There is nothing more powerful than belief, the clear-eyed conviction that it’s possible—to go after dreams, face challenges, stand up to giants, beat the odds, plan for the future and change lives for the better. The events of the past year, against the backdrop of Saint Mary’s history, demonstrate how we make it happen again and again.
Saint Mary’s College is built on a foundation of possibilities. From the core mission of the Christian Brothers “to touch the hearts of students and inspire them” to our own College mission where we boldly state our intent to “probe deeply the mystery of existence,” we have taken up the mantle of educating students differently. In addition to preparing them for a successful career, we know we must also help them to contribute to society as citizens of conscience and character.

We are able to work toward these lofty goals because the quality of the education and the talent of the people of Saint Mary’s is extraordinary. Our distinctiveness comes from our unique blend of graduate and undergraduate programs, our focus on teaching and learning and our research and scholarship, all in service of our Mission. Students come to Saint Mary’s with high expectations—only to have them raised even higher when they get here. They bring dreams of a fuller, bigger life—and here they find the learning and the people to help them make it happen.

Please enjoy the following annual report that highlights a few of the many reasons that the work and the people at Saint Mary’s give me great hope for the future. We know it’s possible to change the world—and we’ll do that one student at a time.

Sincerely,

James A. Donahue
Highlights of 2013–14

SEBA Joins Elite Group
The School of Economics and Business Administration achieved an important milestone with accreditation from the AACSB (Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business). Less than 5 percent of the world’s business programs receive this distinction.

Good News From Moody’s
Moody’s Investors Service affirmed the College’s Baa1 rating and upgraded its outlook from negative to stable, significant given that the rating agency has the entire higher education sector under a negative outlook.

New Recreation Center Nears Launch
After much anticipation, the Joseph L. Alioto Recreation Center will open in Spring 2015. The $23.5 million facility will be a dynamic campus gathering place with 60,000 square feet for climbing walls, indoor sport courts, a pool, fitness center, rooms for yoga, dance, and spinning classes, a snack bar, and outdoor patio and lawn linking to the Korth Tennis Complex and Cottrell Softball Field. It’s free for all students and open to faculty and staff for a fee.

A New President Begins
James A. Donahue was inaugurated as the 29th president of Saint Mary’s College on Friday, Oct. 11, 2013. The installation ceremony was held on the Chapel Lawn. The celebration included an inaugural Mass, an academic symposium on Catholic higher education and a barbecue for the local community.

The Cross Rises Again
In early Jan. 2014, Saint Mary’s cross on the hill was felled by wind. A new cross, made from the heart of a redwood tree from Eureka, was raised in March, nearly 74 years after the original “La Cruz de la Victoria” was installed.

New Varsity Athletics Facility Announced
The College announced plans for a new Student-Athlete Performance Center and a renovation for McKeon Pavilion. The estimated $13 million project will house dedicated facilities for varsity athletes, including a weight room, training and sports medicine areas, a new women’s volleyball locker room and athletics offices.

95% High Potential freshmen return for sophomore year (national rate is 78%)

764 largest ever
UNDERGRADUATE CLASS OF 2014
GRADUATES

More than 30% of students do research with a professor

Students donate 40,000 hours to community service projects
WCC honors
130 student-athletes who earn 3.0 GPA or above

94% graduate degrees prepared them for careers

$236.1 million net assets—a record high (PRE-RECESSION HIGH WAS $223.9 MILLION)

638 job interviews through Career Services

93% say GRADUATE DEGREE WORTH THE COST

36% INCREASE IN Honors at Entrance STU DENTS

29 presidents with inauguration of JAMES DONAHUE

24 science students receive full-tuition scholarships

62% STUDY ABROAD

354,118 total visits to Library

20 YEARS OF Women’s Gender Studies

22 New faculty

30 graduate degrees prepared them for careers

More than 30% of students do research with a professor

Students donate 40,000 hours to community service projects

UNDERGRADUATE CLASS OF 2014
GRADUATES

29 presidents with inauguration of JAMES DONAHUE

24 science students receive full-tuition scholarships

95% High Potential freshmen return for sophomore year (national rate is 78%)

764 largest ever

UNDERGRADUATE CLASS OF 2014
GRADUATES

More than 30% of students do research with a professor
Saint Mary’s champions the dreamers, the believers, the doers—challenging students academically and introducing them to distant new worlds.
Explore Mars

MARS MAY BE 33 MILLION MILES AWAY, but Alice Baldridge, assistant professor of Environmental and Earth Science and Studies, is bringing knowledge of the Red Planet down to Earth and onto campus.

