



# Office of the President

Timothy E. Trainor, Ph.D. | State of the Mount Address  
August 15, 2017

Good morning everyone and welcome back!

I would like to ask you to extend our time in prayer for a few more moments:

Dear Lord, we ask for your intercession to help heal and change the insidious beliefs of racism and bigotry that still exist in our nation. You taught us in Genesis that you created man in your *own* image, both male and female. You didn't differentiate based on race or ethnic origin. Since all people are created in your image, help us to understand that everyone deserves to be treated with dignity and respect and there is no place for the hatred and violence we saw demonstrated in Charlottesville by neo-Nazi, KKK, and white supremacy groups. Keep us ever-mindful of Your Son's exhortation: "Whatever you do to the least of my brethren, you do to me." Thank you for the many blessings you have bestowed upon us here at Mount St. Mary's University. We ask this in your name. Amen."

I appreciate you allowing me to extend Monsignor Baker's opening prayer. We have problems in this country that we must address; we here at the Mount can be a beacon of hope for other communities to emulate.

I want to thank you for your support in me being named the 26<sup>th</sup> president of Mount St. Mary's. Today marks one year since I started at the Mount and I am truly humbled and honored to be named your president. Donna and I are delighted to be able to serve here. Thank you.

Would all the people who started working at the Mount in the past year please stand? Thank you for joining our team.

Today I want to give you my semi-annual State of the Mount talk. My last State of the Mount was in January and I want to update you on a number of items. I want to highlight a number of successes and achievements in the past few months, provide details on a number of key areas of focus for the university, and mention upcoming key events. I will then take questions and comments, followed by some individual recognitions of many of our team members here.

Many students, faculty and staff along with the university have been recognized in a number of positive ways in the past several months. I want to highlight just a few on the following slides. Although I am calling out some specific individuals, I hope we all realize that these people did not garner these achievements on their own. Rather, I consider these successes Mount achievements in many ways because the team of people around them enabled these individuals to shine.



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## Student academic achievements

Brigid Flay, Samantha Solis and Alyse Spiehler were all named Fulbright Finalists for English Teaching Assistant (ETA) Programs through the Fulbright U.S. Student Program. The ETA programs enable award winners to join local English teachers in their respective countries to provide assistance through teaching the English language as well as communicating and representing American culture.

Elizabeth Boyle, C'19, and Sydney Johnson, C'19, were selected as Fulbright US-UK scholars and studied for one month in the U.K. this summer.

Three of our students had an opportunity to gain valuable experience in Maryland's public and social sectors, including the governor's office, department of transportation and nonprofit sector as Public Service Scholars.

## Faculty achievements

Many of our faculty also received accolades and recognition, and here are a few highlights. Our own Fr. Jim met and spoke with Pope Francis this summer, and he was selected as the coach of the year in our club hockey conference. That is one well-rounded person!

For a week in June, Drs. Elizabeth Strauss, Denise Obinna and Kristen Urban met with 40 colleagues from five countries at Notre Dame University's KROC Institute of Peace, and explored a range of topics in the 2017 Summer Institute for Faculty, "Teaching Peace in the 21st Century."

Professor Josh Hochschild was appointed to the board of trustees of the American Academy for Liberal Education.

Since last year, Joe Vince has been assisting the Los Angeles Police Department in methods to utilize crime data as an aide in reducing firearms-related crime in their city.

Oxford University, the oldest university in the English-speaking world, invited John D. Love, S.T.D., associate professor of systematic and moral theology and department chair of moral theology at the seminary for the 2017-18 academic year as a visiting research scholar.



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## **Athletic achievements**

We also had many successes on and off the 'fields of friendly strife' recently. Of course our men's basketball team won the Northeast Conference regular season and tournament championship, one NCAA game and captured national attention against Villanova, the tournament's No. 1 overall seed. Coach Jamion Christian was named NEC Coach of the Year and was the Ben Jobe Award recipient, given to the top minority coach in men's Division I basketball presented by CollegenInsider.com.

Our men's rugby sevens team won the 2017 Collegiate Challenge Cup Philly Division Championship after their 15-12 win over Fordham.

Seniors Natalia Hinton, C'17, Julian Woods, C'17, and Kelly Yanucil, C'17, of the Mount track and field team earned U.S. Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches Association All-Academic honors.

