LISTENING TO STUDENTS 18
Students called for a more just and inclusive campus, and the College responded.

12 PRECIOUS DUTY
Deeply fundamental to a democracy, voting matters. Do you remember your first time?

22 GLORY DAYS
The glory days of SMC baseball. Have they returned?
The California Native Plant Garden has been growing for two years, and over that time 75 percent of the species originally planted have matured to a size where they are no longer endangered by the deer, gophers, turkeys, and other animals that consider it the lunch stop of choice. We have replaced 25 percent of the original plantings, often with bulbs and rhizomes that can recover from herbivory (being eaten), and we have added a few annuals that reseed naturally. The result is a long blooming and seeding season, from March to October, which provides native pollinators and birds with a dependable resource and gives us some eye-pleasing variety across the seasons. We will continue to diversify the plant species in the garden, a resource for students in Ecology, California Flora and Communities, Environmental Science, and the Integral Program.
WE SAID:
Brother Camillus was honored for his 40 years of service at the Staff Service Awards Ceremony today. Also honored was Marty Storti (30 years!). Congrats to all the staff honorees and thank you for your commitment to SMC.
—#OMGSMC

YOU SAID:
Congratulations! I am so thankful for all that Brother Camillus has done and does for my family. What he has shared and taught has blessed my family so much. We are very, very thankful for his unique, transformative presence in our lives.
—LESLIEMARY

We love you, Brother Camillus! He was the officiant at our wedding in November!
—@MEDITATION_NICK @SHOPCOMPLIMENT

I love Brother Camillus! I still practice the meditation techniques he taught. Thank you, sir, for helping me keep my focus and calm.
—WHIZGIDGET

Brother Camillus!! What kind, compassionate, and smart men! Thank you to both for years of service to us all!
—AMIRBEHNOUD @BEHNOUD_SHINGLE @BRIE_QUESITO

Brother Camillus is a SMC treasure. Learning meditation from him has changed my life. Well deserved
—CHRISYM_CAM

¡Felicidades Camilo! Tus tareas valen mas que 40 anos.
—DARBSTER1218

Oh Brother Camillus!! Congrats!! May the Lord continue to bless you!!
—REDWOODAPPLE

Now at age 97, I don’t know if I’ll see any more issues of the Saint Mary’s magazine, but you can’t beat the summer 2016 issue. It chronicles what a great university it is, far more so than the small men-only college when I graduated in 1941. Congratulations for a great job!
—LIONEL HOLMES ’41, SACRAMENTO

Reading Saint Mary’s summer 2016 magazine, I was pleasantly surprised to see my daughter-in-law Katherine’s letter to you about my book—Caught in the Fulk: Tales From My Past. An article in the fall 2014 issue about students in the MFA in Creative Writing program teaching the elderly to “Write a Life” inspired me to write my book. I am overwhelmed with such privilege. Thank you so much.
—MARY VAN DIEPEN

Correction: In Interview on page 6 of the summer 2016 magazine, we inaccurately identified the name of a school in San Jose. The correct name of the school is Horace Mann Elementary.
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Finding our way forward through political polarization

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How Saint Mary’s is building an inclusive community

22 Baseball’s Glory Days
Adding to a strong Saint Mary’s baseball history, with the best season in 20 years

18 Listening to Students
How Saint Mary’s is building an inclusive community

Before Coach Eric Valenzuela arrived on campus in 2014, the Gaels baseball team hadn’t had a winning record in the West Coast Conference for more than 20 years. However, this past season the Gaels earned a series of firsts—the WCC championship, the conference’s post-season tournament, and its first-ever NCAA tournament appearance. Have the glory days of Saint Mary’s baseball returned?

On the cover: Brother Camillus Chavez, recently honored for his 40 years of service to the College, gives his signature fist bump to passing students.

The Saint Mary’s College of California experience inspires learning that lasts a lifetime. The College’s rigorous education engages intellect and spirit while awakening the desire to transform society. We are all learners here—together working to understand and shape the world.

For more information: stmarys-ca.edu.

Saint Mary’s magazine is published three times a year. Please send comments to magazine@stmarys-ca.edu or call (925) 631-4278. Submit status and address changes to info4smc@stmarys-ca.edu and provide a contact number.
DISTINCTIONS

THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION Hispanic-Serving Institutions STEM program awarded Saint Mary’s $2.7 million over five years to improve student success.

SMC was named among the West’s top 10 regional universities, and a best value university, in U.S. News & World Report’s Best Colleges for the second year.

THE COLLEGE was listed in the top 25 percent of U.S. colleges and universities in the first-ever rankings by The Wall Street Journal and Times Higher Education.

PRINCETON REVIEW named SMC among the 381 most outstanding higher-ed institutions in the country in its annual Best 381 Colleges: 2017

ART AND BUSINESS TEAM UP

Last spring, Saint Mary’s students majoring in business, English, communication, and sociology joined art and art history majors to launch Surplus|Lack, a one-night art installation in San Francisco’s Mission District, a multicultural neighborhood with a rich arts tradition. Co-curated by Peter Freund, professor of art theory and practice and a filmmaker, and Jaime Baron, assistant professor at the University of Alberta, the exhibit examined how filmmakers communicated without creating a blockbuster, feature-length film. The show’s 21 short films explored loss, absence, and excess. “Surplus|Lack was an interesting kind of test case to see how the humanities could collaborate with the business department,” said Freund, who hopes for future cross-departmental collaborations.

Room for Prayer

Sacred space for other faiths

Recently, Transportation Security Administration officers kicked my aunt and me—the only passengers wearing the hijab—off a domestic flight. I prayed for patience in an empty classroom.

A few days later, Brother Charles Hilken, director of Saint Mary’s Cummins Institute, invited me to a dinner for our Muslim students, staff, faculty, and families. Thankfully, my mom could make it, but I was apprehensive. Would they judge me because I wear a headscarf and Mom doesn’t?

But when I stepped into Hagerty Hall, I was met with an abundance of smiles. The night was filled with people spreading love, peace, and awareness of the many challenges Muslims face today. During an open mic session, one guest proposed the idea of a campus interfaith meditation area. The suggestion hit home for many of us. Without such a site, practicing Muslims must jump around between empty classrooms, study spaces, and faculty offices to perform their five daily prayers.

Karin McClelland, Mission and Ministry Center director, offered her support. “Every summit regarding interfaith that I’ve been to says [an interfaith prayer space] is a must for campuses trying to promote awareness and diversity,” she said.

The next week Karin and I visited potential prayer room sites, including an underused office. Soon, I received good news: Its occupants strongly supported the request and would relocate. Success! Today, the Interfaith Sacred Space prayer room, located between the Chapel and the Mission and Ministry Center, is open to all.

Now, my unhappiness about the airline incident has faded, replaced by a sense of positivity and acceptance. I am reminded of a Quran passage: “And, behold, with every hardship comes ease” (94:5). —Roshun Rabimi ’17
A Model for Success

The name—Student Success Office—says it all. It describes a holistic approach to supporting students, launched this fall, that combines a collaborative network of people, individual coaching, and high-tech tools to help students thrive.

“The aim of the Student Success Office is to provide students with access to the resources and mentoring they need to build academic, personal, and professional success in college and beyond,” said Assistant Vice Provost for Student Success Tracy Pascua Dea, who leads the newly established SSO, which combines five reconfigured offices under one umbrella—Student Engagement and Academic Success, Career and Professional Development Services, the High Potential Program, Student Disability Services, and the Tutorial and Academic Skills Center.

Core to SSO’s approach is one-on-one coaching with Inside Track, a company providing expertise in coaching and analytics. This year, for the first time, every new student has been assigned a coach who tracks progress, offers resources, and makes referrals. The coach, who stays with the student all four years, is the mainstay in a highly connected web of student support across campus. Eventually all students will have a coach. (Right: Jizelle Vado ‘20 meets with graduate student counselor Emilio Alvarado MA ’17.)

This network also relies on an easy-to-use technical backbone—EAB’s Student Success Collaborative, an interactive platform that helps students, coaches, faculty, and staff access resources, track student progress, analyze data, and predict problems. It’s a one-stop comprehensive view of a student’s progress, with the full picture visible only to coaches. “The Student Success Office combines high touch with high tech for high-impact results for our students,” said Pascua Dea.

—Jo Shroyer

TO KNOW AND CELEBRATE

It’s often standing room only for the annual Cultural Nights, a series of springtime events that celebrate the issues and cultures of six groups on campus. This past year, Expressions of Blackness, The Bash (LGBTQIA), Latino, Lu’au, Asian, and Arabian Cultural Nights touched on topics ranging from the Syrian crisis to the importance of family in Polynesian culture. Established by the Intercultural Center, these joyous events support diversity and enlighten and delight with performance, food, and costumes.
Both Sides Now

Religion’s historic role in politics


“The role of religion in shaping American politics is not well understood,” said McGraw, professor of social ethics, law, and public life and director of the Center for Engaged Religious Pluralism at Saint Mary’s, who wooed top scholars and religious thinkers from one pole of the conservative-liberal spectrum to the other to contribute chapters to the Companion. For example, McGraw said, the struggle for women’s equality is “all bound up” in religious ideas, as was the historic justification for and struggle against slavery. “When you have a better understanding of the historical trends, you can put what’s happening today in context,” she said.