A former NASA postdoctoral fellow, Baldridge has made Mars her life’s work. Her research focuses on studying the geology of the dry lakes of Western Australia to understand what Mars would have been like more than 3 billion years ago and whether it had any forms of life.

Baldridge asks the question that everyone wants answered: Are we alone in the universe?

“If we can show that life got started elsewhere in our solar system, it greatly increases the possibility that more evolved life forms exist somewhere in the universe,” she said.

Baldridge weaves Mars into all of her classes, teaching students to interpret satellite imagery and helping them understand the process of planetary surface formation. She has taken students to the Grand Canyon and Death Valley, using the Earth as her classroom and showing them an array of scientific research opportunities they can pursue.

Four students from four different majors—biology, geology, physics and education—have worked on research with Baldridge. Senior Charlie Cocks spent last summer analyzing satellite imagery from western Australia to determine whether its mineral groups are similar to those of Gale Crater on Mars. They are. His findings, along with those of fellow senior Alina Nguyen, will be presented at the American Geophysical Union Fall Meeting in San Francisco in December.

“Working with Dr. Baldridge is so exciting,” said Cocks. “I’m learning things I would have never been able to learn if I hadn’t met her.” And he’s exploring a career involving remote sensing, a skill he picked up from his professor with a passion for Mars.

Beat the Odds

BRIAN STANLEY ’98, executive director of the Oakland Schools Foundation, has more than an academic interest in helping challenged students beat the odds. The first person in his family to attend college, Stanley was a participant in Saint Mary’s High Potential (HP) Program, a broad-based initiative to provide intensive mentoring and support to first-generation and underrepresented students. “They wrapped you in a system of care,” said Stanley.

Marking its 40th year in April, the HP Program currently enrolls about 90 new students each year. “One of the great challenges for first-generation college students is that they often don’t have very good anticipation of what’s going to happen in college,” said Stanley, a Bay Area native who went on to earn an Ed.D. at Mills College and served for seven years as director of Black Student Programs at Saint Mary’s. For him, as for the 320 current HP students, the program created crucial scaffolding through the Summer Bridge Institute (“the hardest thing I ever did!” Stanley said), peer mentoring, skills workshops, and monitoring and advising for first-year students.

The program isn’t just increasingly popular—it’s also effective. Over the last three years, 95 percent of participating freshmen have returned to Saint Mary’s for sophomore year (nationwide, only 78 percent of freshmen return the following year). And, said Tracy Pascua Dea, the program’s co-director, HP resonates with the College’s mission to serve the underserved and to “not only educate students, but make sure they have a meaningful life after graduation.” HP students, she said, tend to “go back to their communities and positively affect them.”

Strong relationships are at the heart of a Saint Mary’s education, said Stanley, and that includes those forged in the HP Program. “We aren’t talking theories here,” he said. “We’re talking about a mentor asking what happened to you this week that caused you not to go to class, or that was amazing, or that just left you gobsmacked. As a model, that’s a really powerful way of shepherding students through new experiences.”
Humanize the World

KELEY WONG '15 expected to make friends, sample delicious cuisine, and become fluent in French during her semester in the south of France. And so she did. But the changes went beyond the predictable. “Going to France was the most significant thing that ever happened to me,” said Wong, a bubbly International Studies major from Sacramento. In fact, she said, immersion in another culture changed her life.

One of the 60 to 70 Saint Mary’s students who study outside the United States each semester in an SMC or affiliate international program, Wong thoroughly enjoyed living with a host family in Aix-en-Provence while taking classes at IAU College. But the benefits weren’t just academic. “It’s important to realize that everything is a teaching moment you can grow from,” she said. For example, “I had a lot of people coming up to me and making random comments about me being Chinese or squinting their eyes,” said Wong, who is Chinese-American.

