic signs

*Alumna translates landmark edition of  
The Odyssey into American Sign Language*

by Alex Z. Salinas (B.A. '11, M.A. '19)

“ I want to generate interest in future literature interpretation projects and raise awareness for the need for qualified, professional outputs for a wide audience, not just the deaf and hard of hearing. ”



In Greece in the eighth century B.C., Homer began composing an epic poem, *The Odyssey*, which would become one of the most influential pieces of literature in history. More than two millennia later, the classic has been translated into American Sign Language (ASL) for the first time — by a St. Mary’s University alumna.

Leigh Ann Cowan, who earned her Master of Arts in English Literature and Language in 2020, said her choice of base text came down to *The Odyssey* or the similarly aged epic poem *Beowulf*.

In Spring 2019, Cowan, who was born deaf, passingly mentioned her interest in creating an ASL interpretation of a classical piece of literature to Mary Lynne Gasaway Hill, Ph.D., Graduate Program Director and Professor of English Literature and Language. Because Gasaway Hill “essentially volun-told me to get to work on it,” Cowan thanks her for the impetus.

## The odyssey begins

Cowan acquired a recent translation of *The Odyssey* by Emily Wilson, Ph.D. — the first female scholar to translate Homer’s epic into English — a “deciding factor” for Cowan.

She emailed Wilson, Professor of Classical Studies at the University of Pennsylvania, to ask permission to use her translation.

“I became awestruck at how she managed to use contemporary English and retain the meter alliteration, personification and other literary devices throughout to stay as true as possible to the spirit of the story,” Cowan said.

Wilson’s 2017 translation transformed ancient Greek into modern parlance, which critics widely praised. An article by *The New York Times Magazine* stated that Wilson’s new interpretation of the word *polytropos* as “complicated” to describe Odysseus’ character, for example,

displayed her “brilliance” due to her “seeming straightforwardness.”

On constructing a new translation, Wilson told *Gold & Blue* magazine that one of her “main goals was to use very regular meter — iambic pentameter — to encourage read-aloud-ability and tap into the poem’s oral heritage.”

## An epic creation

With assistance from Kate Aultman, Ph.D., Director of Special Projects, Academic Research and Compliance, Cowan received a \$1,500 grant from Humanities Texas, which is the state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Then, with support from Williamson Lehman (B.A. '19) and English senior Josh Collins, Cowan set on a quest to complete her ASL translation — even in the midst of the pandemic.



Photo by Brian Wilson

“With 500 miles between us, it took a lot of adaptation and coordination to edit everything into the finished project on YouTube,” said Cowan of the two-day filming with Collins after campus implemented coronavirus precautions in the spring.

They sent the script and timestamps for each recorded segment to Lehman so he could record voice-overs.

In 10 videos ranging from 26 minutes to 54 minutes, Cowan — clad in black — performed Homer’s translated words with the dramatic flair of a Shakespearean stage actor while Lehman’s gruff voice narrated the action.

The YouTube channel, *The Odyssey Filming Project*, houses Cowan’s videos.

Upon watching Cowan’s work, Wilson was impressed.

“Meter can’t happen in quite the same way in ASL, but I know Leigh Ann was very conscious of pacing and timing in her ASL version,” she said. “It feels entirely appropriate that *The Odyssey*, a poem based on a centuries-long folk poetry oral tradition, designed to be experienced by audiences who had no knowledge of writing, let alone print, should be made accessible to as wide a range of people as possible.”

Hill called Cowan’s project “a manifestation of the St. Mary’s University snowball effect,” and a professional milestone.

“Prior to Leigh Ann, I had never taught a student who was deaf/hard of hearing,” she said. “It’s been a profound learning experience not only for myself, but for everyone in her classes and across our campus. It demonstrates how a responsive program and community like ours are flexible enough to help students identify their passions and how to pursue them.”

While Cowan’s project sparked from her passion for literature, she hopes her videos gain traction and inspire more ASL translations of seminal works. Next, she plans to reach out to deaf schools and interpreter programs nationwide, and she has begun a master’s in Deaf Studies at Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C.

“I want to generate interest in future literature interpretation projects and raise awareness for the need for qualified, professional outputs for a wide audience, not just the deaf and hard of hearing,” she said. ■

# READY, PLAYER ONE

NEW ST. MARY'S COACH  
AMONG FIRST FEMALE  
VARSITY COLLEGIATE  
ESPORTS COACHES

▶ BY TOM NORRIS



▲ Rattler Esports Head Coach Katilin Teniente scopes out the new Spectrum Esports Arena in the University Center.



**B**reaking into the world of esports has been a challenge for women. Leadership opportunities in the rapidly growing industry often are not available or the barriers are too steep. At St. Mary's University, Kaitlin Teniente found her chance to become the first head coach — leading the new varsity Esports Program.

Teniente, a San Antonio native, is among the first women to lead a collegiate esports program across the country.

Early in her esports participation as a competitive League of Legends player, Teniente saw first-hand the challenges women face in the male-dominated landscape. Fellow male gamers would tell her not to be aggressive when she offered feedback during the mostly male-led student club meetings or went against the “way things have always been” in esports. Rather than deter her, the experiences propelled Teniente into leadership opportunities beyond the level of student clubs.

Esports teams participate in competitive, organized gaming commonly played in teams that vary depending on the game. Team members may all be present in an arena during competition, but often players connect online to compete remotely. At St. Mary's, each player locks into one game: Fortnite, League of Legends, Overwatch or Rainbow Six Siege.

## **ENCOURAGING TEAMWORK**

Teniente got her first taste of coaching as a student at the University of Texas at San Antonio when she and a classmate ran their own events for players of all skill levels. Promoting a zero-tolerance policy on toxicity, she helped coordinate five esports events in conjunction with the school's club — each event yielding more than 40 players.

“My vision is to see the Esports Program at St. Mary's be more than ‘competitive video games,’” she said. “I want the program to be a source of pride for both students and the University.”

For players especially, she said, “I want them to walk away from the program having a positive and memorable college experience where they felt included and valued.”

“This is not just about gaming,” said St. Mary's University Director of Athletics Robert Coleman. “Engaging students in esports can help them build critical-thinking skills, encourage teamwork and innovation, and promote self-directed learning.”

For senior Forensic Science (Criminology) major and student-athlete Teresa Lee, being a part of the Esports Program is about competing and connecting. After injuries ended Lee's basketball career, her competitive spirit stuck with her, turning her attention to competitive gaming playing Fortnite.

“When I received an email about St. Mary's adding an esports program, I thought, ‘This is my moment to prove to myself and my family I can play a collegiate sport,’” Lee said.

Lee hopes to build lifelong connections and help lay the foundation for future generations of Rattler Esports athletes.

## **BUILDING COMMUNITY**

When named the first St. Mary's Esports Head Coach, Teniente quickly realized the lack of a gaming community on campus. She saw her new position as an opportunity to build that community from the ground up.

Teniente hopes that growing community will bridge new friendships and an everlasting love for the sport.

“As we continue building the community, we want it to be inclusive and diverse,” Teniente said. “We want everyone to feel like they have a place here, regardless of whether they are going to be a competitive gamer.” ■

# PIVOTING WITH EXCELLENCE

## ST. MARY'S COMMUNITY ADAPTS IN RESPONSE TO PANDEMIC

**T**eams succeed because their members are connected and committed to each other — because one person can bring different skills and abilities to a shared mission.

At St. Mary's University, at no time in our history has our ability to succeed as a team been tested as it has amid the COVID-19 pandemic. At no time has our ability to come together ensured the future of the University and our region as we have this year. Faculty, staff, students and alumni each contributed in their own way — made *one degree* of positive difference — exemplifying the depth of our family spirit.

### MASK SQUAD TAKES ON SAFETY MEASURES

**N**ot all heroes wear capes. Some wear masks. The Mask Squad — a group of about 80 St. Mary's University students who were trained and are committed to the health and safety of every member of our community — have worked to stem the spread of COVID-19 on campus this fall.

The students encourage the University community to be safe and to practice the elements of the Protect St. Mary's Pledge, which include wearing a mask and social distancing.

"Being in the Mask Squad is very important since it is a key piece in keeping campus open for students," said senior Regina de la Parra, who is from Mexico and is double majoring in International and Global Studies, and Environmental Science. "I feel like I am helping the St. Mary's community stay safe and as normal as possible."

Amid the pandemic, fellow Mask Squad member, Francisco Olivas Carmona, an Industrial Engineering senior, said, "We get to help our residents and campus community try and stay safe in the best possible way."

To adapt, Olivas Carmona has had to scale back on visiting the brothers in the Marianist Residence in person as well as traveling home to Mexico to see his parents, but he's also embraced a new online learning style and technologies to benefit from the continued level of quality teaching at St. Mary's.

Similarly, Zyania Seijas, a senior from El Paso studying Finance and Risk Management, has adapted to the seeming isolation of virtual classes by pushing herself to leave her residence hall room and meet a friend outside in the garden to log in to class together.

"St. Mary's has taken a lot of good measures when planning to bring students back to campus," Seijas said. "And the campus, in general, has been good about safety — especially the residents. If you want to stay on campus, you must follow the rules and behave a certain way."

De la Parra said seeing those on campus become aware of the necessary safety practices has been a defining moment for her.

"It is amazing to think that we all consider each other part of this great community and are willing to sacrifice some comfort in order for everyone to be safe," she said. "I know I will never forget this."