McGraw’s passion for inclusiveness informs the ambitious scope of the 616-page Companion. “I refused to finish it until I had Native American and African American experiences in chapters throughout the volume, and women’s experience, and new religious movements,” said McGraw, who won the Hindu American Foundation’s 2014 Mahatma Gandhi Award for the Advancement of Religious Pluralism. “I wanted to present a kaleidoscopic view so that the richness and complexity of the issues involved can be fully understood.” —Autumn Stephens

EASING IN

Moving away to college is a huge transition for any student, but especially for those with a physical, mental, or learning disability. Now in its second year, StepUp!, a transition program run by Student Disability Services, made possible by an SMC family donor, gives about 20 students a more relaxed start to college life. A few days before joining their classmates at Weekend of Welcome, students arrive on campus and are assigned a student leader who, along with SMC staff, helps them move into their rooms and guides them through two days of programs designed to put them at ease.

“Certain students may find it extremely overwhelming to move in when other students are moving in,” said Student Disability Services Coordinator Stephanie Flores. “We created something more mellow and easygoing.”

Flores and Julie Crowder, Disability Services access coordinator, and student leaders offer strategies for coping with campus life, such as good time management, healthy roommate communication, and navigating the library. Once students receive their class schedules, they find their classrooms so they know where to go before school starts.

“The classroom search relieves some anxiety and allows the students to focus on adjusting to campus life,” Crowder said. “The student leaders also share their own experiences with the new students as they explore campus.”

WIDENING PERSPECTIVES Beginning this fall, students can now major in ethnic studies—previously available only as a minor—a multidisciplinary program encompassing anthropology, the arts, economics, history, politics, psychology, communications, and sociology. As college students at SMC and across the country push for social change around race, ethnicity, and social justice, creating an ethnic studies major can help improve the campus climate and expand community resources, said School of Liberal Arts Dean Sheila Hassell Hughes. “Like our women’s and gender studies program, which also has a major, ethnic studies’ role extends well beyond its curriculum. It also plays a role in campus programming, student engagement, and student life.”
ELECTION YEAR YOGA POSES

The ANGRY VOTER Pose

The BABY KISSER Pose

The DOUBLE-DOWN DOG Pose

The FACT CHECKER Pose

The SWING STATE Pose

The FOOT-IN-MOUTH Pose

BY GREG CLARKE
WASC HONORS PROVOST

On July 1, Bethami Dobkin, Saint Mary’s provost and vice president for academic affairs, began a prestigious three-year term on the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) Senior College and University Commission. WASC, a regional accrediting agency, serves a diverse membership of public and private higher education institutions throughout California, Hawaii, and the Pacific and a number of institutions outside the United States.

Provost Dobkin “is an extraordinarily talented academic administrator and I am proud that she has been selected,” said SMC President James Donahue, a former WASC commissioner, who nominated Dobkin for election to the committee.

Under Dobkin’s academic leadership, Saint Mary’s has experienced increased enrollment and higher retention and graduation rates, attained accreditation with the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB International), gained national prominence in the performing arts, and enjoyed a heightened reputation and image. Additionally, Dobkin’s commitment to diversity has resulted in practices promoting greater inclusiveness campuswide.

Now, Donahue said, the many institutions served by WASC will also benefit from Dobkin’s “perceptive insight and expertise.”

BE NOT AFRAID

Brother Thomas Johnson, FSC, a widely respected educator and administrator and the director of the Novitiate for the Region of North America, spoke at Convocation and received an honorary doctoral degree during De La Salle Week, the campus celebration of Saint John Baptist de La Salle. He touched on issues in our pluralistic world. “We seem to be less the ‘home of the brave’ and more the ‘home of the afraid,’” he said. “Of course, sometimes we have to act on well-founded fears, but fear can be deadly when we fear ideas different from ours, people different from us, and when fear governs our lives.” Noting the Scripture’s most common expression is “Do not be afraid,” Brother Thomas (pictured below center with Vice President for Mission Carole Swain and President James Donahue) urged the College to counter the culture of fear, challenge our ideas and ideals, open minds, and offer new ways of looking at problems, all to foster individuals who will change the world.

Better Student Spaces

Changes across campus this summer and fall have created a new central hub for student services, readied space for the business school to move to campus, and improved residence halls and classrooms.

The bulk of Campus Facilities’ recent work has focused on five goals—establishing the Student Success Office in the center of campus at Filippi Administrative Hall, moving the School of Economics and Business Administration to the former Power Plant building campus (above), remodeling classrooms with better technology, upgrading residence halls, and improving student gathering spaces.
Lasallian Summers

Staff and faculty delve into the spiritual mission.

This summer an SMC faculty member and a staff member joined Lasallians from across the globe and participated in the Buttimer Institute of Lasallian Studies, an intensive Lasallian education and formation program that meets for two weeks every summer for three years.

The Buttimer Institute was founded in 1986 at Manhattan College in New York by a group of Christian Brothers who wanted to provide a world-class program of study about the origins and spirituality of Lasallian education. The institute moved to Saint Mary’s in 1987, where it has remained. Since its founding, the program has educated approximately 800 Brothers and Lasallian partners, with the 29th cohort completing its three-summer program this July.

Also this summer, for the first time, community members were able to participate in Engaging with the Lasallian World, a mini-Buttimer condensing the program’s Lasallian teachings and spirituality into three days instead of the usual six weeks. Associate Registrar Leslie Welty, who graduated from Buttimer in 2015, wanted to offer her experience to more people and make it Saint Mary’s specific.

“I was blessed by this program and wanted others to be blessed, as well. It needed to be a shorter program than Buttimer so both faculty and staff could attend,” said Welty. A group of 25 Saint Mary’s faculty, staff, Brothers, and trustees attended.

The Buttimer Institute was named for Brother Charles Henry Buttimer (1909-1982), a Massachusetts native born to Irish immigrant parents, who was the first non-French leader of the Christian Brothers since the religious order was founded in 1680. He served as superior general from 1966 to 1976.
At the end of his senior year, Thomas Vo ’12 decided to serve his own homemade (er, dorm-made) beer at his graduation party. Afterward, he continued to brew beer and brought some of his home brews to a hangout session with the owners of the up-and-coming Calicraft Brewing Company in Walnut Creek.

That landed him a job and the title of “Mad Scientist,” responsible for research and development as well as operations at Calicraft, where he’s been for two years.

“The first was done on an electric burner. After Saint Mary’s, I still brewed a lot. When I did consulting, I brewed a lot,” said Vo, who is on track to graduate from SMC’s professional MBA program in 2017. “The common thread throughout is that I’ve always been into flavors. I didn’t really drink all that much in college. I got into wine first because of cooking.”

Part of what Calicraft tries to do is push the boundaries of what beer is and to think of what beer would be like had it been invented in California, said Vo, citing the uses of grape skins and wine yeast.

And Seminar has helped him brew more creatively. “If you ask the right questions, you can create the meaning and make it relevant to you,” he said. “That is a bucket of apricots. Can I ferment that? Can I make apricot wine, apricot beer? Why not? Asking the questions is really what makes it interesting, makes it meaningful.”

Vo looks to food, cocktails, and even other business names for inspiration. “The other day we were in Palo Alto and we saw the name of a business: Red Cloud. Could we make a beer that is a red ale that is supposed to be creamy?”

In fact, the brewery’s flagship item, Buzzerkeley, is a sparkling ale fermented with champagne and Belgian yeast and mixed with grape pomace (leftover skins), named, of course, after Berkeley.
Acting Like a Leader
On and off the court

Last fall, Shannon Mauldin was excited to enter her senior year as a key player on the women’s basketball team. After starting 52 games over the previous two seasons, she was honored as a preseason all-West Coast Conference selection as a top guard and was prepared to lead the Gaels to another successful season.

After helping SMC jump out to an undefeated 4-0 record, disaster struck. Against Fresno State, in the Gaels’ annual Thanksgiving tournament in McKeon Pavilion, she went down with a season-ending injury. For the rest of the year, the Emeryville native spent more time in the training room and in rehabilitation than on the court.

During that time, however, Mauldin began to transform from a leader on the court to one that could contribute to the program’s success in other ways. “I used to think that the only way I could contribute was if I was suited up and on the floor,” said Mauldin. “But I realized there were other ways I could actively participate. Something as simple as talking and getting your voice heard was something I really took advantage of. I could tell it added an extra dynamic to the team.”

Mauldin also used her time away from basketball to enjoy one of her other passions in life—theater. She appeared in a senior project play, To Be Honest, by Cabrilla Reyes and Kentaley McCurdy. “At first it was pretty nerve-racking because I had never felt so vulnerable,” said Mauldin. “But the more I got into character, the more comfortable I began to feel.” —Richard Kilwien

While recovering from an injury last season, basketball starting guard Shannon Mauldin ’16 discovered some new skills, such as leading her team in other ways and acting in a school play.