Rachel Heinze, C'17, was the NEC Player of the Year in softball, and Sarah Bonson, C'17, was the NEC Scholar-Athlete of the Year, a tremendous recognition.

## **University achievements**

I also want to mention some other recognitions for the Mount. We created articulation agreements with Frederick Community College to enable students there studying cybersecurity and biology to transfer seamlessly to the Mount. We have more programs in the liberal arts where we have crafted similar agreements.

We recently welcomed the first director of the Palmieri Center for Entrepreneurship, Christine Adamow. The interdisciplinary major in entrepreneurship that will be spearheaded by Christine and this center was recently approved by the Maryland Higher Education Commission.

The Mount was selected by Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) through a competitive proposal to provide professional development education to selective cohorts of its teachers. AACPS teachers will now have a way to obtain a master's degree in education taught by our outstanding education faculty.



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For the first time, Money Magazine recognized the Mount on its "Best Colleges for Your Money for 2017," list. Making this is not easy. Money evaluated 2,400 colleges and universities on four factors including financial stability and graduation rates, and only one-third of the initial group made the final list.

In U.S. News & World Report's Best Colleges 2017 list, Mount St. Mary's University is ranked 27th among 130 institutions in the north region's colleges and universities. MSMU was also rated in the top 15 in Best Colleges for Veterans.

The Mount was recognized as a "Great College to Work For" in the category of Tenure Clarity & Process by Modern Think, a research company working in association with the Chronicle of Higher Education.

Finally, we officially finished the monitoring report process that we were directed to do by our accrediting body in early 2016. The Middle States Commission formally voted in June to accept our monitoring report and not require any follow up action until our next normally scheduled review. Thank you to everyone who worked so hard on our follow up actions.

## **Alumni achievements**

I want to recognize a few of our alumni who had recent notable achievements. Dr. David Ginty, C'84, now at Harvard was elected to the National Academy of Sciences, a great honor. Nancy Abu-Bonsrah from the Mount Class of 2012 is the first African-American woman to earn a residency in neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. Karen Dahut from the Class of '85 was named executive vice president of Booz Allen Hamilton. Tamika Tremaglio, class of '92, now leads Deloitte & Touche LLP's greater Washington practice. The senior class president from 2017, Lou Tonon, is an entrepreneur and co-founded Campus Drive, in an effort to create an Uber-like service specifically to serve college campuses. And Charles Haberkorn, C'80, was named CEO of Knouse Foods Cooperative, Inc.

## **Fr. Stanley Rother, S'63**

But our most significant alumni recognition has got to be hands down, Fr. Stanley Rother, seminary class of 1963, being declared a martyr - the first U.S.-born martyr - by Pope Francis. Fr. Rother will be beatified in a ceremony on September 23 in his home diocese of Oklahoma City. Eternal Word Television Network (EWTN) recently completed a documentary about Fr. Rother that stars our own Fr. Connor and Monsignor Baker from the seminary. They do a marvelous job telling the story from Fr. Rother's life and times at the Mount, to his incredible story of faithful service to his people in Guatemala, all the way to his death, when he was assassinated by government forces there in 1981. The EWTN documentary will be aired twice close to September 23 and we will make sure you are notified of the dates and times.



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## Imperatives

I talked about this list of our imperatives for the future during my State of the Mount in January, and I want to discuss it now again. While maintaining our values as a Catholic, liberal arts institution, emphasizing teamwork and keeping students at the center of all we do, we need to:

- Grow total enrollment to increase net tuition revenue.
- Develop niche academic and other programs to improve our attractiveness to potential students.
- Diversify and innovate academic program delivery methods (how, when and where) to meet changing student market conditions (declining traditional residential undergraduate market, increasing demand for continuing education).
- Diversify revenue streams:
  - Increase contributions from foundations, grants, research and new donors.
  - Form partnerships to gain resources.
- Improve the quality of academic, athletic and seminary facilities, and our utility systems.
- Develop a strategic plan that charts the long-term path to accomplish the above.

These are essential for us to thrive in the future as the environment of higher education is changing.

We are working together to fulfill these imperatives in many ways, and I want to provide you an update on several key areas of focus over the past months. In particular, I will talk about the following: the strategic plan, academics, student enrollment, restructuring, Workday implementation, facilities and infrastructure, partnerships, and the Mount brand and marketing.