## ALLISON GRAY, PH.D.

Associate Professor of Theology

**Q: What was your approach in switching to online learning in a short period of time?**

**A:** To address issues of access, I chose to make my courses mainly asynchronous. Each week, students work independently to complete a checklist of tasks through Canvas, with the option to meet with me during a daily office hour. I didn't want to require synchronous class meetings in case there was competition for a household's computer or students who traveled to places without internet (or in very different time zones). But I still wanted to make space so that students could engage with important theological concepts and talk about entertaining early Christian literature or ancient art. I transformed some assignments from papers into collaborative Google Docs so students could not only practice writing skills, but also see each other's reactions to the material. I've also tried to focus more on tasks that invite students to apply new concepts to our shared current experience or to think about how ideas expressed in our texts might impact living communities.

**Q: What are some new teaching methods you've picked up along the way?**

**A:** I've appreciated the challenge of boiling down each lesson into a few major takeaway points that I can summarize in a very short video lecturette, which students can watch before doing the reading, working through a PowerPoint, and completing a quiz or post. ... I'm now planning to incorporate these sorts of introductions into my regular teaching so students can read or watch them alongside their reading assignments.

## ALUMNA'S ADVICE AS NURSE DURING PANDEMIC: 'BE KINDER TO ONE ANOTHER'

**J**une 23, 2020. Riverside, California. A makeshift emergency room without air-conditioning inside the small Parkview Community Hospital serving mostly nursing home patients before the pandemic.

Marcie Alvarado (B.S. '11) is on her very last shift as a nurse there. That day, "we had three deaths and two codes (cardiac arrests) in the COVID-19 intensive care unit," she said.

Alvarado was caring for a patient with the novel coronavirus whose blood pressure and oxygenation were "textbook-perfect at the start of my shift," she said.

But, "something about her overall presentation did not sit well with me," Alvarado recalled.

She later checked the patient's cardiac monitor to devastating results.

"I knew she was leaving soon."

Alvarado phoned her pastor, then — for the first time in her career — served as a "vessel for giving the last rites" while the pastor prayed over speakerphone as she held her dying patient's hand.

"Throughout my conversations with (my patient), I paid attention to her steadfast faith, her gratitude," Alvarado said. "I noticed how she always said to me, 'Dios te bendiga, mija (God bless you, my daughter),' for just a simple cup of water."

Alvarado's journey to becoming a nurse began at St. Mary's University, where she discovered a perfect fit for her education and spiritual life. After St. Mary's, Alvarado earned a Master of Science in Nursing from Rush University in Chicago in 2013.

During a stint working in El Paso, she met her husband, who is a nurse anesthetist. This summer, the couple moved back to El Paso, where Alvarado is taking time off as a nurse to spend with her family.

"Life can be very hard, so be kinder to one another," Alvarado said.



## JUAN OCAMPO, PH.D.

Associate Professor of Mechanical Engineering and Co-Director of the Community for Teaching and Learning

**Q: What are some new teaching methods you've gained this year?**

**A:** Flipping the classroom and asking students to be prepared before they showed up to class so we can use class time for discussions and active learning. I also used Zoom breakout rooms to do project-based learning, which is to give a prompt or an activity to students so they can solve it as a group. They then come back to the main section in Zoom to share their ideas with the whole class.

**Q: What has been your biggest area for growth in teaching online thus far?**

**A:** To create assessment activities to better engage my students in an online environment. Some of those activities include coming up with no trivial, or single-solution, design problems, which students will discuss as a group and find the best solution for an engineering problem. For example, I asked my students to design a machine to build tall structures without using a crane using the principles of strength of materials. I was very happy with how creative they were in developing their designs.



## ACADEMIC TECHNOLOGY SERVICES STAFF STEP UP TO ENSURE SEAMLESS ONLINE INSTRUCTION

Prior to Spring 2020, Academic Technology Services provided Online Teaching Certification to about 12 faculty members each semester. Between April and the start of Fall 2020 classes, a staggering 170 faculty members completed the training.

“I don’t know how many hours we slept,” Executive Director Jeff Schomburg quipped. “I need about a year’s worth of rest and recuperation.”

The small team worked tirelessly to prepare as many professors as possible for online instruction.

“If we do everything we can to support the passion to teach, St. Mary’s will continue to scale to whatever challenges it has ahead,” Schomburg said.

Felicia Cruz (B.A. ’12, M.A. ’14), Ph.D., Director of Online Learning and Curriculum Innovation, felt blessed to give back to the faculty who once helped her.

“It was our time to really step up and show everyone that we’re here to help,” she said. “We did everything we could with the amount of time and resources that we had. All with a smile on our faces.”







## NELSON W. WOLFF (B.B.A. '66, J.D. '66)

Bexar County Judge

**Q: How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted your personal life?**

**A:** I do a daily broadcast (with San Antonio Mayor Ron Nirenberg), and we've been doing this since March, can you believe it? Seven days a week for a while; now it's five

days a week, every night at about 6 o'clock. Before the pandemic, I'd never heard of WebEx or Skype, and now, I'm able to do all of that. It's changed my life in the sense that I get a lot more done in a relatively short period of time. I do a lot more work at my library at home, which is cool.

**Q: How has the pandemic impacted your professional life?**

**A:** We expect about one-fourth of our workforce to continue to work at home after the COVID-19 pandemic. It's going to change our economy from low-end jobs that were in hotels and motels, and some of the jobs that automation has taken.

We'll be focusing on job training programs that will fit into industries like advanced manufacturing, health care and technology that are going to change the dynamics of the economy.

**Q: How have you reflected on your role in continuing the St. Mary's mission during this time?**

**A:** I'm big into therapeutic justice. The pandemic shows that when our jail population went down, we didn't have any more crime, because they (our police force) weren't charging people with minor

offenses. ... When I became Bexar County Judge, there were 4,000 people in jail. Twenty years later, we have 3,800 in jail and 500,000 more people moving to San Antonio. And that's because we've created therapeutic justice by creating specialty courts. We now have drug courts, veterans courts, where you work with somebody and you get them out on probation where they don't go into the jail. We have a reentry center. We have 80 or 90 social service agencies helping people when they come out. We're trying to put a lot of money into programs dealing with mental health and drug-use prevention.

**Q: How do you feel your St. Mary's education helped prepare you for your leadership role, especially in a time of uncertainty?**

**A:** St. Mary's is about compassion — caring for everybody, caring for the poor. St. Mary's taught me to be compassionate. I've noticed people walking around their neighborhoods, sitting on their front porches. They're making meaningful connections with other people who they never met before in their neighborhoods. There's some good coming out of this pandemic.

## MEN'S SOCCER CAPTAIN CONTINUES STUDIES FROM BRAZIL

**D**eni Cresto, a junior from Curitiba, Brazil, studying Exercise and Sport Science, often refers to a message from St. Mary's University Men's Soccer Head Coach Johnny Clifford when times get tough during the COVID-19 pandemic: "Control what you can control." The St. Mary's Men's Soccer captain has used the pandemic to take control of his academics, health and faith, even as the Men's Soccer competition was postponed in the fall on the heels of a Lone Star Conference winning season.

"In my own experience adapting to this new situation, I am in control of my daily training, study schedule and strengthening my relationship with my family and God," Cresto said. "I try to keep up with a daily schedule, going to bed and waking up at the same time, training in the morning, and studying and having online classes in the afternoon."

Despite taking classes virtually from Brazil, Cresto feels right at home in the St. Mary's community.

"Although I miss being on campus, going to in-person classes and interacting with people, I like how the online system is working," he said.

Cresto, who transferred to St. Mary's, said his first year taught him as long as he works hard, smart and with a purpose, he can achieve anything in life.





## ALEJANDRA “ALEX” LOPEZ (B.A. '99, M.P.A. '02)

**Economic Development Director,  
City of San Antonio**

**Q: What have you learned about yourself during the COVID-19 pandemic?**

**A:** The pandemic has made me appreciate interactions with people much more. ... As an introvert, I often find prolonged interactions, especially with strangers or only casual acquaintances, quite exhausting. Initially, physical distancing measures did not bother me much. But as the months have gone by, I feel more disconnected from friends and work team members, even though we are on video calls nonstop. The energy from human interaction cannot be replicated on the screen. ... I have also appreciated the opportunity to spend more time with my daughter. She is a senior in high school and will be going away for college next fall. Of the many challenges this pandemic has created, I will always remember this extra time I'm getting with her.

**Q: How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted your professional life?**

**A:** Our Economic Development team is quite nimble and effectively navigated through technological challenges. But there was no way for us to fully prepare for the magnitude of impact the pandemic has had on our economy. It has been especially challenging to see the disproportionate impacts the pandemic has had on our neighbors who already experienced the most barriers.

For the first couple months, it felt unreal to see the unemployment figures. I would brace myself on Thursday mornings, when national unemployment claim numbers are announced. Our work eventually shifted from response to recovery and has not slowed since April. I helped staff a COVID-19 Community Response Working Group that identified small business and workforce development recovery strategies. I was also part of the team that developed the City's Recovery and Resiliency Plan, which was approved by the San Antonio City Council in early June. I now have the privilege of executing the critical work associated with small business support and workforce development strategies included in that plan.

