



## LEADERSHIP SOCIETY JANUARY UPDATE

You are receiving this letter because you are a member of Saint Mary's Leadership Society, a family of givers who generously contribute \$1,000 or more annually to the university.

Greetings!

Happy New Year to you and your loved ones. I love the energy that a new year brings. Admittedly, I could do without some of the cold and snow, but the sense of possibility is invigorating. It is a time for ambition. It is a time for optimism. It is a time for excitement!

As I continue my first year leading student affairs, along with my ongoing mission and ministry work, I am so proud of our students and our staff who support them. Our team consistently focuses on opportunities that build strong character, leadership skills, and transform each student in our care.

As we enter into 2023, I remain guided by our north star — our mission — to awaken, nurture, and empower learners to ethical lives of service and leadership. Through their involvement in campus activities like athletics, student organizations, volunteerism and ministry, our students give life to that mission every day. Prior to welcome week this fall, 14 returning students participated in a weeklong training to serve as peer ministers during welcome week. They provided a helping hand, prayed for students and their families, and engaged new students. They, and many student athletes, made move-in a breeze for our new and returning students.

Our students never cease to inspire. Katie Pierpont, assistant captain of the women's hockey team, also leads the Green Bandana Project, a student-led mental wellness initiative. During welcome week, Katie and Green Bandana organized a "fun run" on campus, and invited the campus community to participate. Thanks to her leadership, the entire women's hockey team volunteered to make the run a huge success — setting an affirming, energetic tone to the year. This is just one of many volunteer activities our students engage in throughout the year, on campus and in the community.

For example, more than 90 undergraduate students participated in Lasallian Day of Service in Winona. Students did yard work for older community members, the Student Senate organized a highway clean up, and others worked with Brother John Grover, FSC, in the nearby bluffs to remove trash and beautify our own backyard. In total, Lasallian Day of Service included 14 cities, five states, and two countries, bringing together Saint Mary's alumni and staff in the common project of Lasallian service.

Our work is centered on our students — helping them develop into who they are called to be, professionally, spiritually, and in relationships. This includes providing opportunities for our students to explore life's greatest questions. The SEARCH program, led by our seminarians, provides a space for students to deeply consider key questions that cover topics of faith, personal purpose, and the meaning of life through deep and rich conversations and self-exploration. For students interested in growing in their Christian or Catholic faith, our seminarians are available to walk alongside students in their journey. Already this year, there are three students who are interested in receiving the sacraments.

Our Lasallian mission calls us to ensure students are prepared to launch successful, meaningful careers. Our Career Services team hosted our ninth annual Career & Internship Fair that included 60 employers — a 54% increase from the previous year! This past fall, they hosted workshops on campus on networking tips and how to craft compelling, attention-grabbing résumés. Career Services also created the #Cardinal2Career “hashtag” campaign that works across our website and social media channels. This innovative campaign connects alumni, employers, and current students, sparking job and networking opportunities.

Because of benefactors, because of you, many student-athletes are able to unlock their full potential. The Brian R. McCarthy B’79 Hockey Leadership Endowment was established this year in honor of a dedicated and selfless former student-athlete. Brian’s classmates and other benefactors established an endowed leadership program in his memory through an annual retreat for the men’s hockey team. Because of philanthropy, Brian’s legacy will be honored through generations of leaders for years to come.

In addition, philanthropy makes international trips for our men’s hockey and tennis teams possible. This year, tennis coach Jeff Halberg will take the team to England — financed by the team’s own fundraising efforts — while our men’s hockey team will head to Italy and Switzerland in 2023, thanks to the generosity of an anonymous benefactor. “I have heard the guys talk about this as the opportunity of a lifetime, exploring and learning about a new part of the world, competing internationally, and growing as a team and a community,” reflected men’s hockey coach Ryan Egan. “Without the help from the benefactor, this would not be possible.”

There is a vibrancy on campus. There is vitality in our community. There is a deep sense of purpose as we live our mission through service and in faith. I am proud to walk alongside our students as they strive, persist, and succeed in the year to come. I hope that you will continue to walk with us as well, and continue to partner with, invest in, and spread the good word of our Saint Mary’s. Thank you for reading, and thank you for being part of our incredible university.

Live Jesus in our hearts, Forever!

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Marisa J. Naryka". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr. Marisa Naryka  
Vice President for Mission and Student Affairs

P.S. For those who support our student-athletes, be on the lookout for an invitation to our 2023 Cardinal Excellence Fund Dinner and Hall of Fame Awards Ceremony in March. Thanks to benefactors like you, the Cardinal Excellence Fund helps develop our student-athletes on a personal, professional, and competitive level and provides them an incredible experience both in the classroom and in competition.