

UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON NAMED TO U.S. PRESIDENT'S HONOR ROLL FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE, AMONG TOP 15 PERCENT OF SCHOOLS HONORED

DAYTON, Ohio — The University of Dayton has been named to the 2009 President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll, the highest federal recognition a college or university can receive for its commitment to volunteering, service-learning and civic engagement.

Of the 742 schools on the honor roll, the University of Dayton is listed among the top 15 percent, earning a designation of "distinction."

University of Dayton President Daniel J. Curran said the recognition belongs not just to the University, but also to the thousands of students, alumni, faculty and staff who embody the University's mission of "Learn, Lead, Serve."

"When people ask what it means to be a Catholic, Marianist university, this is it," Curran said. "It's a powerful belief in community and servant leadership. This passion to serve others and live life together is present in the University's institutions, classrooms, student clubs and in the day-to-day lives of our students."

The 2009 honor roll recognizes six colleges and universities as Presidential Awardees, with an additional 115 named to the distinction list and 621 schools named as honor roll members. Honorees are chosen based on a series of selection factors including the scope and innovation of service projects, percentage of student participation in service activities, incentives for service, and the extent to which the school offers academic service-learning courses.

Placement on the honor roll is the second national recognition of community service the University has received this academic year. In October, the University of Dayton was tied for No. 2 nationally and ranked No. 1 among Catholic universities in the 2009 "Saviors of Our Cities" ranking, which honored academic institutions for their positive impact on their urban communities.

Examples of the University's commitment to community service considered by the honor roll included ETHOS — the University's engineering service-learning program — the Rivers Institute and a social justice living learning community.

More than 70 percent of University of Dayton students engaged in community

service in the 2008-09 academic year, with nearly 20 percent of students contributing at least 20 hours of service per semester.

Many of those service hours are coordinated by the University's Center for Social Concern, which promotes education on social justice and opportunities for community service, and the Fitz Center for Leadership in Community, which serves as a liaison with the Dayton region to create partnerships for students to learn and serve while helping to build community in the region.

"The University of Dayton has an extraordinary presence in Dayton and is worthy of presidential recognition," said Dick Ferguson, executive director of the Fitz Center. "I am confident that we are educating leaders who know how to build and strengthen communities. Wherever in the world our graduates go, most will know what it means to be civically engaged and will know how to make a difference. This is the University of Dayton at its best."

In addition to these institutional supports, students at the University of Dayton often act spontaneously and independently to serve their community, and a myriad of clubs, academic opportunities, fraternities, sororities and service organizations exist to facilitate student service.

The University's application to the honor roll included descriptions of three programs that exemplify the University's commitment to community service:

* The Engineers in Technical Humanitarian Opportunities of Service-Learning program (ETHOS) connects engineering students with real-world problems in some of the world's most impoverished places. Each year, more than 90 students spend their spring or summer breaks working with local communities to develop non-traditional technologies to meet basic needs. Students have installed wells in Cameroon, efficient wood-burning stoves in Guatemala and solar panels in Pakistan and helped communities establish micro-businesses to improve their standard of living.

* The Rivers Institute, part of the University's Fitz Center for Leadership in Community, is a student-led initiative to reconnect the Dayton area with its rivers as a strategy for improving the economic, ecological and communal vitality of the region. The student leaders cooperate with local governments and community partners to plan outreach to local schools, support river initiatives, participate in river clean-up efforts and more. In 2008, the students established an annual, regional river summit that attracts leaders in cities along the Great

Miami River to discuss how they can create a cohesive vision for recreation and development.

* The Building Community for Social Justice Living Learning Community is a group of more than 75 first-year students who live on the same residence hall floor and participate in specially designed courses that integrate academics and social justice. In addition, all students participate in a 12-hour minimum service-learning experience with a nonprofit organization. Last year, these students mentored at-risk youth, tutored non-native English speakers, worked in food pantries and homeless shelters, participated in a pen-pal literacy project with elementary school students and helped rehab a New Jersey housing project.

For more information and to download the honor roll list, visit http://www.learnandserve.gov/about/programs/higher_ed_honorroll.asp.

The Corporation for National and Community Service oversees the honor roll in collaboration with the Department of Education, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, Campus Compact and the American Council on Education.