**Q: How have you reflected on your role in continuing the St. Mary's mission during this time?**

**A:** A commitment to service, focusing on those most in need, remains at the core of my personal and professional work. In particular, from an economic development perspective, I always remember that my work is in service to the people, our residents. We do what we do — help entrepreneurs launch new ideas, support small business owners, recruit and retain corporations that create well-paying jobs — centered around our residents, their well-being and economic inclusion.

**Q: How do you feel your St. Mary's education helped prepare you for a leadership role, especially amid uncertainty?**

**A:** I have often remembered the following concept from an introductory philosophy class: flexibility is a sign of life; the human body stiffens after death. This pandemic has required extreme flexibility, which doesn't always come easy for analytical, systems-oriented people like me. The need to execute at the speed of relevance is critical, pivoting and iterating along the way.

I have grown weary of the phrases “new normal” or “post-COVID,” maybe because I don't think we have reached either of these milestones. In my heart and in my mind, I firmly believe we will emerge from this pandemic as a stronger community by closing the gap between those who experienced growth and prosperity and those who, for generations, have been excluded from it.

## ROBBIE BISHOP- MONROE, D.B.A.

**Assistant Professor of Accounting**

**Q: What was your approach in switching to online learning quickly?**

**A:** First, to immediately adjust my mindset and accept that I would not be able to see my students in person and capture the in-person synergy from our class sessions. This was difficult to embrace. However, it challenged me to be creative with developing a remarkable virtual classroom experience.

Overall, my primary focus was on making the transition smoother for my students while incorporating the mission of St. Mary's University into the new online learning experience. I achieved this goal by adapting to a change in academic instructional delivery. For example, I've implemented multiple methods of engagement in my online courses. I was able to educate students in the family spirit by exhibiting flexibility and understanding while holding standards of educational excellence to provide an integral education.

**Q: What are some new teaching methods you've begun using?**

**A:** I created a lightboard video presentation to teach a bank reconciliation concept, launched polls during the virtual teaching sessions to engage students, created a virtual Zoom background based on a real picture from my classroom, and hosted guest speakers on Zoom for our class.

**Q: What has been most beneficial about virtual experiences?**

**A:** I was able to expand my availability to the students through flexible options. For example, I hosted virtual expanded office hours through Zoom including some weekend timeframes.





## SUNG-TAE (DANIEL) KIM, PH.D.

Assistant Professor of Finance and  
Quantitative Management

**Q: What has been your biggest opportunity for growth in teaching online thus far?**

**A:** I got used to speaking to the monitor. It felt awkward in the beginning and I always told my students (when they make presentations), “Do not speak to the screen.” But now I feel very comfortable talking with no audience! Additionally, I am planning on producing videos for other courses that I will teach in later semesters even after we go back to normal operations.

**Q: What has been most surprising about how society has responded?**

**A:** Organizations in many sectors are making full use of these technologies to confront the COVID-19 pandemic. Schools were able to go online and governments are utilizing technologies, such as big data or artificial intelligence, to identify, track and forecast outbreaks. Businesses are developing apps to facilitate services like delivering food and groceries. In addition, drone delivery is being used to deliver medical supplies.

## THE RATTLER IMPACT SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS OVER \$1.2 MILLION TO NEARLY 1,000 STUDENTS

In July, through the generosity of the St. Mary’s University Alumni Association, President Mengler and his wife, Mona, combined with University funds, St. Mary’s offered the Rattler Impact Scholarship to further support nearly 1,000 students in Fall 2020.

The Rattler Impact Scholarship was a direct reflection of the Marianist family spirit and the St. Mary’s commitment to taking care of their community in the midst of a pandemic.

When Carlos “Antonio” Rangel, a junior Criminal Justice major from San Antonio, first heard about the scholarship, his dad was in a rehab hospital after being on a ventilator for days due to contracting COVID-19.

“When I told my mom I got the scholarship, she was relieved. It was one less thing to worry about,” Rangel said.

After moving back home to Brownsville at the beginning of the public health emergency, Aracely Ortiz, a junior Biology major, was faced with uncertainty, like so many others. As a result of the pandemic, her mom lost her job, relying solely on her father’s income.

“The Rattler Impact Scholarship allowed me to continue to afford my education at St. Mary’s,” Ortiz said.

“2020 just keeps taking and taking,” said Sarah Nguyen, a junior Electrical Engineering major and recipient of the one-time scholarship.

Her great-aunt died of the coronavirus and, shortly after the semester began, her mom was diagnosed with cancer.

“This semester has been really challenging,” said Nguyen, who added a silver lining: “spending extra time with my mom, dad and even my brother,” since they are all home together.

After losing her paid internship due to COVID-19, Nguyen worried she might have to take a gap year. Luckily, receiving the Rattler Impact Scholarship gave her “the ability to focus on other things,” Nguyen said, “a real blessing.”



Sarah Nguyen, left and Aracely Ortiz



## GEORGE HERNANDEZ JR. (B.A. '74), J.D.

President and CEO, University Health System  
St. Mary's University Trustee

### Q: How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted your personal life?

**A:** One of the wonderful traits of being human is our ability to adapt rapidly to a changing environment. We do this by our ability to communicate, socialize and plan with others to achieve common goals. The pandemic has limited our personal interactions and social outlets because of its global nature. So, like many others, my personal life centers on the immediate family. The most difficult personal issue has been the inability to go to Mass regularly.

### Q: How has the pandemic impacted your professional life?

**A:** Like other health care workers, we have had to address the pandemic directly. Thus, our professional lives are busier than ever. I can say that all the health systems in San Antonio have done an outstanding job in working together, sharing COVID-19

containment strategies and caring for persons with COVID-19. This is classic San Antonio — we all work well together even if we're competitors.

That said, the biggest challenge we face is a surge of COVID-19 patients, which outstrips our hospitals' resources. So, we work on messaging aimed at convincing the public that good prevention practices, like face masks, social distancing and proper hand-washing are essential.

### Q: How do you feel your St. Mary's education helped prepare you for your leadership role during this uncertain time?

**A:** Life is always uncertain, so COVID-19 did not create uncertainty but additional complexity instead. One of the great benefits of a liberal arts education is its emphasis on a broad education in a variety of core disciplines that develop a wide range of skills. The role of a CEO requires a variety of skills to help juggle issues and eventually resolve them. The best analogy I have for a CEO is that of a symphony conductor. You don't play an orchestra instrument, but how you move your baton makes a big difference in whether your organization plays great music.

## COMMUNICATIONS PROFESSOR PUTS STUDENT NEEDS FIRST

Taking advantage of the flexibilities of online learning, Communications Assistant Professor Amanda Hill, Ph.D., has made virtual learning more beneficial for all her students.

"Virtual teaching has given me space to encourage students to focus on the research and endeavors that they have a lot of zest for, hopefully keeping their curiosity on a topic throughout a semester," said Hill, who taught class from Colorado this fall. "Being asynchronous online has allowed me to better focus on the students as individuals with individual goals."

Being a relatively recent student and Co-Director of the Community for Teaching and Learning, Hill had a head start in the transition to online learning as a professor. She implemented a new grading system so that her students could dive into learning the material, rather than completing work solely for a passing grade.

"I adopted a specifications grading system so that the focus isn't on a one-shot attempt to get the highest grade," Hill said. "Students work from a list of specifications that each assignment needs to meet; if the work doesn't meet the expectations, then we discuss ways to revise. The emphasis on revision means that students have the chance to grow and learn from their experiences and use the tools and techniques learned in class to a greater effect."

Hill quickly recognized that her students' priorities shifted during the pandemic and put their needs first.

"For some students, classwork might not be their main focus anymore," she said. "I tried to allow for flexibility in my course requirements so that students could complete their work within their own time frames."





## HUGO P. SALAZAR JR., M.D.

St. Mary's University Student Health Center Physician

### Q: How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted your work?

**A:** The University itself began to talk about COVID-19 when we finished with the winter break. We were already discussing things like what if something happens, what if it starts creeping into the United States, Texas or San Antonio? We were able to think through some basic planning. Later in the spring, the school decided to send everyone home and keep everyone safe.

I've had to apply my knowledge and help the University figure out plans when plans weren't coming from anyone. We didn't know much about the virus and tried to get everything done as quickly as we could and as safely as we could with the little information we had.

### Q: What was your approach in switching to things like virtual services in a short period of time?

**A:** We are fortunate to have electronic health records instead of paper charting. It made it relatively easy to transition to providing telemedicine visits for our students. ... Since we could provide telemedicine visits, our students could refill their asthma inhaler or get a rash seen. That was a considerable adaptation.

### Q: How have you reflected on your role in continuing the St. Mary's mission during this time?

**A:** I think the part of the mission that stands out the most for me is adaptation and change. ... We kept reminding ourselves that, even though things are changing, it's in our mission. It's on us to not only adapt to these situations, but adapt to them safely. To see everybody, early on, recognize this as something we need to do for our community's betterment was exceptional. We know we need to re-evaluate, adjust and live the mission to keep everyone safe.

## RATTLER SUCCESS CENTER SUPPORTS STUDENTS IN ONLINE LEARNING

As the University made the transition to online, the Rattler Success Center (RSC) was one step ahead, having already begun online tutoring earlier in the 2019-2020 academic year.

"We were ready from Day One," said Patricia Medina, Director of the Rattler Success Center and Academic Success Programs.

The RSC houses the offices of Academic Advising and Academic Support Services, the writing and tutoring center, academic peer coaching and other student support services. When the pandemic hit, its staff immediately began focusing on what students needed in the move to an online learning environment.