Wong returned to the United States with her zeal for travel undiminished (she’s since journeyed to Sri Lanka, and looks forward to trips to South America and England), and a brand-new “passion to pursue Asian-American social justice and really just change the way people see racism.” Now she serves as lead peer mentor for study abroad students, and is an enthusiastic advocate for students of color traveling to other countries.

“Our study abroad program is aligned with the SMC mission in terms of educating the student as a whole,” said Maria Flores, associate director of the Center for International Programs, who said stories like Wong’s illustrate why experiencing other cultures is so valuable. “They’re learning another set of life skills that allows them to really humanize the world.”

To encourage international study, Saint Mary’s charges the same tuition for a semester abroad as it does for a semester on campus. But for students who live at home or hold steady jobs, leaving the country still may not be a financially viable option. More scholarship funding, Flores said, “would make a huge difference.”
Saint Mary’s strives to keep education accessible and affordable for talented students with limited financial means. It is core to the Saint Mary’s mission and a sound investment in the future.

Invest in Possibility
“WE HAVE MANY STUDENTS who want to do science but can’t come to Saint Mary’s because they can’t afford it,” said Chris Jones, professor and chair of the Mathematics and Computer Science Department.

Now, with a $617,000 S-STEM grant from the National Science Foundation—the largest funding of its type in the school’s history—such worthy, qualified science and math students have a better chance. With the NSF scholarships, Saint Mary’s can offer full tuition over the next five years to 24 incoming freshman who plan to major in chemistry, biochemistry, physics or mathematics, have financial need and are eligible for Pell Grants.

The scholarships also come with a fortifying dose of mentoring, a place to live with other like-minded students in the science living and learning community in Assumption Hall, and workshops, programs and resources in the STEM-focused First Year Advising Cohort and STEM Career Gateway program. These new and developing programs will help prepare budding scientists for future careers or graduate school.

One of the first recipients of the new NSF scholarships is physics major Marin Gonzales ’18, whose brothers are studying STEM disciplines elsewhere. The scholarship makes him feel independent and removes some of the financial burden from his parents. Gonzales loves the opportunity to live in Assumption Hall. “We share common characteristics. It’s like a family,” he said.

Gonzales is just the kind of student Saint Mary’s hopes to attract. “The NSF grant is a very competitive process, and it’s no small accomplishment to receive one,” said Roy Wensley, dean of the School of Science. “We know we have a high quality program. This just validates it.”
Follow Dreams

BRENDA MARTINEZ ’14 never planned to attend college—she applied to Saint Mary’s only because her high school counselor insisted. “I didn’t even know anyone who had gone to college,” said the recent grad, who now heads a bilingual sixth-grade classroom in Buffalo, N.Y. as part of the prestigious Teach for America program. Simultaneously, Martinez is pursuing a master’s degree in education at Canisius College in Buffalo—and soon she hopes to start volunteering at an educational nonprofit.

“Saint Mary’s offered education, but it also offered the opportunity to be reflective of myself and what I could do for other people,” said Martinez, who was raised in “kind of a rough” neighborhood in Pittsburg, Calif., with immigrant parents and siblings who dropped out of high school.

Always curious and open-minded, Martinez welcomed opportunities at Saint Mary’s as well as those she created herself, like designing a multidisciplinary major in Ethnic Studies. With an SMC scholarship that covered 25 percent of her education, Martinez took on the rest with her own earnings, grants, loans and her family’s help.

A pivotal experience came just after freshman year, when she participated in SMC’s Micah Summer Fellowship immersion program, living in a low-income West Oakland neighborhood and working directly with homeless and mentally ill residents in San Francisco’s gritty Tenderloin. Martinez proved to be a natural at advocating for and forging meaningful relationships with the marginalized men and women she encountered. After that, she said, “I felt like I really aligned with Saint Mary’s mission of social justice and commitment to equality.”

During sophomore year Martinez went to Cuernavaca, Mexico, studying the country’s history and teaching part time in a school for impoverished indigenous children. She returned to the school the following Jan Term to teach, keeping her promise to the students.

“I could not have gotten so many service opportunities from any other college,” said Martinez, who was especially moved by participating in a Mission and Ministry project delivering water and donations to immigrants along the same Mexican-American border that her mother had crossed 26 years earlier.