GAME READY
Beginning this fall, all athletes on Saint Mary’s 17 Division 1 teams and the men’s rugby team (about 360 players in all) have undergone an injury screening as part of their physicals. Previously available only to women’s soccer and the men’s and women’s basketball teams, the protocol assesses athletes’ risk of injury, their recovery from injury, and likelihood of reinjury. Preventing the tearing of the knee’s anterior cruciate ligament (ACL), which means many months of rehab, is a particular goal of Director of Sports Medicine Tony Kearns.

“If we can save even one athlete from having to undergo that hiatus and that surgery, then we have done our job,” said Kearns, who inherited 13 players with ACL tears in 2010 and saw the numbers drop to three last year. As they return to campus, athletes give a health history and then do a drop box test, jumping off a low box onto one leg. If the knee collapses in slightly, there may be a higher risk of tearing the ACL. Players also do a one-legged triple hop for distance.

“While recovering from an injury last season, basketball starting guard Shannon Mauldin ’16 discovered some new skills, such as leading her team in other ways and acting in a school play.”

GREAT SPORTS The Saint Mary’s athletics program had one of its most successful competitive seasons in program history last year. SMC won its first-ever league title in baseball, its third golf championship in the last five seasons, and its third men’s basketball title since 2011. Women’s basketball and beach volleyball finished as league runners-up, and the Gaels women’s tennis team reached the WCC Championship final.

Highlighted by three WCC championships, the Gaels finished as runner-up for the 2015-16 WCC Commissioner’s Cup—SMC’s best finish in the 15-year history of the award. —Richard Kilwien

While recovering from an injury last season, basketball starting guard Shannon Mauldin ’16 discovered some new skills, such as leading her team in other ways and acting in a school play.
I was at Saint Mary's College High School in Berkeley and turned 18 in 1968. The Vietnam War was very important to us, and I remember carrying signs down Telegraph Avenue as a high school senior. Getting involved in the process was something special—being able to effect change. The mixed blessing is, how much effect can one person have? How can one or two people change something? It's almost overwhelming, but I think it's our responsibility to do what we can.

Neil Sweeney '50
Retired educator

I was a student at Saint Mary’s College when I cast my first vote at 22—for Harry Truman. It was a big upset because all the pundits had Thomas Dewey as the front-runner. I voted for Truman because I was raised in a Democratic family and FDR had been our president while I was in the Navy. Why do I vote? Our system needs informed voters and I do try to be informed. I've voted in every election since that time.

Jim Cooper ’04
Assemblymember 9th District

I vote because when I was born, millions of African Americans did not have the right to vote. I vote to honor those who marched, protested, fought, and died because they believed in the fundamental right to vote. I vote because it is not only our right, but it is our responsibility. I vote because it is quite possibly the most important thing that we as Americans can do to ensure a more just and perfect union.

Jessica Porras ’05
Undergraduate academic adviser, The George Washington University in Washington, D.C.

I vote because I value the democratic process and appreciate that voting is a right that not all people have in other countries. It's more than just having my own voice heard. I hope that my vote helps advocate for those that cannot or choose not to vote. I remember going to a politics class at Saint Mary’s the morning after voting in my first presidential election. We engaged in a meaningful conversation about the implications of the election for our country, and I remember recognizing I had contributed to the making of history.

Tim Farley
Director, Government and Community Relations

I have always taken voting very seriously. I know some kids can't wait to get their driver's license. I could not wait to vote. I turned 18 in the spring of 1978 and there was a hotly contested municipal election going on where I lived. In those days local elections were held in April. My first vote was for John Sparacino, who was elected mayor of my town in that election. Since that time I have never missed an opportunity to have my voice heard through the ballot box.

Brother Christopher Donnelly FSC ’73, E ’91
Facilities Department

I was at Saint Mary’s College High School in Berkeley and turned 18 in 1968. The Vietnam War was very important to us, and I remember carrying signs down Telegraph Avenue as a high school senior. Getting involved in the process was something special—being able to effect change. The mixed blessing is, how much effect can one person have? How can one or two people change something? It's almost overwhelming, but I think it's our responsibility to do what we can.
It is such a deeply fundamental part of citizenship in a democratic society that it’s easy to take for granted. But until pretty recently, the right to vote belonged only to Protestant white male landowners. Your gender, the color of your skin, your religion, your country of origin, your poverty could deprive you of a voice in your nation’s and your own future. But it never stopped African Americans, women, Native Americans, Asians, and other groups from trying, even dying, to have the vote in a nation they loved despite it all. So, we asked—Do you remember when you voted for the first time? And why does voting matter?

**Jackie Randazzo**
Interactive media specialist, Office of College Communications

How can I forget the hot, humid days of canvassing for local candidates during my first election in my hometown of St. Louis? For one particular race I campaigned for, only hundreds of votes separated my candidate from the loser. I vote because it matters. My vote, my opinion, matters. Also, let’s be honest—who doesn’t like the “I voted” sticker!!

**Audrey Reid ’11**
Gastronomical chemist, owner of Imbibe Solutions

I’ve used absentee ballots for so long I couldn’t tell you which was the first. But whether by mail or in person, I do think it is important. The whole point of voting is to get public opinions about how we, as a community, handle various situations. Unless you honestly don’t care either way, why wouldn’t you want to put in your two cents? We all have opinions and love to be heard, just ask our therapists!

**Zack Farmer ’08**
Social media coordinator, Office of Alumni Engagement

I turned 18 in time for the 2004 presidential election. It was my first semester at Saint Mary’s and there was a great deal of discussion about both Bush and Kerry. I remember thinking how my vote was going to make a difference and as the years pass, that has more meaning—not necessarily on the national level but locally. Like many young voters, I was guilty of not caring enough to vote if it wasn’t for a president. Every office and proposition can change the way we live, and it is critical that all of us make informed decisions.

**Tarik Scott**
Director, High Potential Program

I vote because I strongly believe in my right and responsibility to use my voice to influence the direction of our country. My ancestors fought and died for the freedom to participate in elections, and I honor their legacy by casting my ballot. The first time I voted, I was a first-year college student and I had the pleasure of helping to elect a U.S. senator who would ultimately go on to a historic run for the presidency. I have never missed an election and take a great deal of joy in helping our students exercise their civic duty.

**Madeleine Falco ’88**
Energy conservation program manager, MiraCosta College

My earliest memory of voting was the Mondale/Ferraro ’84 presidential election. I was 20. It was the first time a woman was running for vice president—a pretty big deal for me and I remember my parents going through the sample ballot with me. I vote because I think it’s part of what it means to be an American and live in a democracy. I travel quite a bit and say this to people who don’t vote: there are people in other countries who literally die for the right to vote. It’s something that I don’t take lightly.
Finding our way forward through political polarization

A single day in June highlights how sharp divisions in public opinion have caused havoc on both sides of the pond.

Great Britain caused global gyrations by electing to leave the European Union on June 23, while on this side of the Atlantic our three branches of government spiraled toward stalemate on issues without taking a single vote.

The eight-member Supreme Court, left short-handed by Senate Republicans’ unprecedented refusal to consider a president’s high-court nominee, deadlocked on a case involving an Obama executive order to allow millions of unauthorized immigrants to live legally in the United States.

At the U.S. Capitol building, Democrats staged a 25-hour sit-in on the House floor to get the Republican majority to hold a vote on a “no fly, no buy” gun safety measure one week after the Orlando shooting spree.

Congress even left for its seven-week summer break without weighing in on a bill to combat the spread of the Zika virus. Democrats opposed the Senate-approved measure after House Republicans added unrelated riders that targeted Planned Parenthood and other “poison pills.”

June 23 was just another day of Washington gridlock to many observers. In reality, it was a taste of things to come. The unpredicted Nov. 8 election of Donald Trump and the Republican Party’s lock on Congress showed just how divided the nation had become.

Saint Mary’s faculty members say that the country hasn’t witnessed this kind of political polarization and disintegration since the Reconstruction Era after the Civil War. But neither are they ready to declare today’s democratic decline “Mourning in America” or the “Final Frontier.”

“This is not the first time that this country has faced a kind of crossroads,” Politics Professor Stephen Woolpert said. “Fortunately, we’ve managed to pull
ourselves together and find the resources to remind ourselves what it is we can and need to do together.”

Professor Carl Guarneri, an expert on 19th- and 20th-century U.S. history, reminds us that polar-
ization and paralysis are nothing new, nor are the challenges inherently more difficult.

“We did have a Civil War,” he said with a smile. “Or you can go even farther back to the first decade of the founders in the 1790s. The Jeffersonians and Hamiltons each believed the others were traitors to the country and conspiring with outsiders to overturn the American government, and the Federalists put in alien and sedition laws.”

Guarneri considers the country a little less grid-
locked now than in the 1870s to 1890s before the Progressive Era, when, he said, the parties were very evenly matched and Congress got very little done. “The issues debated seemed endless: the tariff, railroad aid, civil service, but in the context of the time they were deemed very important and symbolic of larger issues, as immigration is now.”

