
ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY



N E W S R E L E A S E

A CATHOLIC AND MARIANIST LIBERAL ARTS INSTITUTION FOUNDED BY THE SOCIETY OF MARY IN 1852.

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St. Mary's University Board of Trustees Announces Appointment of 13th President

The St. Mary's University Board of Trustees today unanimously appointed Thomas Mengler, J.D., as the University's 13th president, effective June 1, 2012.

Mengler currently serves as the dean of the University of St. Thomas School of Law in Minneapolis, where he also holds the Ryan Chair in Law. Prior to his current position, he worked at the University of Illinois, where he was dean of the College of Law as well as interim provost and vice chancellor for Academic Affairs. As interim provost, Mengler oversaw all undergraduate and graduate programs and the University's entire \$1 billion operating budget. Mengler received his bachelor's in philosophy from Carleton College and a master's in philosophy from the University of Texas at Austin, where he also earned his law degree.

"I am pleased to announce the appointment of Tom Mengler, and I look forward to working with him as he joins our efforts to educate students in the Catholic and Marianist traditions, while continuing to move St. Mary's forward," said Robert Elizondo, Chairman of the Board of Trustees.

Current St. Mary's President Charles L. Cotrell, Ph.D., announced last year that he would return to teaching at the end of his term in June 2012, after 13 years as the University's first lay president.

"Under President Cotrell's outstanding leadership, St. Mary's faculty and staff have helped prepare students to lead lives of significance, and St. Mary's has played a central role in building community both on campus and off. I am truly honored to follow in President Cotrell's footsteps and to serve this great Catholic and Marianist university," Mengler said. "The value of a strong liberal arts education is more important than ever in today's competitive world, where critical thinking coupled with a desire for community engagement and service develops leaders ready to improve their world. I look forward to working with faculty and staff to expand existing programs and develop new ones that will help guide students in their academic and spiritual journeys."

“I was drawn to St. Mary’s for its Catholic and Marianist mission and its dedication to developing graduates who are exceptionally prepared for their professional lives while also called to serve the common good. I embrace the Marianist commitment to promoting open and robust discussions of faith and reason, and I am eager to begin working with the Marianists, faculty, staff, students and alumni to build on the outstanding foundation of academic quality, faith and service that are hallmarks of St. Mary’s,” Mengler said.

The Rev. Martin Solma, S.M., chancellor of St. Mary’s University, said: “Tom is committed to Catholic higher education, social justice issues, academic quality and the formation of students as servant leaders—all facets integral to the Catholic and Marianist traditions of St. Mary’s University.”

“On behalf of St. Mary’s, I welcome the Mengler family to the University community. I look forward to working with Tom as he transitions, introducing him to our vibrant city and to our outstanding alumni in San Antonio, the State of Texas and beyond,” Cotrell said.

At the University of St. Thomas, Mengler helped build the School of Law from the ground up. He became dean in 2002, when the school was in just its second year. In addition to developing its Catholic mission, growing the enrollment, hiring nationally recognized faculty and receiving full accreditation for the school, Mengler also was able to raise more than \$30 million in gifts and pledges for a school with only 1,000 alumni, all of them recent graduates. The funding helped establish endowments for faculty chairs and professorships, student scholarships, an institute for Catholic thought, and a center for ethical leadership.

Mengler’s involvement at both the University of St. Thomas and the University of Illinois extends well beyond their law schools. At both institutions, he served on university-wide academic and administrative leadership councils and important committees, including those for dean searches, university-wide mission statement development, budget strategies, academic best practices, and teaching evaluations. At the University of Illinois he chaired a task force addressing the future of the University’s library.

Tom is married to Mona, a native Texan, and they have four children, ages 18 to 24.

St. Mary’s University has been repeatedly nationally recognized for its commitment to service and community engagement. The Carnegie Foundation has given St. Mary’s its prestigious Community Engagement Classification, and the University is ranked second in the nation by *Washington Monthly’s* 2011 “College Rankings—What Can Colleges Do for the Country?” for promoting community service, fostering scientific and humanistic research, and social mobility. Most recently, St. Mary’s received the Presidential Award from the President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll, the highest federal recognition for service in higher education. St. Mary’s University is a Catholic and Marianist university.