## Strategic plan update

We have been working on the strategic plan for the past several months. The university's strategic planning committee (SPC) synthesized and learned from a number of major recent studies and documents, particularly the effectiveness and efficiency review, our Middle States self-study, the data from SimpsonScarborough and feedback from discussions held last spring in town hall formats. The model for planning is to form our vision of where we want to go, ensure we have the right mission statement to help us get there, develop strategic goals to guide our major efforts, articulate objectives under each goal that are actionable and the attainment of which can be measured, and then determine the list of major activities that we need to undertake over the next five years to achieve these objectives.



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The Strategic Planning Committee was attempting to craft a vision statement a month or two ago and was struggling a bit. A vision statement is supposed to be aspirational, exude excellence and be consistent with institutional values. The SPC realized we did not have a statement of what we deeply value here at the Mount. Through discussion, input and feedback during recent town halls, we uncovered that we deeply value:

- Our Catholic heritage.
- Service to others.
- A student-centric focus.
- Our people.
- A transformative educational and campus environment.
- Teamwork.
- Stewardship.
- Open dialogue and inclusion.
- An ethical, competitive and entrepreneurial winning spirit.
- Honesty and integrity.

When I speak to many alums, they consistently say that there is “just something special about the Mount.” With this definition of what we value, I believe we are coming to articulate what is special.

We now have a draft of a vision statement: Mount St. Mary’s University will be the No. 1 *<Catholic university in our region\*>*, whose graduates are sought nationally as ethical, values-based team builders in service to God and society.

We are still looking at what we should aspire to be number one in, but we know the statement needs to be aspirational, inspire excellence as we want our graduates to be in demand nationally and have many of the things we value embedded within.

## Strategic priorities

With our Board’s guidance, we have developed these three strategic priorities: student success, financial sustainability and stewardship, and having a faith- and values-based campus environment for the next five years. We are now working on defining strategic goals, objectives and activities within the framework of each of these strategic priorities and are seeking your input and participation during weekly town hall meetings over the next several weeks. The SPC is sending



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out an email every Friday with updated documents reflecting feedback and progress, and with information for the time and location of the following week's town hall. We are providing updates to the Strategic Planning Committee of our Board of Trustees and I will bring the overall plan to our full Board of Trustees for approval on October 16.

## **Student enrollment**

As you can see by the numbers here, we have made great strides in total student enrollment in the last year. We expect our full-time undergraduate enrollment to be about 100 more students than this time last year. Our freshman class that arrives on Friday will be over 100 more than last year's freshman class, transfer students will be close to double those of last year, and our retention rate should be about 5 percent higher. I want to thank everyone for your efforts in helping us recover our enrollments thus far. Our great admissions team really worked hard and the results show this. Our faculty and staff really helped make people feel welcome while visiting and answered questions from parents and prospective students. Tremendous efforts made by faculty and staff enabled us to retain a higher percentage of our students this year. From academic efforts led by the Center for Student Engagement and Success to improved policies and positive interactions with our student life representatives, everyone contributed to improved retention. This was a Mount effort and a Mount success; we need to keep this up.

Our Seminary, led so ably by Monsignor Baker, is attracting more men who want to be priests. We expect our graduate and continuing studies enrollment at our Frederick campus to be about the same this year, but I am very confident we can grow our enrollments there based on market analysis studies, and because of the great team we have in place there now.

## **Athletic improvements**

Please note the growth in NCAA student athletes. Last year, we embarked on a plan to grow student-athlete enrollments by adding additional sports and by growing team rosters, and it is working. In the fall 2015, we had 290 student-athletes, last year 330 and now 426. This year we elevated our women's rugby program from a club team to NCAA Division I and grew the size of select teams. Next year, men's soccer will compete as a Division I team, and we will add men's and women's golf, and women's bowling. In future years, we are looking at adding women's volleyball, field hockey and water polo but we have facility issues to address for each of these first. This growth plan is working and the students we are recruiting in this process, on average, have higher academic scores and they typically retain better than our average non-NCAA student-athlete. We will continue on this path. Thanks to everyone again for your efforts in helping recruit new students and retain our current students.



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Our team of great academic faculty and staff have been working on a number of initiatives.