The Progressive Era that followed (1890s–1920s) offered renewed hope according to Woolpert, Guar-
neri, and other scholars. Faced with a dismal economy, poverty, corruption, and racism, new leaders emerged. The next generation of progressive reformers cleaned up politics; professionalized the civil service; and helped expand public education, health care, and other policy arenas.

“There are historical reasons to be sanguine,” Woolpert noted, “but it’s hard to remember that when every day there’s another reminder of our problems.”

Today’s partisan divisions began with the Reagan administration in the 1980s, according to Woolpert, whose research interests include the U.S. Constitution and Supreme Court. The gulf has widened considerably since then: The Democratic Party has tacked slightly left, the GOP has shifted way right, and very few remain in the middle, according to survey data from sources such as the Pew Research Center.

“It’s almost like Republicans and Democrats are living in two different countries,” Woolpert said, “and they don’t like each other.”

The American public is divided over economic, social, and foreign policies; race; and many other issues. When Congress does vote on legislation, powerful interest groups get their way and the majority of Americans don’t, according to a definitive study published by the American Political Science Association in 2014.

Other factors such as redistricting, money in politics, and partisan media are driving us further apart. Republicans have held their largest advantage in the House since 1931, in part because the 2010 “Red wave” gave GOP-controlled state legislatures significant power to gerrymander districts after the last census.

Congressional Republicans have blocked virtually all meaningful legislation and functions since then. Supreme Court nominee Merrick Garland is not the only judicial appointment or nominee caught in the partisan crossfire.

Not surprisingly, national approval ratings of Con-
gress hover near record lows of about 12 percent, though voters generally approve of their own legis-
lators.

In addition to the growing polarization between the GOP and Democrats, deal making has become more difficult because party leaders have lost clout within their own parties.

House Republicans, in particular, have become less accountable to their own party. In 2011, President Barack Obama and former Republican House Speaker John Boehner forged a difficult “grand bargain” on a long-term budget deal, which fell apart because Boehner couldn’t get it past renegade conservatives in his own caucus. In 2013, House Republicans bucked the speaker’s warnings again and shut down the government for two weeks over the Affordable Care Act, aka Obamacare.

Over time, Guarneri said that both major political parties lost “inherited” political allegiances (for example, white Southerners voted Democratic for a century because the Civil War and Reconstruction were pushed by Republicans). As a result, the parties are not the ideologically diverse coalitions that they used to be, which encourages inter- and intraparty deal making.

“One of the reasons the South was divided was that they didn’t have political parties,” said Guarneri, who is completing a book about the Civil War. “Lincoln, on the other hand, had a real two-party system to work with. He was masterful with the carrot and stick. He
did a really good job of using the political system to build coalitions that would stay pro-Union, and he actually passed legislation which he couldn’t have done if there was no organized vocal opposition.”

That kind of brokering between responsible political parties is hard to imagine in today’s rough-and-tumble political climate, especially without an Honest Abe or Abby in sight. Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump entered the general election as the two most unpopular nominees since modern polling began.

This presidential campaign will likely go down as the most polarized, unpredictable, and just plain bizarre ever, with daily dramas that made current shows such as *House of Cards* look more like *Friends*.

Guarneri said that there was “no historical or political precedent for Donald Trump’s victory,” one day after an angry electorate sent shock waves around the world.

As a result, our divided country now has the first president-elect with no military or public service experience; and the GOP will control all three branches of the U.S. government, and roughly two-thirds of state legislatures and governorships.

While Democrats are left to figure out what they can do differently, the party of Lincoln still faces an identity crisis according to Clinton delegate and Associate Professor Monica Fitzgerald.

“Democrats may be struggling [with these losses],” said Fitzgerald, “but the Republicans will have to confront a president-elect who does not appear to have any allegiance to the GOP or its platform.”

Trump offered few policy details during the long political campaign, when traditional Republican values took a back seat. Woolpert characterized differences between Democratic and Republican visions as “whether to have a society open to inclusion versus one that is closed and isolated.”

The GOP has embraced an “America First” battle cry that offends the party establishment, though maybe not as much as its standard-bearer’s distasteful and divisive rhetoric, according to Woolpert, Guarneri, and Fitzgerald.

“Trump rose to fame on a strain of nationalism more than people in the past,” said Fitzgerald, a women’s historian who teaches courses on social justice and gender studies, “and I think history teaches us a lot about these moments of fear and nationalism.”

Community empowerment, not national politics, is the future for Saint Mary’s alumna Jahmese Myres ’06, who has spent the last six years as a grassroots organizer to improve job quality and access in Oakland with the East Bay Alliance for a Sustainable Economy.

“Politicians are not going to save us,” said Myres, who, like many of her friends and former classmates, was inspired by former presidential candidate Bernie Sanders. “There’s a national groundswell for change that comes from the bottom up and that pushes local, state, and potentially national changes,” said Myres, who served as SMC Associated Students president in 2006.

“When there are some wins or actions—like raising the minimum wage or Black Lives Matter—or that rare candidate who speaks to our dreams, it ignites a lot more passion and excitement, and we see an opportunity for change.”

Come Jan. 20, Myres will be organizing in Oakland; Woolpert and Guarneri will be teaching on campus; and Fitzgerald will be observing the inauguration of President Donald Trump in Washington, D.C. with her Jan Term class, The Making of a President.
“Inclusion is not just about having the representation of marginalized students at Saint Mary’s, but having the resources to support and retain them.”
— Gabriella Perez ’15, Student Success Office, the child of Mexican immigrants
It started out as just another warm day on campus. But instead of the studious calm that usually precedes spring finals, agitation and shouting echoed across the quad. Scores of students marched and held rallies. United under the call of End the Silence, the protesters, many of whom were students of color, raised their voices and fists to express their concerns about being marginalized and targeted on campus. The demonstrations included an all-day walkout, sit-ins, and open-mic sessions, and they ended with a list of demands for the administration.

Among other things, students called for curriculum changes, mandatory diversity workshops for faculty and staff, and in First Year Advising Cohorts (FYACs) and Collegiate Seminar. They also called for more help with college affordability, support for undocumented students, and more faculty diversity.

The student unrest echoed similar student actions nationwide. Many of the demonstrations were held in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement and, most notably, the student protest at the University of Missouri, which garnered national media coverage and led to the resignation of its president.

The May 5th demonstration was in the wake of high-profile incidents of bias on campus a month earlier, including vandalism, with political graffiti on campus sidewalks and the egging of the Intercultural Center (IC) during a Black Student Union sleepover there. The IC incident was investigated by Moraga police and SMC’s Public Safety Department, which categorized it as a hate crime.

In addition to reviewing the student demands and acknowledging where the College can improve, President James Donahue collaborated with the College Committee on Inclusive Excellence (CCIE) and the Intercultural Center in a series of town hall, campus climate conversations. They included a solutions-oriented gathering of students, faculty, and staff and two brown bag lunch discussions with the president, provost, and concerned students.

Desmond Hatter ’18 attended both brown bag sessions. His initial takeaway was one of appreciation for Donahue, for taking the time to listen to students and explore their concerns. But he added that it’s one thing for administrators to “talk the talk” and another to actually walk it. The 21-year-old business major said, “Things will change when the administration is proactively seeking to help students. Being an administration that supports marginalized peoples isn’t trying to solve instances after the fact.” If administrators focus only on the protest, he said, without examining its root causes, they’ll have missed the opportunity to live up to their Catholic and Lasallian principles.

While May began with students questioning the College’s commitment to inclusion, the month ended on an inspirational note, with actor Mahershala Ali ’96 delivering a moving commencement address about finding his calling as an artist at Saint Mary’s. It was in his senior year, while working with Theatre Professor Rebecca Engle in the production of Spunk. “In terms of college productions, the play was a huge success, standing room only,” he said. “It was a brave undertaking on Rebecca’s part because for the first time in the theatrical history of the school they produced a black play. So in some regards it was groundbreaking and I had the time of my life. I felt alive with a sense of purpose that I hadn’t yet experienced up to that point.” Ali would go on to challenge the graduating class to pursue their destinies with patience, perseverance, and prayer. His message and personal success story resonated across the College.

Over the summer, members of the End the Silence group and administrators gathered to talk about inclusive community at SMC. “We’ve made real progress on addressing key concerns in the student demands,” said Chief Diversity Officer and Professor of Marketing Tomás Gómez-Arias. “Those areas included improved mandatory diversity training for all staff, in particular staff in the business and financial aid offices. Many student critiques were borne out of the lack of intervention by professors when inappropriate language surfaced in Seminar discussions. As a result, there is an expansion of diversity training and workshops for faculty on handling difficult dialogues.”

Gómez-Arias added that Saint Mary’s has also made notable gains in hiring faculty of color, in particular tenure-track black and African American professors. “Black students have repeatedly asked why

“Diversity and inclusion are a frame of mind. You have to see the other person. You can’t be so self-absorbed that the world revolves around you.”