Martinez plans a social justice career in educational policy and stresses the importance of never giving up on dreams. “Follow your heart and think about what you can do for other people.”
To navigate and succeed in a challenging future, Saint Mary’s plans strategically, reflects on tradition, embraces diversity and builds on timeless values.
Train Leaders

AN EXPERT IN WORKPLACE CREATIVITY has been awarded the new Guyette Professorship in Responsible Leadership. Nancy Lam, assistant professor in the Graduate Business Program of the School of Economics and Business Administration (SEBA), is the first recipient of the professorship established in 2013 by Kay and Jim Guyette ’67. Professorships help Saint Mary’s hire and retain high-quality faculty, especially in competitive areas like accounting, finance and strategy.

“Not enough Ph.D.’s are produced in these disciplines and our salary is not as high as many of our competitors, so it’s very difficult to compete for top talent,” said Zhan Li, dean of SEBA, noting that the endowed professorship is at the top of the College’s salary scale and comes with the prestige of the endowed title.

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“As the Guyette Professor, Lam mentors seven juniors and seniors selected as Fellows for the program who learn from her and from executives at companies like Apple and PBS, as well as attend the Leadership and Diversity Conference in Los Angeles. The Fellows will also work on solving real problems, such as a report with the College’s Center for the Regional Economy, assessing the Bay Area economy for the California Bank of Commerce. “You do not typically see this kind of project for undergraduates,” said Lam. “This will be a real tool for the bank, which has asked us to assist them with their growth goals.”

In April, Business Insider Magazine ranked Saint Mary’s undergraduate business degree among the top 10 for best return on investment. The San Francisco Business Times ranks Saint Mary’s Executive M.B.A. program as the largest in the Bay Area and the Executive M.B.A. Hybrid as in the Top 25 in the Nation for Best Online M.B.A.

Believe in the Future

ZACH FLANAGIN sees the future of Catholic higher education as both exciting and uncertain. A young father of two, active in his parish and married to a Presbyterian minister, the chair of Saint Mary’s Department of Theology and Religious Studies is what President Jim Donahue calls the modern Catholic. He represents the spirited future of Saint Mary’s College.

In a panel discussion on the topic, Donahue said that at its core, Catholic higher education must be a spiritual practice. But “to talk about educating the whole person and Catholic values doesn’t tell me too much. How will Catholic higher education really make a difference?”

Dialogue will help make the difference, Flanagin said. “At its best, the Catholic tradition has been able to bring its theology, its rituals, its richness into dialogue with what is human in every generation. At its worst, we have been scared of what’s human in a particular generation and have run away from it and often closed ourselves up into this static box.”

Flanagin cites Pope Francis as someone who is trying to push us to put tradition into dialogue with the world as we’ve come to know it.

“It’s not necessarily an ‘anything goes’ inclusivity,” he said, “but it’s an openness to have conversations with the way the world’s changing and with new voices that we didn’t ever hear—even if they were always there.”

Saint Mary’s is ready to look at what’s happening in the world with “critical, analytic eyes,” Flanagin said. “It’s what a Catholic university does. It’s the place where different voices can be heard in an intentional dialogue.”

The great excitement of being Catholic, Flanagin said, acknowledging that it’s a little scary, “is what’s going to be next? What’s going to be the new conversation?”

stmarys-ca.edu 21
INSPIRE DISCOVERY

In a warm, wood-lined room where centuries-old books fill the walls as if guarding a hallowed space, 15 students use iPads to research topics ranging from climate change to organic foods. The room buzzes with their energy.

Welcome to the Library’s new digital instruction room—an example of how Saint Mary’s is changing with technology and the times.

“I just have a love for information and have a passion for making it fun and easy for students to do research,” said Gina Kessler Lee, the information literacy librarian spearheading the project.

A 2013 graduate of the University of Washington with a master’s degree in library and information science, Lee said it’s exciting to be able to support the process of intellectual discovery. “Now there’s so much online, they can pursue any line of knowledge and we have the resources for it.”

It was a light bulb moment that led Lee to a career in library science. “I was in college at a career networking event and I happened to be in line for cheese,” she recalled, when she asked the woman in front of her what she did for a living.

“She said, ‘Let me tell you. I just went back to school and got my master’s degree in library science, completely changed careers midlife, and I love it.’ It sounded like a wonderful opportunity to both help people, which I love, and also learn about new things all the time and keep up with new technologies,” said Lee, whose youth and enthusiasm have been contagious.

