

Local universities celebrate high national rankings

Baltimore's Loyola University Maryland and Notre Dame of Maryland University and Mount St. Mary's University in Emmitsburg were all celebrated in the Sept. 13 edition of the U.S. News & World Report's 2011-2012 "America's Best Colleges" survey.

Loyola was ranked third overall among all universities in the North region. It has been a staple among the top five in the region during the last five years. Loyola was also third in the country for the highest percentage (81 percent) of students studying abroad.

"It speaks very highly of the consistency of our programs and the experience of our students," said Jesuit Father Brian Linnane, president of Loyola. "We work very hard to maintain a rigorous, high quality experience across the board. That it's recognized by U.S. News and World Reports and our peers means a great deal to us."

The school was also cited among "A+ Schools for B Students." Father Linnane said incoming students typically have B+ averages entering Loyola.

"I often tell students, 'You will really be a star here,' " Father Linnane said. "Here, you're really going to be able to take advantage and shine, instead of being run of the mill. What we have here are the resources of an elite university."

Loyola's business school was ranked among the top third in the country, while the finance and international programs ranked 22nd. Among schools in the North region, with the highest rates of students who graduate within six years, Loyola was fifth, and in the top 10 for the average amount of need-based aid awarded.

Loyola was also ranked in the top 50 nationally for "Best in Undergraduate Engineering," something that pleased Father Linnane. He said the school's reputation as a liberal arts institution shows people are recognizing Loyola's commitment to forming the whole person.

Mount St. Mary's ranked No. 21 in the North region, jumping a notch higher than last year.

"Mount St. Mary's University is pleased to be named among the top 25 best Universities in the region in the latest U.S. News and World Report rankings," said President Thomas H. Powell. "Over the past several years our star has continued to rise and as a result, our Catholic university being named one of the best in the region puts us in a very select group of our peers."

The Mount also was cited on the "A+ Schools for B Students" list of North regional universities.

"This speaks to how a diverse range of phenomenal students can find a good fit at Mount St. Mary's University," says Vice President of Enrollment Michael Post. "We seek students who will thrive in our classrooms and bring leadership to our campus – students with different backgrounds and perspectives. We seek students who possess character, in addition to a strong academic background."

Notre Dame, which added university designation Sept. 9, was No. 10 on the "Great Schools, Great Prices" list and was 32nd Best Regional Universities-North.

"For the third year in a row Notre Dame of Maryland University has been recognized for providing a high quality academic experience to our students at a great price," said President Mary Pat Seurkamp. "Our commitment to offer a challenging and engaging learning environment is among the chief reasons why Notre Dame continues to rank among the region's most highly-regarded universities."