—Ted Tsukahara ’62, professor of economics and Integral Program tutor, who lived in a WWII internment camp with his Japanese immigrant parents and family
there weren’t more professors ‘who looked like them’ at the College,” he said. “At the end of spring term, we had six tenure-track faculty of African descent, out of 183 ranked faculty members. That was a real pain point for students. However, since then that number has climbed to 11 for the new academic year; that’s an 83 percent increase in a tight academic labor market.”

The College further advanced its commitment to a faculty that mirrors its student body with the hiring of additional diverse professors, including four new professors of Asian ethnicity, eight of Caucasian, and five of Latino ancestry.

Provost Bethami Dobkin, who co-chairs the CCIE with Gómez-Arias, says a major reason for the encouraging progress the College has made in a short time is that the actions requested by students were consistent with the College’s mission and goals and with many of the items already under consideration or in motion. “The President’s Office, CCIE, and others across this campus are deeply committed to inclusive excellence, which requires a high-quality academic experience that draws from and is deepened by the strengths of all of our students and the diversity they bring, based on things like their religion, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or class,” she said.

Dobkin believes Saint Mary’s response to the student demands and its overall inclusion efforts will help distinguish the College as a best practices institution within the higher education landscape. “We are Lasallian educators who revere human dignity and understand that building a more inclusive community, one based on respect and equity, is essential for student success,” she said. “When we actively employ those values, we foster life-changing academic opportunities for all Saint Mary’s students.”

Regent Song Woo MBA ’05 thinks the College’s approach to pursuing inclusion and diversity initiatives across the campus shows that it recognizes the needs of both its current and future student population. “I think the long-term benefit is that SMC will be looked upon as an institution that is out on the forefront, ahead of the curve and making sure it is evolving with the times.”

Woo, president of Lighthouse Management Group, a recruiting and consulting company, said actively promoting inclusion and diversity in the business arena, including the business of education, is fundamental to success, whether that success is measured in product market share or by enrollment growth. “Aside from being morally and ethically right, from a business standpoint, it’s going to impact you negatively if you are losing a pipeline of the best young minds. That’s true whether you are in business or higher education.”

Ines Sosa ’17, a double major in politics and Spanish, and part of the protest planning team, said she was encouraged by the College’s efforts so far. “We’ve taken the demands and they have sat down with us and we’ve talked through them. Like, ‘This is the first demand and

“It’s important to reflect diversity in the staff and full-time faculty and decolonize education on a national level, bringing multicultural thought to our pedagogy and our practice today.”
—Shaunna Vela ’03, performance artist, choreographer, and dance instructor at SMC

“Diversity and inclusion mean recognizing and embracing individual differences and, perhaps more importantly, finding strength in our differences and coming together as one.”
—Collin Pugh ’05, Student Success Office
this is what we are doing about it, and this is what we can’t do.’ So, being clear about what they can do and what they are unable to do has been really helpful to us, to keep things at a much more realistic level,” she said.

Sosa noted several areas of progress with the administration, including establishing standardized diversity sessions for first-year advisers and advisees. The initiative is intended to set expectations for appropriate campus behavior, including helping to reduce microaggressions and create awareness of how unconscious biases can affect campus life. “Right now every FYAC professor does their own thing. Now, hopefully, with the new curriculum that will be implemented … once you get all the first-years from the very beginning, they all can get this training and they are all on the same page.”

As part of the College’s effort toward transparency with its work on inclusion, Sosa and End the Silence co-member and psychology major Daniela Santana ’18 were invited by Dobkin to participate in a summer workshop on building inclusive excellence with Saint Mary’s academic leadership team, which included the president, provost, cabinet members, Brothers, deans, senior staff members, and CCIE faculty representatives. They were also invited to join the CCIE to ensure student perspectives were heard.

While Sosa and Santana believe Saint Mary’s initial inclusion efforts were earnest, by late fall they were apprehensive. “Students cannot be certain any change is being made when they can’t see them in action,” said Sosa. However, CDO Gomez-Arias said the College is committed to addressing the student demands and has scheduled a student, faculty, and staff gathering to continue those efforts. Sosa added that implementing change soon is important, noting the victory of the Republican presidential candidate has increased campus anxiety. “Saint Mary’s has a much bigger responsibility now than before. How can it ensure that this campus is a welcoming space, when the rest of the country isn’t?”

Santana reflected that the election results could spark opportunities for campus unity. “All I can say is that we must remain strong and we have to be there for each other, more than ever.”

The toll of the White House battle wasn’t lost on Donahue. “Regardless of the election’s contentious nature, and its impact outside of the College, we will continue to uphold the values of the Christian Brothers and Saint Mary’s mission. We’ve made genuine progress in our pursuit of inclusive excellence,” he said. “Respect for all persons and inclusive community is part of our mission and embedded in our strategies for making SMC the leading Catholic comprehensive university in the West,” he said. “We will always be committed to these fundamental Lasallian principles. And, everyone on the campus is expected to adhere to those principles—everyone.”

For more perspectives from SMC community members: stmarys-ca.edu/listening-to-students
It was the College’s first sport, stretching back to 1872, with many talented alumni going to the major leagues over the years, including the four men who all took the field in the 1915 World Series. The most recent season looks like the glory days of Saint Mary’s baseball have returned.
When Eric Valenzuela accepted the job as head baseball coach at Saint Mary’s before the 2014 season, he knew he was in for a challenge. The Gaels hadn’t put up a winning record in West Coast Conference play for more than 20 years. But Valenzuela was confident things would get better. He just wasn’t counting on things getting so much better so quickly.

Last year, in just Valenzuela’s third season as head coach, Saint Mary’s won its first-ever WCC championship, won the conference’s postseason tournament for the first time, and qualified for the first NCAA tournament appearance in school history. Their 33 wins were the most for an SMC baseball team since 1977. Six Gaels earned all-conference honors, nine made the WCC All-Academic team, and Valenzuela was named WCC Coach of the Year.

“I’m pretty familiar with recruiting at a place like this, and I felt like if I got the right coaches around me we could do something special,” Valenzuela said. “But to be able to do what we did this year, am I surprised? Yeah. It’s hard to win this conference. What an honor for our guys to do what they did.”

“Coming into this year we knew we had a lot of talent and worked together well,” said Gaels pitcher Corbin Burnes ’17. “It all starts with Coach Valenzuela. He’s definitely changing the culture of the program. He gets us to work hard, whether it’s on the field, in the weight room, or in the classroom.”

Burnes was named to All-American teams by Louisville Slugger and Baseball America. He started his pro baseball career this summer after being selected in the fourth round of baseball’s
June amateur draft by the Milwaukee Brewers. Catcher Nate Nolan '17, pitcher Anthony Gonsolin '16 and third baseman Anthony Villa '16 were also drafted by major league teams.

Valenzuela wants to add to a strong baseball history at SMC. “There might not have been a tradition of championships here,” he said, “but the baseball tradition here is unbelievable; there have been so many good players.”

Indeed, Saint Mary’s has sent dozens of players to the major leagues, including a Baseball Hall of Famer. And there was once a World Series in which four SMC alums were on the field.

Baseball was the first sport at Saint Mary’s, going back to the school’s first year as a degree-granting institution in 1872. Less than a decade later, in 1881, the first SMC player reached the major leagues when Jeremiah Eldridge (class of 1882) joined the Providence (R.I.) Grays, then a member of the National League. Eldridge played professional baseball under the name Jerry Denny, a name he began using while a student at Saint Mary’s so he could play for pay in the summers without risking his amateur status for college baseball.

Denny played 13 seasons in the major leagues and was one of the best defensive third basemen of his era, even though he played without a glove. As unthinkable as that seems today, playing barehanded was actually common at the time he started playing, but gradually other players began using gloves (albeit much smaller ones than modern models). Because he could throw equally well with either hand, Denny believed playing without a glove gave him an advantage, and he is believed to be the last player to forgo a glove for his entire career.

Others from Saint Mary’s soon followed Denny to the majors. By 1910, according to Paul Zingg, former professor of history and dean of the School of Liberal Arts at SMC, 14 former Saint Mary’s athletes had played in the majors, far more than any other school west of the Mississippi River; only four eastern schools had produced more. And one of those early alums became one of baseball’s all-time greats.

Harry Hooper (1907) came to Saint Mary’s former campus in Oakland in 1902 as a 15-year-old in the precollegiate curriculum the school offered at the time. He did so well in the classroom that his teachers encouraged him to enroll in the baccalaureate program, and he graduated in 1907 with a degree in civil engineering. He was also a star on the school’s undefeated 1907 baseball team that was strong enough to defeat the major league Chicago White Sox in an exhibition game. (Three other players from that Saint Mary’s team went on to play in the majors.)

“I never had any intention of taking up baseball as a career,” Hooper told Lawrence Ritter in Ritter’s classic 1966 book, The Glory of Their Times. “I expected to be an engineer. After graduation I played with the Sacramento [minor league team], mainly because they promised to get me a surveying job. When I wasn’t playing ball I worked as a surveyor for the Western Pacific Railroad. I figured I was an engineer who played ball on the side.”

After his season in Sacramento, Hooper signed with the major league Boston Red Sox and “started on what I figured would be just a couple of years of playing baseball,” he told Ritter. “And that was the last job I ever had that was connected with engineering.”