**Specifically, in preparing for the significantly larger freshman class, we have:**

- Provided opportunities to explore intended majors and multiple areas of interest.
- Increased communication between faculty and support groups such as our Learning Services Center, CSES and Athletic Advising Staff.
- Created an increased number of smaller sections for First Year Symposia.
- Expanded the use of My Mount Hub app across campus.
- Provided access to non-Catholic church services in the area.

**In restructuring the team at our Frederick campus and ramping up recruitment and marketing resources to support growth, we have:**

- Created a new division of Graduate and Professional Studies with an Academic Council in place, representing the various master degree programs being offered.
- Enhanced staff to develop and support student retention, enrollment and marketing efforts.
- Conducted marketing studies to better define our market.
- Planned to offer more undergraduate degrees at our Frederick campus.
- Planned to revamp, expand our master offerings.

**Through plans and programs to support retention efforts, we have:**

- Developed various avenues for students to perform better.
- Provided study skills workshops through the core foreign language courses (headed by Christine Blackshaw).
- Provided study skills workshops through CSES and Learning Services.
- Implemented the Bridge Program - beginning in the summer and extending to the fall (developed by Tim Fritz and Greg Murry).
- Provided enhanced Transition Program through Learning Services.
- Provided 23 sections of a one credit study/organization/time management course.
- Provided a one credit academic skills course through Learning Services for students currently on academic probation.



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- Performed attendance tracking through CANVAS.
- Revamped and streamlined the Mount Care's process.
- Recruited more student peer mentors/student academic leaders.

## Through building a cybersecurity lab in Coad, we have:

- Provided hands-on learning experiences for our new curriculum in cybersecurity.
- Housed our computation and data analytics thus providing an integrated learning experience for our students.

## Our Division of Education is exporting our goodness by:

- Having our education team compete and be awarded a contract to deliver leadership development to Anne Arundel Public School teachers and they are exploring doing the same in Montgomery County.

## New Initiatives:

- Continually exploring new, innovative ways to improve the classroom learning experience as well as ways to increase retention and student success.
- Collaborating between the provost's team and Student Life. This continues to grow and produce positive results.

## Organizational structure

In order to improve our effectiveness while also trying to make us more efficient, I have been looking hard at our organizational structure and made some changes this year, and will continue to look at our structure. Our School of Education and Human Services changed to the Division of Education reporting to the provost; Dr. Barb Marinak leads the division. Dr. Barbara Martin Palmer became a University Professor and is chair of the Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment (IEA) Committee and serves as our accreditation liaison, in addition to faculty duties. The department of sociology moved to the College of Liberal Arts. We established the Division of Graduate, Continuing and Professional Studies at the Frederick campus reporting to the provost in order to provide greater institutional focus to this area of potential growth; Dr. Carol Rinkoff leads the division. I also established the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment by restructuring existing offices and personnel to bring research, assessment and analytics functions together under one umbrella; Dr. Jeff Simmons leads the office, which reports to Wayne Green, Chief of Staff.



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## Workday

We have been implementing the Workday enterprise resource management system. This is a significant institution-wide effort that requires many extra hours and extraordinary efforts by several people. We implemented the initial modules of finance and human resources. Workday will give us greater visibility and transparency on how we are using our most important resources: people and dollars.

Although some of you may experience an increase in the vigilance required to review and approve time and expenses, this is part of good stewardship. The system has already eliminated hundreds of hours of paper forms processing and redundant manual data entry.

We experienced some difficulties with one of our contractors which has delayed deployment of some features. Shortly after launch, as a result of a phishing attack on our cyber network, some users inadvertently exposed their accounts and passwords allowing unauthorized access; however, we have had no reports of material losses and we provided these employees ID theft support. Before Workday, due to manual processes, every time we added a substantial number of students, we had to add back-office staff. Now we can grow enrollments while limiting administrative growth and focus more dollars on direct student impact.

## Facilities and infrastructure

I'd like to talk about our facilities and infrastructure now. We partnered with Johnson Controls, who completed a detailed study of our utility systems, and we are seeking to implement a \$7 million renovation and upgrade project over one year that will be paid for by future energy savings. The project will focus on HVAC and electrical systems and controls.