Patricia Medina, left, and Graciela Lopez-Fuentes

The RSC staff worked with the STRIVE Career Center to hold several virtual workshops, helping students who were unfamiliar with taking online classes or utilizing tools like Zoom. Staff also offered tips for students to set up online learning environments.

The advising team prepped for priority advising and registration, which normally requires students to meet in person with

advisers. Advisers reached out to students via Zoom, email and phone, and made themselves available on the weekends.

"We want to make sure that students still feel connected," said Graciela Lopez-Fuentes, Director of Academic Advising. "We're there virtually for them."

## HOUSEKEEPING STAFF CONTINUE THEIR SPOTLESS RECORD

During a pandemic, proper cleaning is crucial. Fortunately for the St. Mary's community, the Housekeeping Department went above and beyond even before COVID-19.

When Housekeeping Superintendent David Campos received coronavirus disinfectant protocols, his response was clear: "We already got it covered."

Despite the pressure to keep thousands of students, faculty and staff healthy, the team used it as an opportunity to support one another.

"I'm the type to work side-by-side with my staff," Campos said. "We're a family around here — we have to make sure we help each other out."

Housekeeping Team Leader Terry Clemons and Housekeeper Mary Leal were among those who stepped up.

"If you work as a team, you'll get nothing but positive results," Clemons said.

For Leal, she sees her role as part of a bigger mission: "We have to be like ants. We pick up that little crumb and carry it together."

And her dedication continues to be unwavering.

"If we have to clean something 10 times in a day, that's what we're here for," Leal said. ■

Left to right, Terry Clemons, Mary Leal and David Campos



# BRIDGING THE GAP

## *Sociology professor helps launch new Public Health certificate*

*by Jennifer R. Lloyd (M.B.A. '16)*

Photo by Robin Jerstad

Discrimination. Income level. Access to health care. Occupation. Housing. Education.

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought into stark view America's health disparities based on these and other factors outlined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

“**This certificate will reinforce the need to love and respect people.**”

At no time in modern history has the need for public health expertise been more striking, nor has the call to rectify inequities in the nation's public health system been louder.

“It's just a prime opportunity to get students to understand how important the health of various groups of people is,” said Assistant Professor of Sociology Sue P. Nash, Ph.D., whose expertise and courses will provide part of the framework for a new Certificate in Public Health launching in Fall 2021.

Nash will co-direct the new 12-credit hour certificate program — offered by the

Sociology Department in the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences — with Janet Armitage, Ph.D., the Chair and Associate Professor of Sociology who has pushed for the new certificate for several years.

“This certificate is important because it allows students to connect what's happening in their families to what's happening in their city, San Antonio, to what's happening beyond them,” Nash said.

She worked in public health before earning her Ph.D. in sociology, which she said extended that interest because sociology is the study of groups and public health efforts require analyzing the health of groups as well. For instance, she studied intimate partner violence and, through sociology, gained the tools to understand the public health issues she had observed.

Her students often start “boxed in” to understanding their own personal lives. Through her courses, she helps them situate their perspective in a broader social context to recognize they are not alone in these issues common to groups of people, families and communities.

“Take obesity as an example. Students may think, ‘I'm obese because I'm not eating well,’ or ‘That's just how my family is.’ But let's go beyond that to what's happening in

your community,” Nash said. “Do you have access to fresh produce? Is there fast food surrounding you and you don't have access to farmers markets? Those factors will really impact your personal health.”

Diamond Estrada, a senior Sociology major, was so hooked on the topic that she's begun an accelerated Master of Public Health at the University of Texas Health Center at Houston too.

“With everything that's going on recently, I felt like it was necessary to get into the health industry,” said Estrada, who aspires to better connect those with less income with public health resources. “My family has always dealt with health issues as well, so that was kind of an initiative to get started.”

For Nash, sharing the understanding of people from different age and background groups with students like Estrada prepares them to serve the public through cultural competence.

“Public health is in essence that — educating for service,” Nash said. “This certificate will reinforce the need to love and respect people.” ■

# Seeking understanding

## *The graduate counseling program prepares the next generation of mental health professionals*

by Brooke Blanton Leith

One in five U.S. adults experiences mental illness, according to the National Alliance on Mental Illness.

But help is on the way. The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that employment of substance abuse, behavioral disorder and mental health counselors will grow 25% this decade.

In San Antonio, many of these future counselors get their start at St. Mary's University, where the Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling degree has experienced tremendous growth. During the Fall 2020 semester, 69 students were enrolled in the program, making it the second most popular graduate program.

Program Director Melanie Harper, Ph.D., encourages students from all walks of life to enroll. Since she joined St. Mary's in 2007, Harper has taught students from India, Saudi Arabia, Peru and Turkey, as well as those coming from careers in the military, education and waste management.

"I've taught people in their 80s all the way down to those who came straight out of undergrad," Harper said.

Although Harper's students come from different backgrounds, she has noticed among them a commonality: the desire to help others.

"They're looking around and saying, 'I want to do more. I want to make more of an impact,'" she said.

Asia Robinson enrolled in the program in Fall 2020 after completing a bachelor's degree in her hometown of St. Louis. She chose St. Mary's because of the private, liberal arts atmosphere.

"People go to counseling because they're discouraged," she said. "They're looking for a better understanding of themselves and life."

She wants to help alleviate the stigma surrounding counseling among African Americans. The populations she's interested in working with are children, people with disabilities and those experiencing homelessness.

**"Students are interested in counseling because they want to help people, especially the disenfranchised."**



Photo by Robin Jerstad

Play therapy puppets surround counseling student Asia Robinson in the Family Life Center, where supervised students provide counseling to the community.

"I'm still exploring," she said. "My classes are teaching me about myself and how I will be as a professional."

After earning a master's degree in Sociology from the University of North Texas and working as an adjunct professor, Benjamin Tolleson was at a career crossroads when a colleague suggested he join the mental health field.

"I was pondering and praying about it, and then I had three people on three different occasions tell me stuff they had never told anyone," Tolleson said. He knew then that he was onto something and enrolled at St. Mary's in Fall 2019.

He hopes to help young adults, like those he once taught, or clients who have experienced trauma — a population he worked with during his practicum at the Family Life Center at St. Mary's.

"People are recognizing the need for mental health right now," Harper said.

She believes widespread traumatic experiences, such as the COVID-19 pandemic and mass shootings, have contributed to a shift in the perception of mental health. The growth of the program at St. Mary's is no surprise to her.

"Students are interested in counseling because they want to help people, especially the disenfranchised," she said. "They look at the mission of the University being tied so closely with social justice and it's not a hard sell." ■



# ACE TO PH.D.

## *Rattler Baseball player graduates to research scientist*

by Alex Z. Salinas (B.A. '11, M.A. '19)

Like young baseball fans around the world, Jeff Wigdahl dreamed of making the big league — Major League Baseball.

The San Antonio native began playing organized baseball at age 6 and vividly recalled watching with his dad the Los Angeles Dodgers win the 1988 World Series, a moment that inspired him to swing for the professional ranks.

Wigdahl (B.S. '10), whose later career curved into unexpected territory — from minor league baseballer to dedicated researcher for a biomedical company specializing in eye and foot care — chose to play pitcher because he said he “wasn’t much of an athlete.”

“Mentally, if you’re tough, you can outthink the hitters,” he said. “Back then, I was fiery. I wanted to make every hitter look bad.”

That toughness signaled his future success in academia too — an arena in which he has a master’s degree in Electrical Engineering and a Ph.D. in Biomedical Engineering.

### ◆ FIRST BASE

In his senior year at Taft High School in San Antonio, Wigdahl received baseball and academic scholarships from St. Mary’s University and clicked immediately with the coaches.

Charlie Migl, Head Baseball Coach, said he knew “right away that Jeff was a really smart guy.”

“He was quiet, but when he said something, you knew he’d thought it through,” Migl said.

Wigdahl acknowledged he had “no clue” what he wanted to do beyond baseball, though he felt he was decent at math and science. He majored in Electrical Engineering, a program in which he struck lasting connections with St. Mary’s professors.

Wigdahl wound up for a miraculous first season with Rattler Baseball, helping

the team win the 2001 NCAA Division II National Championship and propelling a number of players into the MLB.

Standing 6 feet tall and pitching lefty, Wigdahl played for Rattler Baseball until 2004 and holds the career record for strikeouts per nine innings at just over 11.

“Jeff had an outstanding career here,” Migl said. “He’s one of our best leaders and best players to come through.”

### ◆ SECOND BASE

In 2004, the Houston Astros drafted Wigdahl in the 23rd round and he put his college education on hold.

Wigdahl’s first stop in the minor league was with the Tri-City ValleyCats in upstate New York. He also logged time with the Lexington Legends in Kentucky, the team formerly called the Salem Avalanche in Virginia and the Corpus Christi Hooks before retiring in 2007.

Meanwhile, Wigdahl stayed in touch with Electrical Engineering Professor Bahman Rezaie, Ph.D., who’d planted the seed for him to finish what he started at St. Mary’s.

### ♥ STEALING HOME

“While Jeff was in minor league, he visited me in my office and brought me his baseball card that he was very proud of,” Rezaie said. “To this day, his card sits on my wall of honor in my office.”

This winning bond with a mentor led to Wigdahl’s return to St. Mary’s in 2008 to finish his Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering.