Hooper went on to play 17 seasons in the majors and was elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1971. “If [my parents] hadn’t sent me to Saint Mary’s College, I’d have turned out to be a dry farmer in the San Joaquin Valley and nobody would have ever heard of me,” he said in his induction speech.

Hooper played in four World Series for the Red Sox (1912, 1915, 1916, and 1918). In the first three of those, Boston’s left fielder was George “Duffy” Lewis (class of 1911), who had spent a year at Saint Mary’s. And they weren’t the only SMC alums in the 1915 World Series. Hubert “Dutch” Leonard (class of 1916) pitched for the Red Sox, and the catcher for their opponent, the Philadelphia Phillies, was Ed Burns (class of 1907), a classmate of Hooper. Also on the Phillies roster (although he didn’t pitch in the Series) was pitcher Joe Oeschger (class of 1914), who, like Hooper, had an engineering degree from
Saint Mary’s. Oeschger spent 12 seasons in the big leagues, and in 1920 he was part of the longest major league game ever played, pitching all 26 innings for the Boston Braves.

Another Saint Mary’s major leaguer a century ago was Louis Guisto (class of 1918). If the name sounds familiar, it’s because the baseball field at SMC is named for him. Guisto was a three-sport star in college (baseball, football, and rugby) who played for Cleveland at various times from 1916 to 1923 and later returned to Saint Mary’s as a coach.

The great New York Yankee teams managed by Casey Stengel in the 1950s included a former Gael. Andy Carey ’53 left Saint Mary’s to sign with the Yanks when the school dropped baseball for financial reasons during his sophomore year in 1951. He played third base in four World Series during his 11 years in the big leagues.


Two Gaels played in the major leagues in 2016. Kyle Barraclough ’12, who pitched at SMC from 2009 to 2012, joined the Miami Marlins in 2015 and has become a key member of their bullpen. Outfielder/first baseman Kyle Jensen ’10, a two-time all-conference selection at Saint Mary’s, made his big league debut for the Arizona Diamondbacks in September.

Will there be more Gaels in the majors in the future? With the resurgence of the baseball program, it seems likely. “I think the expectations from within are high now,” Coach Valenzuela said. “The talent pool of recruits is just skyrocketing. It’s a good feeling. But this year was just one step in the right direction.”

And Valenzuela won’t be satisfied until the Gaels take the next step.
Nick Moore ’63 attributes much of his success to luck—being in the right place at the right time. Luckily for Saint Mary’s, the former chairman and CEO of Price-waterhouseCoopers (PwC), one of the most prestigious accounting and consulting firms in the world, has made a point of “being there” for the College over the years. He and his wife, JoAnne, have given more than $500,000 to SMC and this March pledged another $500,000 to the Student Athlete Performance Center.

“I try to do the best I can,” said Moore, who has directed much of his financial support to athletics, which he thinks offers students remarkable leadership training and also benefits Saint Mary’s by elevating the College’s visibility. He and his wife have supported annual athletic scholarships, the new recreation center, men’s basketball and rugby, as well as other funds that support the College in various ways. He and JoAnne are also fully sponsoring two current SMC students.

“At PwC, we hired 15,000 young people a year,” Moore said, “and made a point of looking for athletic backgrounds, as well as military service, because of the discipline involved, the collaboration and teamwork.” At SMC “it takes a lot of talent and commitment to compete at the Division 1 level while also having to hit the books.” He admires the scrappy resolve it requires to pursue athletics and succeed in rigorous academics at Saint Mary’s.

That same kind of resolve characterizes Moore’s rise in the corporate world in which he got his start in public accounting in 1968 in San Francisco but soon found himself in a new Coopers and Lybrand office in Palo Alto. He had earned his law degree from the UC Hastings College of the Law in San Francisco. The East Bay native said the timing couldn’t have been better.

“My earliest clients included venture capital firms focusing on the emerging Silicon Valley—before it was called that,” Moore said. In serving these clients, the firm grew quickly, developing a large technology company practice, with Moore first leading the tax practice and then rising to head of the office. His role continued to grow as he assumed management responsibilities for the Western and Northeast regions, then became part of the executive committee running the firm and, in 1994, was elected chairman and CEO of Coopers and Lybrand and moved to New York City. After orchestrating a merger with Price Waterhouse in 1998, Moore served as global chairman and U.S. CEO of PricewaterhouseCoopers until 2001.

“I think my work in Silicon Valley really forced me to grow quickly,” Moore said. “It was a fast-paced environment of creative, innovative people, who were very demanding clients. It helped me develop technical competence and leadership skills.”

Moore wasn’t new to the feisty, tenacious kind of environment that characterized those embryonic days in the California tech industry. “I learned a lot from my classmates—natural-born leaders, athletes, a close-knit group,” Moore said. He counts some 20 classmates as lifelong friends. In a class that includes attorneys, CPAs, business and investment professionals, a national poet laureate, Vietnam War heroes, a judge, professors, and teachers, Moore said, “it was a scrappy bunch of people. We were lucky, we worked hard, and had a good foundation.”

Throughout his career Moore has applied principles of inclusivity and leadership learned from his Lasallian teachers and professors at Christian Brothers High School in Sacramento and at Saint Mary’s. “I helped to inculcate in the firm a culture of diversity and evenhandedness, bringing in talented people, retaining them, and creating opportunities for leadership.”
BLESSED BY STUDENTS

Brother Thomas Jones FSC ’69 feels blessed to be “always available” to the students in his charge as a staff psychologist in Counseling and Psychological Services and a resident director in North Claeys. “Our students are really our means to salvation. This is how we get to heaven,” he said.

With two master’s degrees and a PhD in psychology from the University of San Francisco, Brother Thomas helps troubled Saint Mary’s students articulate their tensions and support systems. “Maybe they’re not sleeping or their appetite is gone or they’re sleeping too much or eating too much,” he said. “There is something going on that they may not understand until they unwrap it.”

Brother Thomas knew he wanted to join the Brothers at age 15. He attended Saint Mary’s and has returned three times to work, currently juggling four jobs, including director of the SMC Brothers’ Community. But being a resident director to mostly sophomores is his favorite experience.

“I love the relationships, the hope that they represent at the beginning of their lives as they explore so many things and I love that they include me in that exploration. I really feel humbled by that because I’m actually old enough to be their grandparent.” —Ginny Prior

Laser Sharp

John Macken ’62, a physicist and entrepreneur who holds U.S. patents for 36 scientific inventions, has been “semiretired” since 2001. But this latest phase of a highly productive life scarcely consists of resting on his laurels. “I’m working on a very big physics project,” said Macken, whose forthcoming book, The Universe Is Only Spacetime, argues that everything in the universe is created from a single building block.

As a shy physics major at SMC, Macken took up the “bitter medicine” of debate to gain verbal confidence, an asset that helped land him a job in the brand-new laser lab at Rockwell International in the early 1960s. He went on to launch two tech companies of his own—Optical Engineering, which manufactured scientific instruments that Macken invented, and Lasercraft, Inc., which made laser-engraved decorations based on processes he developed.

“I loved being a physicist and inventing things,” said Macken, “but as president of a company of 200 people, 90 percent of my time” revolved around employee management. “That was my day job,” he said. “Then I would come home, play with my kids, and work nights coming up with inventions.”

Macken’s best-known products include a powerful carbon dioxide laser commonly used in laser surgery and an optical design for remote sheet-metal welding used in automobile manufacturing.

“My most recent technical paper is going to knock the socks off everybody,” he said. —Autumn Stephens
Warrior for Human Rights
Blazing trails as an advocate for women and girls

In an Atlanta juvenile courtroom in 2000, Deborah Richardson MA ’13 witnessed a booking that deeply impacted her professional life. A 10-year-old girl, handcuffed and shackled, was sent to jail on a curfew violation after being found in a van with a 42-year-old man who had rented her for sex. The man was slapped with a $50 fine and let go. At the time, pimping and pandering a child for sex was a misdemeanor in Georgia. But not for long.

Richardson helped lead a campaign to change the law to a felony and raised $1 million to open Angela’s House, the first safe house for sexually exploited girls in the Southeast. “People thought sex trafficking happened over in Thailand and Bangkok. We were the first to really identify domestic sex trafficking here in the U.S.,” said Richardson, who also organized over 20 organizations in 2010 to force Craigslist.com to close down its Adult Services site, where adolescent girls were being peddled for sex.

“Stopping human trafficking, which is a very lucrative enterprise, has easily been my passion for the last 17 years,” said Richardson, a single mother of two adult children who earned a master’s in leadership at SMC and is currently a doctoral candidate in public policy and social change at Union Institute and University.

Now the executive vice president at the National Center for Civil and Human Rights, Richardson continues to blaze trails as an advocate for women and girls. In 2014, she launched the International Human Trafficking Institute, which engages college students to help fight against sex and labor trafficking “through a shift of culture, hearts, and minds.”