“She is skilled and fearless with technology, passionate about teaching students to be discriminating life-long learners and, best of all, is an irrepressible experimenter who keeps us excited and challenged,” said Pat Kreitz, dean of Library and Academic Resources.

Lee, for her part, remains modest. “When I came in, my fellow librarians had already done so much to make sure students had access to the kind of information they needed—and we were moving along with them into the digital age. I’m just following their lead and trying to contribute new ideas where I can.”
The results are obvious when you engage innovative leadership, demanding academics and intelligent risk-taking. This investment in thinking big pays off.
Build Successful Lives

A survey of more than 30,000 U.S. college graduates supports what Saint Mary’s has always believed—graduates thrive in the workplace and have a higher sense of well-being in life when they felt supported and mentored in college, and had caring professors who stirred their excitement for learning.

While only 14 percent of those responding to the 2014 Gallup/Purdue University survey felt their education delivered such outcomes, recent surveys of Saint Mary’s students show far better results.

In the National Study of Student Engagement, SMC seniors reported higher student-faculty interaction, and gains in quantiative reasoning and collaborative, integrative, reflective learning than other four-year Catholic institutions.

Students also indicated satisfaction and learning in areas central to Saint Mary’s mission, said Bethami Dobkin, provost and vice president for academic affairs. “These include connecting learning to social problems, understanding diverse perspectives and engaging others who are different from themselves.”

Three years into the College’s five-year Academic Blueprint, which requires that global competency be part of the undergraduate and graduate curriculum, Saint Mary’s has expanded study abroad opportunities and increased scholarships for Jan Term, experiences students describe as life-changing.

In overall impact, Saint Mary’s averaged higher than other four-year Catholic and private institutions in the Higher Education Research Institute’s 2013 CIRP College Senior Survey, measuring such factors as improved skills in critical thinking, problem solving, leadership and preparation for life after college.

Keenly aware that graduates need jobs, Saint Mary’s has increased internships by 24 percent and facilitated hundreds of job interviews. More than half of surveyed graduate students received promotions or raises after completing a graduate degree; 94 percent said it prepared them for work in their field; and 93 percent said their degree was worth the cost.

But, as the Gallup/Purdue study notes, a successful college education does more than deliver jobs; it invests in things that last. Saint Mary’s does this particularly well, with professors who care about their students, opportunities for students to apply what they learn, and a community that helps them pursue their dreams.
SMC SINGERS TOOK HOME THE GOLD — twice — at July’s World Choir Games Competition in Riga, Latvia. The Saint Mary’s Chamber Singers and Glee Club each won gold medals under the direction of Julie Ford.

Known as the Choir Olympics, the number of voices was staggering—27,000 singers from 73 nations. The Glee Club competed against 29 choirs and the Chamber Singers went up against 55 groups in their category.

“One of our goals was to just really enjoy the experience,” said Ford. “I knew they would do their best. They really did. I could see it on their faces. They all said ‘I felt over-prepared,’ if there is such a thing.”

In preparing for the 10-day trip, Ford used a bootcamp approach. “I really wanted them to understand that it would be hard work. We did include fun social activities—you really can’t sing that many hours a day—but I kept them focused on the idea that I needed to stretch them further.”

Senior Thinus Venter said it worked. “The number of hours we put in was really exhausting. But the choir is very motivated and loves singing.” In competition, he said the singers feed off Ford’s energy. “The way she conducts is so passionate—it makes it really easy as a singer to capture her passion and get excited off the vibes.”

Winning double gold medals at the World Choir Games comes on the heels of winning a silver and gold diploma at the Inturkultur International Choral Festival in Reno, Nev. (2011) and a silver diploma and silver medal at the world Choir Games in Cincinnati, Ohio (2012). Singer Lucas Shimizu, ‘14, believes these awards are the beginning of a legacy. “The greatest achievement that I would say the group has accomplished is the establishment of a choral identity—one that is built on the most positively infectious stage presence and genuine musical integrity. The singers simply own the music they perform.”

The Chamber Singers and Glee Club have been invited to sing at Carnegie Hall in 2015 and the world Choir Games in Sochi in 2016.

