

Mount St. Mary's University, St. Maria Goretti High School enter guaranteed admissions partnership

Leaders from Mount St. Mary's University in Emmitsburg and St. Maria Goretti High School in Hagerstown hailed "a great day for Catholic education in Washington County" as they signed an admissions agreement guaranteeing the high school's graduates admission and a four-year renewable scholarship to the university.

"This partnership recognizes the shared goal of two of the leading Catholic institutions of the region to enhance access to high quality values-based education at the high school and postsecondary levels," said Mount St. Mary's University President Timothy E. Trainor, in a Feb. 23 news release. "Both institutions have long histories of enrolling students who are looking to live significantly; this agreement is a natural fit."

Christopher Cosentino, president of St. Maria Goretti, called the collaboration a "remarkable record of achievement and a strong commitment to the Catholic faith."

Under the terms of the agreement, signed by Trainor and Cosentino, St. Maria Goretti High School students who meet defined requirements are guaranteed admission to Mount St. Mary's. Students who meet the criteria will receive, at minimum, a \$22,000 four-year award, with a total value of \$88,000.

This semester St. Maria Goretti High School became the first high school in Washington County to collaborate with MSMU by offering students the opportunity to enroll in collegiate courses such as sociology and criminal justice, according to the news release. The initiative was made possible by the Center for Catholic School

Excellence housed in the Division of Education. According to Center Director Elizabeth Monahan, a select number of qualified juniors and seniors participate in a class either remotely or at the Mount's Frederick campus that is taught by the university's professors. Currently, Professor Tim Wolfe is teaching an introduction to sociology course. St. John's Catholic Prep in Buckeystown also participates in the program. Students who complete and pass the courses receive both university and high school credits.

"High-quality connections enable our students to grow in a powerful learning atmosphere, and we are doing just that with this collaboration," said Bridget Bartholomew, St. Maria Goretti's principal. "This partnership is a perfect fit for our Catholic, college-preparatory high school."

Under the agreement, a Mount St. Mary's admissions representative will visit St. Maria Goretti as many as three times a year to share information about the Mount's academic programs and application, admissions, financial aid and related processes.

"We are thrilled to build on our relationship with St. Maria Goretti - this furthers both schools' abilities to be of service to students and families in Washington County," said Eric Danielson, director of admissions at the Mount.