—Lynn Armitage

MUSIC ON THE LAWN
The second annual Music on the Lawn brought together 180 Gaels, their families, and campus neighbors on a soft June evening in front of the Chapel to enjoy a lineup of alumni performers—Shawn Brown ’98; Elements of Truth, with E.J. Youngblood ’10; and 3:30 Friday, featuring Courtney Lohmann ’05 and Daniel Lewis ’00. The evening included dinner from Bay Area food trucks, local craft beer and wine, and fun activities for kids.

There are many ways for Gaels to stay connected after graduation through reunion and events. Join us for Alumni Chapter Christmas parties in December and the Beat the Zags Pregame Tailgate Party and Annual Car Drawing in January. Below, alumni celebrate at the Basketball Opening Night Tailgate and Beer Garden in November. For a full listing of upcoming alumni events, visit stmarys-ca.edu/alumnievents.
Leaping Over Hurdles

When William Lane ’16 graduated summa cum laude, he sent the message that autism doesn’t have to hold a student back. He earned a history degree with a 3.9 GPA, is finishing an economics minor this fall, and is considering a career as a library archivist. Lane’s family chose Saint Mary’s because of its caring, small school environment that supports students with disabilities. There was also the surprising mentorship that developed through a mutual friend who knew Gaels track and cross-country Coach Marty Kinsey.

“He [Kinsey] met with William before school started and walked him around campus and talked to him about the transition process and what to expect. After school started, he had someone he could go to for advice,” said Lane’s mother, Mary.

At SMC, Lane worked to bring disabled students into the mainstream, founding a Diverse Disabilities Support Group through Student Disability Services (SDS).

“I wanted enough of us to form a critical mass and have our own little sub-group like the ones in the Intercultural Center,” said Lane, pictured below with Russ Tiberii, former director of SDS. The group had mixers and a speaker on disability law. His best friend and mentor, senior Lowell Kirkwood ’16, was the treasurer.

Learning leadership skills has meant overcoming hurdles amplified by autism.

“There was a fear that I would talk too much in class and alienate everyone, that I would have too much anxiety and not be able to function,” Lane said.

But Lane and his family found inspiration at SMC. “The professors have been wonderful at bringing out his strengths and supporting his challenges,” said his mother.

And Lane believes he earned more than a degree. “I’ve grown to understand learning as a community, as opposed to learning being more of an individual thing.” —Ginny Prior

PLACES YOU REMEMBER

Nearly 700 Gaels turned out for Reunion 2016 this July to celebrate the Saint Mary’s they remember and their college today. The class of ’66 celebrated their 50th by raising $76,000 to establish an endowment. Also notable was an engaging reception honoring the Lamont Madden Book Fund, which helps many students pay for their books. And dinner under the stars on the Chapel Lawn remains the favorite event every year.

“It’s generations of Gaels coming together to reminisce with their classmates and meet new people who all share one thing, a deep love for this place,” said Courtney Lohmann ’05, director of alumni engagement. “It’s indescribable.”

GAEL NOW NIGERIAN BISHOP

The Reverend Father Akinwunmi Oyejola MA ’13, who earned a master’s degree in marriage and family therapy, was appointed bishop of Osogbo Diocese in southwestern Nigeria. Born in Nigeria and ordained a priest in 1991, Bishop Oyejola holds degrees in the humanities and pastoral leadership from All Hallows College in Dublin, Ireland. He has served the Church in a variety of roles—as parish priest, diocesan director of vocations and diocesan chaplain of youth, diocesan director of the Biblical Apostolate, a member of Consultors, as well as national director of religious educators in Nigeria.
Up From the Flames

Twenty-five years ago, the Oakland Hills fire destroyed the home of Risa Nye MFA ’11. With the help of Saint Mary’s MFA program, Nye realized her dream of writing a book—There Was a Fire Here, her memoir of surviving the firestorm. Published in June, it coincides with the 25th anniversary of the Oct. 20, 1991, fire that killed 25 and caused $1.5 billion in damage.

For Nye, the course helped her process some painful memories, which her professor—Peter Trachtenberg—compared to a mud puddle. “He said, ‘I want you to walk through that mud puddle… get to the emotion. Don’t be afraid to go where it’s messy.’”

Nye’s book shares not only the hopelessness she and her family felt as they returned to a home in ashes but also the personal growth they experienced in rebuilding.

“For me, a person who always had trouble making decisions, it forced me to step up,” Nye said. “I discovered I was more capable in some ways than I thought.”

That newfound confidence surfaced again when she entered the MFA program with students the same age as her own kids. “I was 58 when I started. I just had to decide it wasn’t going to matter.”

Nye found support in her classes, with small writing groups and even an internship at a publishing house. And the 100-page thesis, due at the end of the program, became the bones of her book.

“What makes Risa’s writing so special is that she’s able to balance humor and disaster with expert pacing and a singular philosophical velocity,” said SMC English Composition Professor Alex Green. “She’s quite fearless, too—to watch her stare down this tragic incident with such aplomb is something to marvel at.” —Ginny Prior

FINE ARTS FRIDAYS
A musician and artist since childhood, John “J.T.” Taylor ’17 delights in sharing his passion for the arts. So last year, he was thrilled to serve as coordinator of the Fine Arts Fridays after-school program at De La Salle Academy, a Concord middle school founded in 2014 by Saint Mary’s alumni. The school exclusively serves boys from low-income families. Inspired to stretch the young teens’ “creativity beyond what they know and help their brains develop in new ways,” Taylor led a student team, providing participatory experiences in drawing, theater, and liturgical and contemporary music.

Since the academy’s inception, Saint Mary’s alums and students have been carrying out the Lasallian mission there. Marilyn Paquette ’97 serves as principal, Mark DeMarco ’83 as president, and Ken Hofmann ’45 and Lisa Hofmann Morgan ’81 as benefactors helping provide free tuition. But the benefits flow both ways, and Taylor emphasized his joy in seeing the boys’ pride in their own artistic creations and performance. “I wanted to do things that would stick with them,” he said.
Last summer we lost a highly respected, longtime member of the Saint Mary’s family. Valerie Masson Gomez, former dean of academic development, who served the school as a professor and administrator from 1968 to 2002, died peacefully in her sleep on June 14.

Gomez was born in Dunsuir, near Mount Shasta, on April 15, 1925. She became the first female student body president in her high school, and after graduation, during World War II, inspected railroad tracks for the Southern Pacific Railroad before attending UC Berkeley where she earned a bachelor’s degree in Spanish.

Gomez then moved to Mexico City to work for the American Embassy, where she met her husband, Angel Gomez Gil. Three of their four children—Angel, Marcelle, and Valerie—were born there. The family then moved to Dunsuir, where their fourth child, Peter ’68, was born.

Gomez earned a master’s degree and a doctorate in romance languages and literature at UC Berkeley after the family moved to Oakland in 1961. In 1968, she began teaching Spanish at the all-male SMC as an assistant professor. Intelligent, driven, and with an extraordinary work ethic, tempered by humor, sensitivity, and a love for opera, Gomez gradually transitioned from teaching to administration.

“Valerie Gomez was an extraordinarily loyal, gracious, and dedicated writer, thinker, organizer, and producer of critical College publications,” said Brother Mel Anderson, president of Saint Mary’s from 1969 to 1997, who notes, as do others, that it took several people to fill her shoes when she retired.

But she always made time for her students. “Valerie was a mentor to me as a student. She inspired my love for Spanish linguistics. My text on phonetics is dedicated to her,” said Frances Sweeney ’86, professor and chair of the Department of World Languages and Cultures.

Gomez also served as a mentor to young faculty. “I will always cherish Valerie’s genuineness and willingness to help a junior faculty member (me) learn to navigate the intricacies of academic administration so that I could one day take on the role of dean for academic development that she pioneered,” said Theatre Professor Frank Murray.

Gomez retired at age 77 in 2002, after 34 years at Saint Mary’s, and devoted herself to researching her Scottish ancestors. She never lost her love for hiking and continued to enjoy trails like the Dipsea in Marin well into her early 70s, said her daughter, Valerie Gomez Lienau. “My mother loved her family, loved her research, loved opera and a good joke, but in large measure gave her life to Saint Mary’s College.”
1952
1 Stan Russell and Arden Russell happily celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on June 25, 2015, with family and friends.

1964
A South Carolina local news service reports Larry Biddle, who started a recognition program at Conway High School in 1984, was awarded emeritus status at that time. He now writes full time from his home in Marshall, Minn. The West Coast promises to figure in Book III, The Marsco Sustainability Project, to be published in 2017.

1974
3 Carl Wu joins John Hopkins University as the 23rd Bloomberg Distinguished Professor, a group of scholars working both individually and collaboratively across fields to address major world problems and teach the next generation. Carl is a widely recognized expert on chromatin biology and biochemistry. Carl, a member of both the National Academy of Sciences and the National Academy of Medicine, intends to set up a one-of-a-kind laboratory at Johns Hopkins dedicated to the understanding of chromatin structure and gene expression—the areas that have commanded his focus since the start of his career.