OPPONENTS HAVE A COMMON REACTION when they size up the Saint Mary’s rugby team. “They look at us and think, small guys, small school,” said coach Tim O’Brien. “But underestimate the Gaels at your peril.

Saint Mary’s won the USA Rugby Division 1A national championship in May after defeating national powerhouses Cal and BYU during the season. “We’re probably one of the smaller teams physically, and we certainly don’t have the best athletes,” said O’Brien. “But our guys are very fast and very physical, and they’re smart. We have guys with a very high rugby IQ. They identify an opponent’s weaknesses and go for it. Everything we do is about efficiency.”

With volunteer coaches and no recruiting budget, SMC doesn’t get the top high school rugby players that a program like Cal lands. “We’re just a bunch of guys who are ready to put in a lot of work,” said Gaels captain Cooper Maloney ’15, MVP of the national championship match.

Maloney said a key to the Gaels’ success is the degree to which the coaches empower the players. “They build our knowledge of the game to turn players into coaches and get us interested in how to improve ourselves,” he said.

O’Brien works to develop what he calls calculated risk-taking in his players. “You learn when a risk has a higher percentage of success, and in what circumstances you want to take a risk,” Maloney said. “You’re not going to get better if you don’t take risks.”

“We’ve created something special here,” O’Brien said. “It’s taken a lot of people to make it happen, and there’s a real sense of community all the way through the College.”

And if the Gaels don’t do things quite the way other schools do? “We don’t want to be just any other team,” O’Brien said. “We want to be unique.”
Solid Ground
To experience especially challenging economic times and emerge from the storm better off than before is a tribute to wise stewardship of resources and a steady hand.

Financial Highlights 2013-14
The operating results for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2014 indicate a continued multiyear trend of improvement for the finances of Saint Mary’s College. Primary evidence of this trend is the $29.6 million increase in total net assets for the year.

The College’s net assets total of $236.1 million as of June 30, 2014 is a record level. The net assets total is also well above the pre-recession high of $223.9 million recorded on June 30, 2007.

The $29.6 million increase in net assets can be attributed to a $26.0 million increase in net assets from non-operating activities, resulting primarily from a $19.2 million increase in the market value of the College’s long-term (primarily endowment) investments.

The fiscal year-end market value of endowment investments has grown to $169.3 million as of June 30, 2014, exceeding the pre-recession high fiscal year-end market value of $166.0 million recorded on June 30, 2007. Endowment growth was driven by an investment return of 19.02 percent for the 12 months ended June 30, 2014. It was also driven by net gifts to the endowment of $3.6 million.

The $29.6 million increase in net assets can also be attributed to $3.6 million in net income from operations for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2014. This net income amount resulted from continued growth in net student revenues as well as growth in most other revenue sources. Although operating expenses grew by 2.7 percent, they grew at a lesser rate than the 4.3 percent growth rate in operating revenues. The growth in operating expenses, it should be noted, can be attributed to planned increases in faculty and staff compensation and to strategic expenditures including investments in facilities, programs and technology.

Other financial highlights for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2014 included a revision to stable of the College’s credit outlook by Moody’s Investors Service. The College also modified its direct purchase bond agreement with Bank of America by assigning the bonds to Bank of America Public Capital Corporation in exchange for a lower tax-exempt interest rate and for the extension of the maturity of the bonds to October 2019. The lower tax-exempt interest rate, it should be noted, is expected to save approximately $250,000 per year.

In closing, the fiscal year ended June 30, 2014 represented the continuation of a multiyear improvement in the College’s operating results and financial position and a record level of net assets. It also provided evidence that the College was well positioned to take advantage of conditions in global financial markets to both increase its investment return and to further restructure its long-term debt.

Many of the strategies formulated and implemented by the College to improve operating results and take advantage of global financial markets will continue to be pursued. These strategies include the further diversification of endowment investments, the further simplification and stabilization of the debt structure, and the further investment of funds in strategic initiatives that improve the College’s programs and facilities. Future strategic initiatives, it should be noted, will be further refined and focused with the completion of a new institutional strategic plan during Fall 2014. These continuing and new strategies should help assure that Saint Mary’s College can further improve its financial position as it pursues its mission into the future.