Over the next few years, we need to build more academic space; expand and improve our athletic facilities to support the growth I spoke of before; perform needed, major renovations to the seminary building; renovate St. Mary's Chapel; and increase the devotional space in the Grotto to accommodate its 300,000 annual visitors.

We are embarking on a three-year comprehensive campaign called Forward! Together as One, growing in mind, body and spirit. Through this campaign we plan to also raise an additional \$4 million, which we be used to match a grant of \$4 million from the state of Maryland projected in the year 2020. We will use this to do a major renovation and slight expansion of the Academic Center.



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## Partnerships

One of the imperatives for our future I spoke of before is entering partnerships to bring needed resources to the Mount with limited cost outlay. We are working, in particular, on these three potential partnerships:

**Seton-Dubois:** A proactive collaboration among Mount St. Mary's University, the Daughters of Charity, and other organizations who profess a common vision and shared mission to serve the Church. Seton-DuBois will provide the broader community with expanded learning and service opportunities, e.g., the Service Semester and the Pastors & Stewards online education effort for parishes.

**Solar Farm:** A project to upgrade the panels in our solar farm to increase total power generation capacity of the field while reducing the footprint. The funding partner sought is the Department of Defense who will receive access to some power; our goals are to make us self-sufficient for electric power needs and to gain back some land for athletic fields.

**Frederick Regional Health System (FRHS):** FRHS will initially provide improved medical support to student-athletes in conjunction with our athletic training staff. Our long-term goal is for improved quality and availability of health care for all of our students, including improved health care facilities funded in large part by a medical provider. New and enhanced academic programs in the health care field would be integrated into this effort.

## Marketing and branding

We have been working on creating a new way to market the Mount to prospective students and parents for quite some time. This began over a year ago and continues today. Based on a detailed market analysis, discussions with faculty, staff and students, and with alumni and others, we have arrived at these three themes to emphasize about the Mount in future marketing campaigns:

**Rigorous academics and strength in STEM:** Mount students choose from a wide variety of outstanding programs that prepare them to excel in not only foundational academic disciplines but also in emerging fields of study that are increasingly critical in our science- and technology-driven economy. With the unwavering support of committed faculty mentors, they embark on a challenging and inspirational academic journey that emphasizes critical thinking and ethical decision making in preparation for successful lives and careers.



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**Exhilarating mountain campus:** Our beautiful mountain campus environment allows students to engage in healthy activities that allow them to grow in mind, body and spirit.

**Values-driven leadership:** Mount students are truth-seekers and trailblazers. They believe in using their God-given gifts to promote justice and effect positive change in the world.

Using these themes, we developed a set of draft concepts for potentially marketing these themes with a contract partner, Up & Up. They and our marketing team have done focus groups with many of you to get feedback on these, and we will continue to refine these messages. You can see some examples on this slide. I like the impact of these simple statements. The overall lead message to be conveyed is Mount St. Mary's; Live Significantly.

## Important dates

As I close out, I want to highlight for you some of the many activities that will happen this semester:

- Freshmen Move-In Day Aug. 18
- Classes start Aug. 21
- Convocation Aug. 25
- Family Weekend Sep. 15-17
- Fall Open House Sep. 23
- Fallen Firefighters Memorial Service Oct. 6-8
- Board of Trustees meeting Oct. 15-16
- Seminary Family Weekend Oct. 20-22
- Special Olympics & Day of Service Oct. 21
- Fall Sports Fest Oct. 21
- Inauguration Oct. 23
- Ring Mass Nov. 4
- Fall Open House Nov. 11
- Student Christmas Dance Dec. 1
- Final exams Dec. 11-15

Finally, the commitment the cabinet and I have to you this year is for us to communicate better, collaborate more and be better customer servants for you.



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I also have expectations for you. Please seek to be excellent in your role at the Mount. Seek to be the best faculty member, coach, custodian, grounds worker, administrator or whatever your role is here; you are all important to the success of our students and the Mount. Also, don't try to do your boss' job or someone else's role. Be a good teammate; together we are much stronger than as individuals. Being a good teammate helps all of us. Finally, be positive! Enthusiasm can be infectious, and we want to pursue relentless optimism as Jim Collins wrote of in his Good to Great books.

I look forward to working with you this year to help our students succeed, and to make the Mount the place that everyone wants to live and serve.

Go Mount!