1976
Denise Bradley ’79, a judge in Houston, Texas, reports on her fellow alums: Ralph Walker, after 20-plus years as an Oakland police officer, is now Stephen Curry’s bodyguard. There is an excellent article about Ralph in Sports Illustrated on.si.com/1NkIffY8. Denise also tells us that Joseph Varela ’79 was appointed in 2010 as public defender for Marin County. He is doing cutting-edge work helping people exit the criminal justice system.

1983
4 Louis Lotorto is celebrating his 27th year as a professional union actor and recently appeared in the Tony Award-winning South Coast Theatre’s revival of Amadeus in Costa Mesa. He appears in Neil Simon’s Laughter on the 23rd Floor at North Coast Repertory Theatre in Solana Beach near San Diego in the fall. Pictured: Louis (left) as one of Salieri’s Venticelli in Amadeus at South Coast Repertory Theatre.

1985
5 David Cooke was among 12 honored and inducted into the Christian Brothers Athletic Hall of Fame at Christian Brothers High School in Sacramento on Saturday, June 4, 2016. He is noted as “an All-City 6’8 power forward for Brothers, going on to be a four-year letterman for Saint Mary’s College. David then played for the Sacramento Kings in 1985, and went on to a nine-year professional basketball career in Europe.”

1993
Damien Fairbairn is now working as senior IT compliance manager at NetSuite Inc. in San Mateo. Damien lives in Redwood City with his wife, Angelin, and two sons, Lucas (4) and Maxwell (2).

1995
After obtaining her MBA, Barbara (Giel) Verhey flourished in her career with British Airways, including a two-year posting in its London headquarters. Having been bitten by the travel bug, Barbara continued her worldwide travels after retirement and currently works as a flight attendant with JetBlue, based in Fort Lauderdale. In between trips, Barbara keeps active with ballroom dancing, skiing, traveling, and entertaining. And yes, she’s met the first family while working at the White House doing floral design for four years at special events. If there is a South Florida alumni chapter, she would love to participate.
1996
Dirk Vliks just finished a book that might be helpful for students graduating and looking for work in a new world—Square One.

2005
6 Lauren (Porter) O’Neill and her husband, James, welcomed their first child, Liam Michael O’Neill, on March 9, 2016. They are thrilled with the arrival of their happy, healthy bundle of joy. Liam’s proud godfather is Lauren’s brother John Porter ’06. Pictured: Lauren and James O’Neill with baby Liam.

2008
Professor Myrna Santiago led a group to the Amazon, and among them were the following SMC graduates, plus Professor Jennifer Heung ’09, chair of the Anthropology Department.

Conchita Hernandez, Tony Zapien, Andrew Aguilar ’11, Alicia Villanueva ’11, and Yesenia Chavez ’11.
The picture was taken at the Opera House in Manaus, Brazil.

7 Dana (Gilbert) Saindon ME ’09, ECR ’09 and her husband, Bryan, welcomed their first child, Owen Robert Saindon, to their family on May 1, 2016. At a whopping 9 pounds 7 ounces and 22.25 inches long, Owen is a happy, healthy baby ready to cheer on our Gaels!

2009
8 Shannon (Barbara) Wallace married Robert on Nov. 7, 2015 in the Saint Mary’s Chapel, with a reception at the Orinda Country Club. Good pals and fellow Gaels Michael Antonopoulos and Martin Torres were in attendance. Shannon works as the director of alumnae relations at her high school alma mater, Notre Dame High School in Belmont.

9 Eleanor (Eldredge) and husband Adam Mills ’06 welcomed their first child, Sofia Rose Mills, into this world on May 20, 2016. They couldn’t be more in love with their precious little girl!

Aaron Arnold graduated from medical school from Rocky Vista University College of Osteopathic Medicine this past May and went on to continue his residency training in family medicine in Washington at Skagit Valley Hospital.

2011
10 Heather Martin earned her doctorate in clinical psychology from the California School of Professional Psychology at Alliant. San Francisco. Heather will continue on to complete her postdoctoral fellowship providing therapy services to underserved children and their families in the Bay Area.

11 Sarah Shevlin recently received her MBA from the University of Redlands. She is continuing to expand on her accounting and financial career in Southern California. Pictured: Sarah with her parents, Chris and Becky Shevlin, after the graduation ceremony.

2012
12 Elizabeth Schroeder and Robert Peers got engaged on the top of Mount Whitney in June 2016 after a week-long backpacking trip that ended at the summit. Elizabeth’s dad was there to witness the momentous occasion, as were other early-morning hikers who cheered the happy couple the whole way down the mountain.

Caitlin Wiley worked for the U.S. Department of Agriculture after graduating with a degree in environmental studies. After witnessing the government shutdown in September 2013, Caitlin decided to take her environmental concerns to the next level: law school. In fall 2014, she entered the part-time program at the University of San Francisco School of Law. She is now in her last year of classes and looking forward to life as a lawyer.

2013
13 Lauralee Jacks recently published a children’s book, Clovers and Fire. It is a rollicking adventure and fairy tale that is geared toward children and young teens from 8 to 14 years old. Themes of this book include friends, loyalty, and following your dreams. Lauralee lives in her hometown, Fayetteville, Tenn., and is working on her master’s in elementary education. She is also a member of the Society for Children’s Book Writers and Illustrators.

Jazo Moises went to the University of Oregon School of Journalism and Communication to complete a graduate degree in media studies after graduation. After briefly interning in New York for an independent young adult fiction publisher, she returned to California and recently married. Somel now works in San Francisco for the Public Library of Science, an innovative nonprofit publisher that advocates and serves as an industry pioneer for open access and advancing science and medicine research around the world. Somel never forgets her social justice roots inherited from SMC and also volunteers part-time as a California State Certified Rape Crisis Counselor. She is looking forward to the holidays and to celebrating her one-year wedding anniversary with her husband, Sanchit Talwar.

2014
Somel (Jammu) Talwar graduated with honors as an Integral Program major with an emphasis in creative writing. After briefly interning in New York for an independent young adult fiction publisher, she returned to California and recently married. Somel now works in San Francisco for the Public Library of Science, an innovative nonprofit publisher that advocates and serves as an industry pioneer for open access and advancing science and medicine research around the world. Somel never forgets her social justice roots inherited from SMC and also volunteers part-time as a California State Certified Rape Crisis Counselor. She is looking forward to the holidays and to celebrating her one-year wedding anniversary with her husband, Sanchit Talwar.

To see additional Glimpses photos, visit stmarys-ca.edu/glimpses.
The Larger Circle

I waited for June 18 for months after receiving the acceptance email. I had plans. I was going to write 20,000 words during my two-week residency. I was going to read books I had started and put down, distracted by a running to-do list in my head.

Two frightening flights later, a shuttle picked up five of us at the Burlington, Vermont airport. After an hour driving, we arrived in Johnson, Vermont. The driver parked in front of the Red Mill, which once held grain silos but now housed the cafeteria where breakfast, lunch, and dinner would be served to visual artists and writers from around the world. The Mill was a crimson pin calling out on a map, “You are here,” a place I went to less for the food, hungry to connect with others, most of whom had begun their residencies two weeks before me.

The Gihon River ran moss green adjacent to The Mill. Certainly not the largest or most powerful river in the state, yet undeniably the first palpable thing we all saw as our white van headed into Vermont Studio Center (VSC).

Being away from home challenged the child in me who once called my parents crying with homesickness from sleepaway camp. The residency would be my first time away from my own kid, who would be turning 10 the day before I was scheduled to return home. Could I leave the Kid for art?

Vermont Studio Center was a place to dream and write uninterrupted. I sat in a soft red armchair daily as the river crept into my writing. All was unknown, until it was known. Then, a boy appeared on the blank page on my laptop screen and I found myself writing a story about the magic of finding one’s path against the unpredictability of nature.

On one sticky humid Vermont day, I watched artists launch themselves in swan- and pizza-shaped floaties down the Gihon. On another day, we comforted our English friend when Brexit passed. We mediated on the grassy lawn next to the river. We wrote, painted, sculpted, and performed.

Another mother at VSC sent me words from Sarah Ruhl’s essay, “On Interruption,” which I wouldn’t understand until later: “I found that life intruding on writing was, in fact, life. And that, tempting as it may be for a writer who is also a parent, one must not think of life as an intrusion. At the end of the day, writing has very little to do with writing, and much to do with life. And life, by definition, is not an intrusion.”

The day before the last day of our collective residency, I roamed through open studios, dreaming and inspired. But by evening my sister called to tell me my mother had suffered a near-fatal heart attack, “a big one,” and I changed my flight, flew into the unknown again.

The Kid bounced up and down at the airport. I had made it home on his birthday after all. And gratefully, just a month later, my mother was well, if not better, with a new stent in her heart. Life was not an intrusion; life was the larger circle. Inside the circle, I was writing it all.
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Chasing the Sun’s Shadow

Students discover that things are not always what they seem as they use SMC’s Meridian Plinth, based on a 2,000-year-old tool, to track the sun’s movement in an Integral Program class with Brother Kenneth Cardwell. “You just want to figure out the truth,” said Integral major John Burkart ’20. “You have to find it out for yourself.”