Peter A. Mitchell
Vice President For Finance

Total Net Assets
June 30, 2007 through June 30, 2014

Endowment Market Value
June 30, 2007 through June 30, 2014

Fiscal Year End
Faithful friends and supporters investing in possibility bring Saint Mary’s mission to life, changing the world one student at a time.
The themes of 2013-14 were new ambitions and the celebration of accomplishments. With the inauguration of President James Donahue, we were inspired by a bold vision for Saint Mary’s College. The year was filled with much success, establishing the foundation for a prosperous future.

I am pleased to share with you that the College finished the 2013-14 fiscal year with $10,779,677 in new gifts and pledges—an increase of more than 38 percent over the previous year. Advancement focused its efforts on increasing scholarship support for students in need, raising more dollars for annual and endowed scholarships than we have in a decade. Our planned giving efforts continued with a $1 million charitable remainder trust made by an alumnus. We directed our energies to meet Saint Mary’s capital priorities—the Joseph L. Alioto Recreation Center, the Library and Learning Commons, and the Student-Athlete Performance Center—securing $3.7 million in support, including a $1 million gift from an alumni parent. We celebrated the progress on the Alioto Recreation Center with our first-ever Beam Ceremony. Donors signed the final steel beam and witnessed it being installed in its place completing the structure of the facility. Those signatures now reside in the building for its life. Students will begin using the rec center in spring 2015 when it opens.

On the Alumni Engagement and Annual Giving front, our efforts were very much about building philanthropic participation at all levels. We called our alumni to support the College by attending our events as well as making the college’s dreams a reality. You have the power to make it happen. Please join us as we bring to life the College’s new strategic plan, realize President Donahue’s vision and remain faithful to our Gael traditions.

By an alumnus. We directed our energies to meet Saint Mary’s capital priorities—the Joseph L. Alioto Recreation Center, the Library and Learning Commons, and the Student-Athlete Performance Center—securing $3.7 million in support, including a $1 million gift from an alumni parent. We celebrated the progress on the Alioto Recreation Center with our first-ever Beam Ceremony. Donors signed the final steel beam and witnessed it being installed in its place completing the structure of the facility. Those signatures now reside in the building for its life. Students will begin using the Rec Center in spring 2015 when it opens.

Our generous donors made gifts in 2013-14—an increase of 8 percent. Our new graduates responded as well with a record-breaking senior gift campaign—more than 62 percent of the class of 2014 made their first gift to Saint Mary’s. Additionally, we had more than 8,000 guests participate in events on campus and in 27 different cities across the country. You supported the College, and we say, “Thank you!”

Looking to the year ahead, I see many opportunities. A new strategic plan led by President Donahue will set the direction for our work with each and every one of you. Our goals are ambitious: we will continue to seek ways to expand need- and merit-based scholarships for our students; we will work with our alumni, parents and friends to present creative and engaging events; and, we will invite all of you to continue investing in the life of our College—our faculty, students and new programs. We aspire to report back to you next year that 7,900 donors have invested in the College.

Abundant and rich opportunities lie ahead. I invite you to join us in making the College’s dreams a reality. You have the power to make it happen. Please join us as we bring to life the College’s new strategic plan, realize President Donahue’s vision and remain faithful to our Gael traditions.

For more information about a record year in philanthropic support and a comprehensive list of the College’s generous donors, please see stmarys-ca.edu/HonorRoll.

Our thanks to alumni, parents and friends for your support throughout the year.
Learn to Give

COLETTE WHITNEY’S volunteering and giving habit was already well established when she arrived at Saint Mary’s as a freshman in 2007. “I grew up learning that that was the right thing to do,” said Whitney ’11, who now works at Salesforce as a sales representative. But despite being only three years out of college—a time when most young adults are just trying to make a living—Whitney has never lost the habit. She has continued to give to Saint Mary’s every year since graduation and gave $500 last year as a member of the 1863 GOLD (Gaels of the Last Decade) Society. She is also a member of the Spinster’s of San Francisco, a philanthropic group for unmarried women ages 21-35.

“What goes around comes around,” said Whitney, who points to her senior-year experience as co-chair of the Student Gift Committee as pivotal to her continued commitment to giving. She sees donating to Saint Mary’s as contributing to the education of future students, some of whom may end up being her own children. “Down the road I will see the full circle. It’s an investment.”