Wigdahl said professors, such as Rezaie and Djaffer Ibaroudene, Ph.D., Professor of Computer Engineering, “didn’t pull any punches,” teaching him valuable programming knowledge he incorporates to this day in developing software for medical use.

After graduating from St. Mary’s in 2010, Wigdahl, with Rezaie’s assistance, landed

a paid internship at New Mexico-based VisionQuest Biomedical, which develops image-based technology for patients with eye disease and diabetes.

Wigdahl was quickly promoted to researcher and has remained with VisionQuest Biomedical. The company funded his master’s degree from the University of New Mexico and supported his three years at the University of Padua in Italy to earn his doctorate.

Recently, he worked on software for an iPhone app for doctors that alerts them to retinal problems in premature babies.

“We look at retinal images of the inner eye,” he said. “Several eye diseases can be detected through digital images, and we, ultimately, teach computers how to detect those diseases through the images.”

“From home, I write code for hours and hours,” said Wigdahl, who lives in Dallas. “It’s not baseball, but I take pride in my work knowing we’re helping people keep their vision and their feet.”

Wigdahl credited much of his vision for success to St. Mary’s.

“I did so much better the second time around,” he said. “I hit the engineering books hard and received a top-notch education. It’s a credit to the professors, who are all available to you.” ■

“I take pride in my work knowing we're helping people keep their vision and their feet.”



# CLASSNOTES *alumni news*

## 1960s

**Melvin “Mel” Eichelbaum, J.D., B.B.A. '64**, San Antonio, attorney emeritus, has published his memoir, *The Legal Aid Lawyer*, detailing the major civil rights and poverty law reform cases in which he was engaged, some of which went to the U.S. Supreme Court and made legal history.

## 1970s

**Terry Tuck, B.A. '73**, Plano, longtime baseball coach for the Plano Senior High School Wildcats, is a nominee for the Texas High School Baseball Coaches Hall of Fame. After leading the Wildcats for 23 years, Tuck moved to college baseball and is a pitching coach at the University of Texas at Dallas.

**Michelle “Shelley” Potter, B.A. '75**, San Antonio, retired as president of San Antonio Alliance of Teacher and Support Personnel, the city's largest public-sector union, after more than 35 years in leadership.

**Ron Bowman, B.A. '78, M.S. '80**, Boerne, the longest-serving city manager in Texas, was recognized by the Texas City Management Association with the 2020 Lifetime Achievement Award. Bowman began his career with the City of Boerne in 1980 and became Boerne's first city manager in 1995.

## 1980s

**Sylvia Borunda Firth, J.D., B.B.A. '81**, El Paso, former city attorney, is making history as the first El Pasoan and first Hispanic woman elected president of the State Bar of Texas.

**Lucy R. Rodriguez, B.A. '81**, Culver City, California, was a featured guest on the Latino Theater Company's online conversations series. A member of the company, Rodriguez has extensive theater training, including three years at Lee Strasberg Theatre and Film Institute in Los Angeles.

**Hansel Burley, Ph.D., B.A. '82**, Lubbock, recently moved from Texas Tech University to become Dean of the College of Education and Human Sciences at the University of New Mexico.

**Anthony (Tony) Jimenez, B.A.S. '84**, Great Falls, Virginia, is Webster University George Herbert Walker School of Business and Technology's Outstanding Alumnus for 2020. Jimenez is the CEO and founder of MicroTech, a successful Hispanic-owned technology company.

**Sandra Laurel, B.B.A. '86, J.D. '89;** and **S. Tyler Rutherford, B.A. '89, J.D. '96**, San Antonio, have joined the personal injury firm of Carabin Shaw.

**Oscar A. Troncoso, Ph.D., B.A. '87**, El Paso, is in his second year as superintendent of the Anthony Independent School District, a rural school district in west El Paso County serving 850 students pre-K-12.

**Ben Dunn, CL '88**, Mesquite, has been publishing comic books for more than 30 years. His 1994 comic book, *Warrior Nuns Areala*, was the genesis for one of the most popular series of its genre on Netflix. *Warrior Nuns*, which has been renewed for a second season is, according to an article in *Texas Monthly*, based on Dunn's comic that “told the story of an order of nuns, imbued with holy power and tasked with fighting demons.”

**Debra Guerrero, B.A. '88**, San Antonio, is senior vice president of strategic partnerships and government relations for the NRP Group, which is committed to building affordable housing for individuals and families, regardless of income.

**Carlos Martinez, B.A. '88, M.S. '89**, San Antonio, is Chief of Staff in the Office of the President at the University of Texas at San Antonio.

**Sister Norma Pimentel, M.A. '89**, Brownsville, executive director of Rio Grande Valley Catholic Charities and nationally known for her work with migrants along the U.S.-Mexican border, is one of *Time* magazine's 100 most influential people in the world for 2020.

## 1990s

**Mark Haby, B.A. '91, J.D. '95**, Castroville, district attorney for the 38th Judicial District that encompasses Medina, Uvalde and Real counties, was featured

in the *Divine News* in an article that focused on Haby's hard line on violent and repeat offenders and his streamlining of the district attorney's office. Beginning in 2021, his office will handle only Medina County cases.

**Rolando Pablos, B.A. '92, J.D. '98**, San Antonio, is managing partner of Cross-National Advisory Partners, a consulting firm dedicated to guiding and assisting governmental, private sector and nonprofit organizations in their efforts to access domestic and foreign markets. Pablos is on the advisory board of USA Rare Earth, LLC, the funding and development partner of the Round Top Heavy Rare Earth and Critical Minerals Project in West Texas.

**Steve Rosenauer, B.A. '92, M.A. '96**, San Antonio, who served for 25 years as executive director of the St. Mary's University Alumni Association's Fiesta Oyster Bake, is the new executive director of the Fiesta San Antonio Commission, which helps lead more than 100 events during Fiesta San Antonio.

**Kristina K. Laurel Hale, J.D., B.S. '93**, Laredo, the first female city attorney in the history of Laredo, has been approved by the Laredo City Council to be assistant city manager. She is responsible for several city departments and assists both the deputy city manager and the city manager in running city services and affairs.

**Conrad M. Hein, B.B.A. '93**, Northville, Michigan, is chief financial officer for Aludyne, a global lightweighting solutions and components supplier to the mobility industry. As CFO, Hein will manage the company's IT and supply chain organizations and direct all financial functions.

**Magda Garza, B.B.A. '97**, Brownsville, marketing vice president of communications for Vamos, earned an industry certification by the Promotional Products International Association (PPAI). She obtained the advertising specialist certification and is now working toward the master advertising specialist certification. PPAI certification demonstrates a commitment to both business excellence and continued professional growth.

**Jenee Gonzales, B.A. '97, J.D. '03**, San Antonio, is a member of the Leadership San Antonio Independent School District's Education Leadership Development Program Class of 2021. She is a founding member of the new nonprofit Con Corazón SA, whose mission is to promote and provide lasting solutions that address health inequity and emergency preparedness through resources for underprivileged communities.

**William E. “Bill” Marion II, M.S. '97**, Austin, works with the federal arm of consulting firm Accenture as managing director of growth and strategy in its defense and intelligence practice.

## 2000s

**Kris Balekian Hayes, M.B.A./J.D. '00**, Dallas, a family law attorney and managing partner of Balekian Hayes, PLLC, is included in the 27th edition of *The Best Lawyers in America*.

**Bhavna Dave, B.B.A. '01**, Falls Church, Virginia, is chief human resources officer of LaserShip, the largest regional e-commerce parcel carrier in the U.S. With more than 15 years of human resources experience, Dave is based in LaserShip's Vienna, Virginia, headquarters.

**Melissa Vela-Williamson, B.A. '02**, San Antonio, owner of MVW Communications, has earned the Accreditation in Public Relations (APR) that measures knowledge, skills and abilities in the practice of public relations.

**Artesia “Tess” House, B.A. '04, J.D. '14**, San Antonio, a family law attorney, was featured by FOXSanAntonio. In *SA STRONG: Local lawyer using her voice to educate others about racism*, House discussed racism and encouraged conversations among diverse individuals and groups.

**Karen Lee Rolirad, M.S. '04**, San Antonio, executive director of Bexar County Military and Veterans Services Center, is the San Antonio Business Journal's 2020 Women's Leadership Award recipient in the category of Career and Workplace.

**Krystal Dee (Sheeran) Bollinger, B.B.A. '05**, Panama City, Florida, and Charles Bollinger III married on Feb. 29, 2020, in San Antonio at the Omni La Mansion del Rio, the former site of St. Mary's College and the St. Mary's University School of Law.

**Kiran Bains, B.A. '06**, San Antonio, was one of 20 activists selected from South Africa and the United States for the 2020 class of the Atlantic Fellows for Racial Equity. She joins an enduring network of leaders working across issues, approaches and geographies to challenge anti-Black racism and build the policies, institutions and narratives needed for a more equitable future.

**Denise Rodriguez, B.A. '06**, Fort Worth, is the assistant director/deputy police monitor for the City of Fort Worth's Office of the Police Oversight Monitor.

**Lizeth Cuellar, B.A. '07**, Laredo, was appointed by Texas Gov. Greg Abbott to the Texas School Safety Center Board, which reports to the Governor, the Legislature, the State Board of Education and the Texas Education Agency regarding school safety and security, and advises the center on its function, budget and strategic planning initiatives.

**Patricia Garcia Luna, B.S. '07**, and sister **Theresa Garcia, B.A. '10**, San Antonio, are vice president of administration and vice president of operations, respectively, for Division Laundry & Cleaners, which provides commercial laundry services for South and Central Texas. They were featured in American Laundry News about the challenges women face in the *Spotlight on Women in Laundry (Part 1)*.

**Robert Massie, B.A.M. '07, M.S. '14**, San Antonio, received his Doctor of Computer Science in June from Colorado Technical University.

**Marina J. Gonzales, B.A. '08**, San Antonio, most recently president and CEO of Child Advocates San Antonio, is president and CEO of the San Antonio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.

**Valerie Lisette Cobos, B.A. '09, M.P.A. '11**, San Antonio, was selected by Delta Zeta Sorority as a recipient of the 2020 35 Under 35 award, which highlights alumnae who are outstanding young professionals making a significant impact in their industry.

**Elizabeth Henderson, J.D., B.A. '09**, Redmond, Washington, joined Microsoft Corp. in March 2020 as an attorney in the company's corporate, external and legal affairs group.

## 2010s

**Miguel Arroyo, M.D., B.S. '10**, El Paso, completed a residency in pediatric emergency medicine in Houston and accepted a position as a pediatric emergency medicine attending physician at El Paso Children's Hospital.

**Vanessa Villalpando Elsayed, M.A. '10**, San Antonio, returned from the United Arab Emirates to the United States after living and working abroad for nearly three years at American University of Sharjah. She is working at San Antonio College and as a realtor for Keller Williams.

**Nicholas Wight, B.B.A. '10**, and **Felicia (Torres) Wight, B.A. '13**, Georgetown, Kentucky, report that since meeting at St. Mary's as students they have married, made innumerable memories and now are proud parents of twin boys.

**Richard Montez, B.A. '12**, San Antonio, director of member services for the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, is a finalist in a program that recognizes emerging Latinx community leaders.

**Javier Villarreal, B.A. '12**, Laredo, after earning a master's in Public Administration, started working at a nonprofit organization and began a master's program in Health Administration.

**Meghan Garza, M.B.A. '13**, San Antonio, president and CEO of CHR Partners Inc., is the San Antonio Business Journal's 2020 Women's Leadership Award recipient in the category of philanthropy and nonprofits.

**Kirsch Wilberg, M.A. '13**, Belle Chasse, Iowa, who served for the past four years a principal of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, is the new principal at Holy Name of Jesus School in New Orleans.

**Dominic Bewley, B.S. '14**, Las Cruces, New Mexico, recently co-wrote and co-illustrated a children's book about the novel coronavirus to help youngsters better understand the world's current situation, according to the Las Cruces Sun News. The book, *Hi, My Name is Corona!: COVID-19*, is available through Barnes & Noble.

**Gabriela "Gabby" Diaz, B.B.A. '14, M.B.A. '16**, San Antonio, is starting a new position as risk analyst lead at USAA.

**Emily Morales, B.A. '14**, Houston, completed a master's in Counseling and works in mental health services for client care. She is currently studying for licensure.

**Eric Michael Garza, M.B.A. '15, J.D. '16**, San Antonio, after serving two years as vice chair of the Texas State Bar's Legal Service to the Poor in Civil Matters Committee, is now chair of the committee.

**Kiara Brown B.A. '16**, Austin, is pursuing a master's in Marriage, Couples and Family Therapy at Lamar University.

**Tyler L. Dudley, B.A. '17**, Brooklyn, New York, is pursuing a graduate degree at Syracuse University.

**Faith Escobar, M.B.A. '19**, Edinburg, has moved into health care administration since earning her MBA and is medical staff director at the hospital where she works.

**Jesus Valencia, B.S. '19**, San Antonio, is one of 15 minority students awarded scholarships by the Texas Medical Association to attend medical school. He will attend UT Southwestern Medical School in Dallas and plans to practice in a medically underserved rural area near El Paso.



Courtesy Photo

## REMEMBERING

# RUTH BADER GINSBURG

◀ (From left to right) In July 1995, Georgetown Law Professor Marty Ginsburg, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg and St. Mary's University School of Law Professors Gerald S. Reamey and Vincent R. Johnson (standing) hike along the Panoramaweg, a trail high in the Alps above Innsbruck, Austria. The Ginsburgs taught in the St. Mary's University School of Law's program in Innsbruck that summer.

# Welcome, future Rattlers!



**Allison Halpern Boerger, B.A. '02, M.A. '07,** San Antonio, and spouse welcomed Abraham Arnold on May 6, 2020.

**Derrick Alvarado, B.B.A. '04,** San Antonio, and spouse welcomed Derrick J. II on Aug. 8, 2020.

**Natalina (Pizzi) Martinez, B.B.A. '04, M.B.A. '05,** and **Alex Martinez, B.A. '04,** San Antonio, welcomed Annalicia on April 30, 2020.

**Monique (Edwards) West, B.B.A. '05, M.B.A. '09,** San Antonio, and spouse welcomed Marley Cornell on March 4, 2020.

**Edis Mekic, B.A. '06, M.A. '08,** and **Veronica (Pruneda) Mekic, B.A. '07,** San Antonio, welcomed Mia Noemi on Sept. 14, 2020.

**Gloriana (Perez) Cantú, B.A. '07,** Laredo, and spouse welcomed Nathan on July 25, 2020.

**Shawn Fitzsimmons, B.A. '07,** and **Ashley Montalbo Fitzsimmons, B.A. '08,** Fredericksburg, welcomed Owen Grady on June 18, 2020.

**Damien Ramirez, B.S. '07,** Grapevine, and spouse welcomed Maya on March 20, 2020.

**Sarah (Galvan) Schneider, B.A. '07, J.D. '11,** San Antonio, and spouse welcomed Andrew Eric on Sept. 4, 2020.

**Marie (Hulsey) LaCroix, B.B.A. '09,** El Paso, and spouse welcomed twins Emmitt Shawn and Bailey Lynn on June 13, 2020.

**Tracy (Elizalde) Morales, B.S. '09,** Southlake, and spouse welcomed Ryan Michael on Feb. 20, 2020.

**Adriana (Jimenez) Segura, B.A. '10,** and **Miguel Segura, B.B.A. '11,** San Antonio, welcomed Daniel in February 2020.

**Selena (Mendoza) Beverage, B.A. '11,** Macdona, and spouse welcomed Micaela Rose on Sept. 5, 2019.

**Chelsea Sykes-Wenske, B.A. '11, M.A. '14,** San Antonio, and spouse welcomed twins Oliver and Brody in July 2020.

**Lynzee (Villafranca) Hill, B.A. '12, M.P.A. '16,** San Antonio, and spouse welcomed Lincoln Dexter on May 25, 2020.

**Amanda Martinez-Walthall, B.B.A. '12,** San Antonio, and spouse welcomed Perry on June 20, 2020.

**Mariela Cadena, B.A. '13,** San Antonio, and spouse welcomed Pablo Esteban on Aug. 18, 2020.

**Selena (Rangel) Vasquez, B.A. '13,** and **Vincent Vasquez, B.A. '14,** Arlington, welcomed Maximo Joseph on June 10, 2020.