When it comes to convincing her fellow recent SMC grads to open their wallets—no small feat when many are saving towards travel or new clothes—Whitney said she starts with, “Did you like your time at Saint Mary’s? How about you help another student have that experience? If you look at where you are today, it’s unlikely that you got there without SMC.”

She also reminds them that giving to Saint Mary’s gives them a chance to connect at events with older alums who can offer crucial professional connections in the future. “If you give back,” she tells them, “you might be able to get something back.” And besides, she added, “I just love giving back and the feeling of it.”

Support Success

SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS once wrote “To love is to will the good of the other.” It was this famed philosopher, along with Aristotle and Kant, who most influenced Aco Alvarez ’99. As the founder of one of the fastest growing firms in Silicon Valley, the Mice Groups, Alvarez made a charitable gift of $20,000 to the Integral Program in 2014.

“The Integral Program teaches you to think. It gives you a tremendous platform for success—everything from medicine to law, to music,” said Alvarez. He said the program also taught him how to listen to people in his business of recruiting and corporate placement.

The donation is earmarked for scholarship aid to high school students who are invited to attend SMC’s Integral Summer Institute before their senior year.

“It gives us national reach and an opportunity to show students what four years of study in Integral might feel and look like,” said Steve Cortright, director of the Integral Program. The Institute attracts students from as far away as Tennessee and Nevada, and gives them a sample of what Alvarez experienced when he was at SMC, he said. “He understands the kind of program we are,” Cortright said, noting that the idea of reading 110 great books and five times that many auxiliary and helping texts “sounds stranger and stranger to high school ears.”

Cortright called the Summer Institute one of the ways they’re trying to stay in touch with contemporary high school students. “We were able to bring five students this last summer who we weren’t otherwise able to bring. We expect to continue to be relatively generous for the next few years,” he said.

For his part, Alvarez is humbled and happy to give back to his alma mater. “I thoroughly enjoyed my time in Integral. I loved it so much I was looking for graduate programs that were somewhat similar. My own personal belief is it’s what an education should be.”
WHEN TOM AND KAREN MULVANEY talk about their neighborhood, a narrow, inviting lane in Lafayette, it’s a story of 30 years of caring relationships with close neighbors. “Our sweet, sweet neighbors,” as Karen put it.

But as you listen to these big-hearted people, you realize that their neighborhood extends far beyond their quiet lane to encompass the entire world.

Avid volunteers themselves, the Mulvaneys were intensely moved by the experiences of their daughter, Marguerite “Meg” Mulvaney ’13, M.A. ’14, in a Jan Term class in Rwanda led by the Catholic Institute for Lasallian Social Action (CILSA) and supporters.

“It was a profound experience,” Tom said. “As parents, while we weren’t ‘boots on the ground,’ we were able to vicariously experience what was happening there.”

To expand such opportunities for other students, the Mulvaneys created the Mulvaney Family Head, Heart and Hands Endowment Fund with a gift of $250,000 to CILSA, challenging others to give and promising to match gifts up to $50,000 annually for five years, for a total of $500,000.

“To have our children or students we know go and be part of that kind of experience brings us a lot closer to a place and its people than reading a newspaper.” Karen said. “It breaks down that separation we all feel between each other, and allows us to see that we are all really the same.”

Now the Mulvaneys have contributed $35,000 to create a collaborative program between CILSA and a similar organization at the University of San Diego, where Tom received his law degree. This summer, SMC and USD students will collaborate on immersion service-learning projects in the Bay Area.

“We’re eager to see if this could lead to partnerships with other institutions and a community of student leaders in Catholic colleges across the West Coast,” said CILSA’s Director Marshall Welch.

For the Mulvaneys, facilitating such connections is deeply rewarding.

“It’s an opportunity to change lives,” Tom said. “If we’re going to try to make the world a better place, this is how we do it—by working together, learning and helping each other. I think it’s what we have to do.”

“It gives my life, all life, meaning,” said Karen. “If not for each other, why else are we here?”
We know that a successful year doesn’t just happen. It begins with the belief that the Christian Brothers’ Lasallian mission can transform lives and change the world. Through bold leadership, generous friends, confidence, innovation and careful planning, Saint Mary’s will thrive.

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