**Dennis Erazo, B.B.A. '15,** San Antonio, and spouse welcomed Joaquin Alberto on Sept. 23, 2020.

**Stephanie (Quiroz) Nuckols, B.S. '15,** Grapevine, and spouse welcomed Julia Elizabeth in May 2020.

**Faith Escobar, M.B.A. '19,** Edinburg, and spouse welcomed Easton Gray.



Photo by Robin Jerstad

# FRIENDS WE'LL MISS

## 1940s

**Robert C. "Bob" Mecke, CL '44,** San Antonio, Sept. 11, 2020

**Reeves L. Smith, D.D.S., CL '48,** San Antonio, May 12, 2020

## 1950s

**Robert Gene Coffman, B.A. '50,** Buford, Georgia, Aug. 10, 2020

**Frank Nick Pantuso, CL '51,** San Antonio, April 28, 2020

**Leo Edward Jauregui, CL '52,** San Antonio, Aug. 25, 2020

**Robert Burnett "Bob" Kerr, B.B.A. '52,** Spring Branch, Aug. 14, 2020

**Ramon Americo Galindo, B.B.A. '53,** San Antonio, March 11, 2020

**Eugene Grafe, B.B.A. '53,** Cuero, July 8, 2020

**Lt. Col. Clyde L. Morrison, U.S. Army, Ret., B.S. '53,** San Antonio, May 13, 2020

**William Frederick Black, B.B.A. '54,** San Antonio, May 21, 2020

**George Gordon Moore, B.B.A. '57,** Brenham, March 20, 2020

**John Joseph "Jack" Range, B.A. '57,** Germantown, Tennessee, July 13, 2020

**Thomas Michael Townsend Sr., B.B.A. '57,** Mission, Aug. 20, 2020

**Robert A. Hingst, B.B.A. '58,** Manakin Sabot, Virginia, May 30, 2020

**Woodson Anthony "Woody" Huggins, B.B.A. '58,** San Antonio, July 19, 2020

**Joseph F. Schreiber, B.B.A. '58,** San Antonio, May 1, 2020

**Paul Whiteman Hurley, B.S. '59, M.S. '67,** Fredericksburg, May 24, 2020

**Patrick Quinlan McCaffrey, B.B.A. '59,** Albuquerque, New Mexico, July 10, 2020

**Deacon Thomas L. Torres Jr., B.B.A. '59,** San Antonio, Aug. 13, 2020

## 1960s

**Sister Ferdinand "Ferdie" Connerney, SHSp, B.A. '60,** San Antonio, June 15, 2020

**John F. Friedland, B.A. '60,** San Antonio, June 20, 2020

**Ronnie Joseph Garcia, B.A. '60,** Denton, May 23, 2020

**Eugene Benedict Labay, B.B.A. '60, J.D. '65,** San Antonio, June 8, 2020

**Sister Angelina Kilbane, SHSp, B.A. '61, M.A. '67,** San Antonio, June 14, 2020

**Roberto Lachica, B.A. '61,** Brownsville, May 5, 2020

**Ray Gil Villanueva, B.A. '62,** San Antonio, April 5, 2020

**Martin A. Zerda, B.B.A. '62,** San Antonio, March 10, 2020

**Lynn Clarence Hervey, M.A. '63,** Corpus Christi, Sept. 1, 2020

**Manuel C. Vasquez, B.A. '63,** San Antonio, July 15, 2020

**Roy M. Mendoza, B.A. '64, M.A. '68,** San Antonio, March 5, 2020

**John Black, B.A. '65,** San Antonio, June 24, 2020

**Stephen D. Walsh, B.A. '65,** Glen Allen, Virginia, Aug. 19, 2020

**Col. Gus Nestor Gikas, U.S. Air Force, Ret., B.A. '67,** Baton Rouge, Louisiana, Sept. 22, 2020

**Catherine "Kitty" Alden Golightly, B.A. '67,** San Antonio, April 11, 2020

**Laurence Richard "Larry" Beneke, B.A. '68, M.A. '69,** San Antonio, June 9, 2020

**James Richard "Jimmy" Dunn, LL.B./J.D. '68,** Denison, Aug. 30, 2020

**Anthony Louis "Tony" Garza, B.B.A. '68,** Dallas, Aug. 13, 2020

**William "Bill" Hyder, J.D. '68,** Scottsdale, Arizona, Aug. 9, 2020

**Gloria Gosch Sparkman, M.A. '68,** San Antonio, Aug. 11, 2020

**The Hon. Gus James Strauss Jr., LL.B. '68,** New Ulm, April 28, 2020

**Evelyn Campbell Reed, B.A. '69, M.A. '71,** San Antonio, Sept. 4, 2020

## 1970s

**Gilbert E. Brosch, B.B.A. '70,** Aurora, Colorado, July 15, 2020

**Ken Burmeister, B.A. '70,** San Antonio, May 19, 2020

**James Leonard "Jim" Gaultney, B.B.A. '70,** Fredericksburg, July 22, 2020

**Charles Angelo "Chuck" Traynor, B.B.A. '70,** Goose Creek, South Carolina, May 1, 2020

**George Roger Walling, B.A. '70,** San Antonio, Aug. 21, 2020

**Sister Mary Redempta Bradley, CDP, M.A. '71,** San Antonio, July 19, 2020

**Bobbie Jean Smith Crowder, B.A. '71,** San Antonio, April 21, 2020

**Cecil L. "Don" Strong, J.D. '71,** San Antonio, July 30, 2020

**Hilario Castillo Tobias, B.A. '71,** San Antonio, June 8, 2020

**John Edward Hierholzer, B.A. '72, M.A. '11,** Fredericksburg, Sept. 15, 2020

**Barry Peterson, J.D. '72,** Amarillo, March 31, 2020

**Alton "Ray" Samsel, B.S. '72,** Pleasanton, Aug. 8, 2020

**Edward Spence "Corky" Cotrell, B.A. '73,** Live Oak, June 11, 2020

**Michael Henry Maldonado, B.B.A. '73,** San Antonio, May 19, 2020

**Marion A. "Al" Olson Jr., J.D. '73,** San Antonio, June 26, 2020

**Jack Minyard Partain Jr., J.D. '73,** Austin, June 19, 2020

**Sister Mary Francella Schaapveld, RSM, M.A. '73,** Oklahoma City, June 12, 2020

**Herbert Lee Schwartzman, B.B.A. '73,** San Antonio, July 21, 2020

**Pamela Yvonne Thomas, B.A. '73,** John's Creek, Georgia, March 16, 2020

**Judy Harris Brown, J.D. '74,** Arden Hill, Minnesota, Aug. 12, 2020

**Arthur Medwick Crisler, U.S. Army, Ret., B.A. '74,** Seguin, June 19, 2020

**Maj. Stuart H. Simms, U.S. Army, Ret., J.D. '74,** San Antonio, Sept. 7, 2020

**Sister Helen Louis Rivas, CDP, M.A. '75,** San Antonio, July 21, 2020

**Lt. Col. Donald D. Starnes, U.S. Army, Ret., M.A. '75,** Schertz, May 14, 2020

**Gabriel Ayala, B.A. '76,** Luling, Aug. 27, 2020

**Cathy Jean "Casey" (Washkoske) Cangi, B.A. '76,** Banks, Oregon, June 22, 2020

**Dennis "Denny" Daly, J.D. '76,** Trenton, New Jersey, March 7, 2020

**Timothy Tynan "Ty" Griesenbeck Jr., J.D. '76,** San Antonio, March 19, 2020

**Tommie Charles Lee, J.D. '76,** Lufkin, March 30, 2020

**Col. Robert Lynn Rhame, U.S. Air Force, Ret., M.S. '76,** Albuquerque, New Mexico, March 24, 2020

**John Paul "Jack" Rogers, B.B.A. '76,** San Antonio, May 29, 2020

**Jerry R. Rosson, J.D. '77,** San Antonio, April 1, 2020

**Sister Maria Guadalupe Herrera, RSM, M.A. '78,** Oklahoma City, June 5, 2020

**Derek Alden Howard, J.D. '78,** Austin, Aug. 1, 2020

**Frank Obregon, B.A. '78,** San Antonio, June 6, 2020

**Susan Schoggins Kirk Ramirez, M.B.A. '78,** San Antonio, May 25, 2020

**Lt. Col. Norma V. Busse, U.S. Army, Ret., J.D. '79,** San Antonio, July 12, 2020

**Genevieve C. "Ginny" Cruz, B.A. '79,** San Antonio, July 6, 2020

**David Rodriguez Weiner, J.D. '79,** Dallas, Sept. 26, 2020

*Continues on Page 28.*

## Friends we'll miss *continued from page 27.*

### 1980s

**John Anthony Aguillard, B.A.** '80, San Antonio, May 13, 2020

**Thomas M. "Tom" Root, J.D.** '80, Dickinson, July 13, 2020

**Christopher LeRoy Stein, J.D.** '80, Columbus, Sept. 16, 2020

**Gordon Dion Bailey, J.D.** '83, San Antonio, July 27, 2020

**Sister Martinette Rivers, OLS, M.A.** '83, Shreveport, Louisiana, Sept. 1, 2020

**Lydia Ovitz Powell, M.A.** '84, Converse, March 23, 2020

**Larry Steven Hearne, J.D.** '86, Floresville, July 23, 2019

**Shevaun Brigetta Horan, B.B.A.** '86, Boerne, March 10, 2020

**John James Curtis Jr., J.D.** '87, Fredericksburg, June 7, 2020

**John Raul "Johnny" Juarez II, B.B.A.** '87, San Antonio, June 13, 2020

**Alan Patrick Long, B.B.A.** '87, San Antonio, March 30, 2020

**Christopher D. Warren, J.D.** '87, Hattaras Island – Outer Banks, North Carolina, Sept. 18, 2018

**Anselmo Jesus "Chemo" Robledo Jr., B.A.** '89, Laredo, April 1, 2020

**Carol Annelise Vela, Ph.D., B.A.** '89, San Antonio, July 29, 2020

### 1990s

**David Earl Browne, B.B.A.** '90, Helotes, March 31, 2020

**Thomas Wesley Colvin, B.B.A.** '91, Fort Worth, July 27, 2020

**Bryan Kost, J.D.** '92, San Antonio, April 25, 2020

**Kim Mathers-Heffernan, J.D.** '92, Chicago, June 15, 2020

**Susan Towler Stacy, J.D.** '92, Pearsall, Sept. 9, 2019

**Linda Samuel-Treviño M.D., J.D.** '93, San Antonio, May 29, 2020

**Robert Hamilton, J.D.** '94, Lake Worth, Florida, May 9, 2020

**Diana "Dee Dee" Sims Lewis, Ph.D.** '94, San Antonio, May 26, 2020

**Melissa De Leon, PharmD, B.S.** '95, San Antonio, April 1, 2020

**Debra Lynn Parker, J.D.** '95, San Antonio, Sept. 19, 2020

### 2000s

**David Bowman, J.D.** '07, Dallas, May 1, 2020

**Lauren Emily Christoffel Weant, J.D.** '08, Fort Worth, Sept. 1, 2020

**Enrique M. "Quique" Matos, J.D.** '09, Austin, Sept. 23, 2020

### 2010s

**Joe Haeggquist, J.D.** '11, Vidor, June 5, 2020

### 2020s

**Amanda Roxanne Zavala, B.A.** '20, San Antonio, June 12, 2020

## Fondest Farewell

### **Armando Abney, Ph.D.**

Abney died May 25, 2020, in San Antonio after a long illness. Abney joined the St. Mary's University faculty more than 30 years ago. During that time, he contributed his expertise to the departments of Criminal Justice and Criminology, and Sociology. His classes overflowed with students who praised his teaching style and he worked tirelessly to prepare them for life after graduation.

Abney was a published scholar and he recently co-wrote a book on internships in criminology and criminal justice. He was a reviewer for the *National Social Science Journal*, a research director to several St. Mary's students doing projects with the McNair Scholars Program, and a research mentor for area high school students.

Abney was passionate about St. Mary's, and he had an abiding love for his alma mater, the University of Notre Dame. Several people on campus who were graduates of Notre Dame's football foes had running rivalries with him (friendly, of course) and each football season there would be a gift left quietly either for Abney or by Abney, depending on the game's outcome.

### **Jennifer Gutierrez-Lozano (CL '22)**

Gutierrez-Lozano, a native of Mission, died at the age of 25 on May 17, 2020, as the result of injuries sustained in an all-terrain vehicle accident in San Juan. A student at the St. Mary's University School of Law, she had completed her first year of classes and would have graduated with the Class of 2022. In her short time at the law school, Gutierrez-Lozano made an impression on students and faculty who viewed her as bright, energetic and talented. She was respected and well-liked throughout the law school community.

### **Alan Cirlin, Ph.D.**

Cirlin died May 13, 2020, after a struggle with Parkinson's Disease.

The longtime Professor of Communication and Speech Communication taught a range of courses, including argumentation and debate. He established, organized and developed the International Public Debate Association. During his more than 30-year tenure, his debate students gained national and international recognition. He was a master storyteller and punster.

Cirlin was especially a champion of his students, and he was committed to their success. He shared with *The Rattler*, "My biggest pride is taking care of my students and making sure they come out stronger than when they came in. I want to leave them with something usable and powerful to them."

### **The Rev. Laurence "Larry" Doersching, S.M. (B.A. '67)**

Doersching died May 27, 2020, in San Antonio, after a brief illness, at age 74 with 55 years of religious life. He got to know the Marianists in Milwaukee while attending high school and, in 2014, celebrated his 50th jubilee of being one of them.

Doersching entered novitiate, professed his first vows in 1964, final vows in 1968 and ordained as a priest in 1973. He attended St. Mary's as a student brother, earning a B.A. in 1967. Afterward, he taught in Marianist high schools before entering seminary in St. Louis.

After ordination, Doersching served as teacher, chaplain and administrator in Marianist schools in Texas and Florida. From 1986 to 1996 and from 2015 until his death, he served on the campus ministry staff at St. Mary's. He wrote that he appreciated the opportunity as a Marianist to be both a priest and teacher.

## *Fondest Farewell* continued.

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### ***Robert E. Engberg (B.B.A. '60)***

Engberg died July 31, 2020 in Kingsland. He earned a bachelor's in Business Administration from St. Mary's University, became a C.P.A., and continued his education at the Harvard Business School in its Program for Management Development.

Bob and Jeannine Engberg, originally from North Dakota, moved to San Antonio, married and raised three children. In 2007, he retired as president of Capitol Aggregates, a unit of the Zachry organization, after 45 years with the company. He considered it a privilege to serve others.

Engberg enthusiastically supported St. Mary's and the Marianists. He was president of the Alumni Association in 1983 and a University Trustee from 1991 to 1999. In 2005, the St. Mary's Alumni Association honored Engberg with its Distinguished Alumnus Award.

### ***The Rev. John Manahan, S.M. (B.A. '57, M.A. '77)***

Manahan died Sept. 16, 2020, at the St. Mary's Marianist Residence at the age of 87 with 66 years of religious life.

Manahan met the Marianists at high schools in St. Louis. After two years of college, he entered the novitiate, made first vows in 1954, perpetual vows in 1958 and ordained as a priest in 1968. He earned a bachelor's in English from St. Mary's in 1957 and a master's in Religious Education in 1977. He served the Province in many ways, including teaching, retreat ministry and parish work.

Manahan was well known at St. Mary's for often presiding over Mass at Assumption Chapel and assisting with student retreats led by University Ministry during and after 11 years as associate pastor and pastor of Holy Rosary Parish, adjacent to St. Mary's University, before retiring.

### ***Anthony "Tony" Kaufmann, Ph.D.***

Kaufmann, Dean Emeritus of the School of Science, Engineering and Technology died July 21, 2020. He taught in the Biology Department for 40 years, served as dean of the Graduate School for five years, and became the University's first dean of the School of Science, Engineering and Technology. He retired in May 2009.

During Kaufmann's 25 years of leadership, the School built a strong undergraduate pre-health program, giving students entrée to the best medical and dental schools. He built a strong faculty and expanded degree offerings in the sciences and engineering, including the forensic science degree. Also under his supervision, degree programs in Industrial Engineering and Electrical Engineering received and maintained accreditation by the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology.

Kaufmann was well respected in the community and especially by his students who, while challenged, considered him a consummate professor and always gave him outstanding reviews for his teaching and rigor.

### ***The Rev. Rudy Vela, S.M., D.Min. (B.A. '76)***

Vela died Sept. 29, 2020 in San Antonio at age 68 with 48 years of religious life. St. Mary's University Trustee, longtime Theology faculty member and administrator, he well-loved by colleagues and students.

Vela earned a bachelor's at St. Mary's in 1976. He completed a doctorate at Chicago Theological Union and returned to his alma mater in 2003 to teach. In 2009, Vela became the first Rector and second Vice President for Mission. His talents and energy focused on enhancing the Catholic and Marianist character of the University and were integral in advancing the University's mission and identity.

A favorite signature project of Vela's was his leadership in the renovation of Assumption Chapel. He also established the popular and festive annual birthday celebration of the Blessed William Joseph Chaminade. He will be remembered for his dedication to students, humor, cheerful personality and love of St. Mary's.

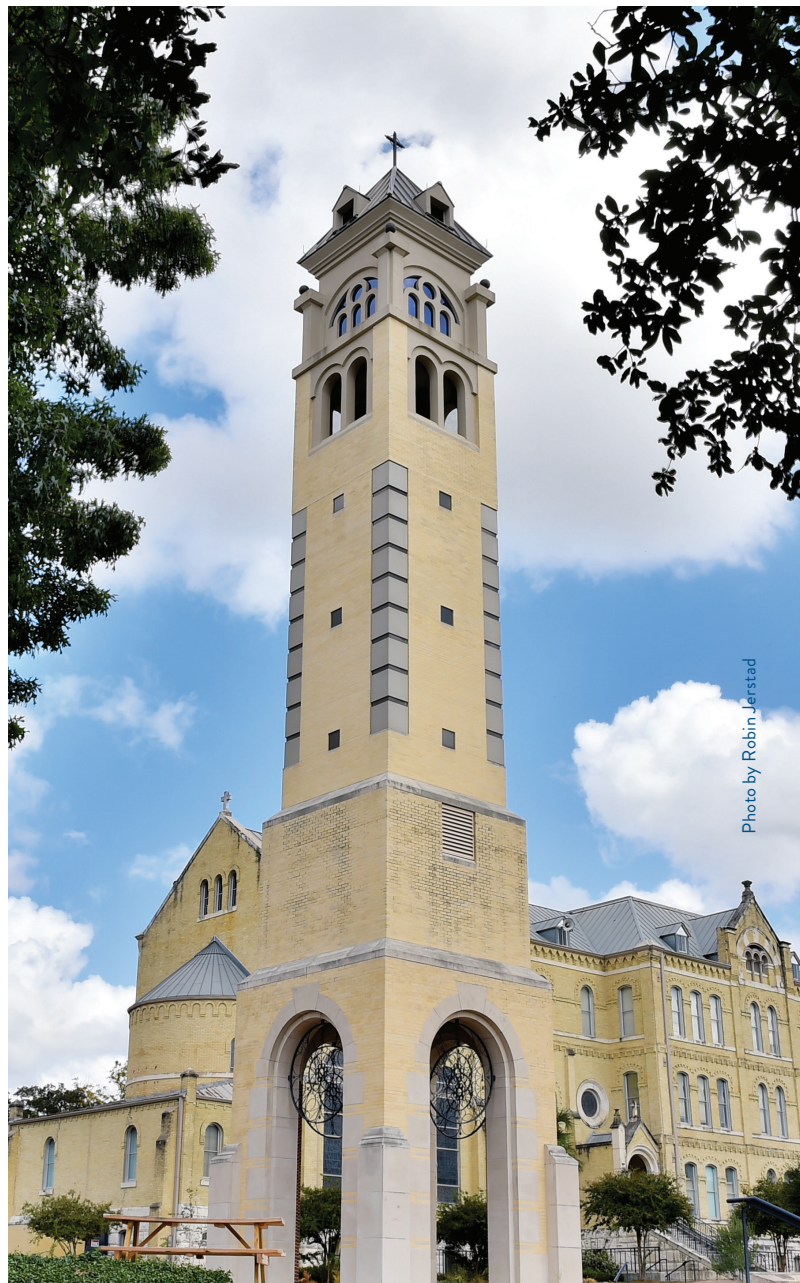


Photo by Robin Jerstad





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# RUNNING WITH PURPOSE

The St. Mary's University's seventh annual 5K run/walk/hike — the StMU 5K for the Neighborhood — launched from a virtual starting line in October, with four different event options to get those of all ages lacing their sneakers to benefit Holy Rosary Catholic Church.

Several hundred participants joined to #RunWithPurpose wherever they wanted, including a group of resident students running on campus with President Thomas M. Mengler, J.D., masked up in the top right photo.

