

Marian University and Saint Joseph's College to Collaborate on Two-Year College

Rensselaer, Ind.—Saint Joseph's College will collaborate with Marian University when the latter opens its previously announced two-year college in Indianapolis, officials from the two institutions announced today during a press conference on the Saint Joseph's College campus in Rensselaer, Ind.

Marian University President Daniel J. Elsener joined Saint Joseph's College Rector Father Barry Fischer and Father Jeffrey Kirch, Provincial Director of the Cincinnati Province of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood, in announcing that the boards of trustees at both institutions had signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) formalizing the mission collaboration. Under the terms of the MOU, the new two-year college, slated to open in July 2019 adjacent to the Marian University campus in Indianapolis, will be called Saint Joseph's College of Marian University – Indianapolis.

"This is a collaboration between two Catholic institutions with a shared mission and history," Elsener said. "Saint Joe's has a rich tradition of educating thousands upon thousands of leaders with a strong liberal arts foundation. The outlook for success for our innovative two-year college is greatly enhanced by this collaboration."

"This is a positive step forward for the future of Saint Joseph's College," Fr. Barry Fischer said. "Saint Joseph's College continues to live, in both name and mission, and we are excited about the possibilities that will be presented through this collaboration."

According to Marian University's President Elsener, a study will be conducted to determine the feasibility of expanding the two-year college to other areas of the state. One of the locations that will be considered, he said, is the Saint Joseph's campus in Rensselaer.

"Our first priority is ensuring the successful opening of our flagship campus in Indianapolis," Elsener said. "Once we have that site up and running, we can begin to look at expanding into rural areas, with the Rensselaer campus being a focal point of that study."

An advisory board, under the direction of Marian University's board of trustees, will be created to guide the two-year college, and at least 40 percent of the advisory board will be composed of members selected by Marian from a list of recommendations provided by the Saint Joseph's board of trustees. Additionally, former faculty and staff of Saint Joseph's College and members of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood will be strongly considered for open positions for the new two-year college.

Per the terms of the agreement and in keeping with its historical mission, Saint Joseph's College will provide \$1.5 million in scholarships, to be paid over 10 years, for students who attend the new two-year college. These scholarships will primarily be funded from donations already made to Saint Joseph's College to support deserving students.

"Saint Joseph's College and Marian University indeed share a mission, and a big part of that mission is to provide access to higher education for those who can't afford it," Fr. Barry said. "The scholarship funds being provided to the two-year college are indicative of our commitment to its mission and the success of its students."

When Marian University originally announced last month its intentions of opening a two-year college, it established a goal of 75-125 students in the first year. Three programs of study are planned: liberal arts, business, and information technology.

"We are confident that we've landed on three focused areas of study that are relevant to employers, are true to our liberal arts foundation, and are easily transferable for students who may want to later pursue a four-year degree," Elsener said. "We will always have the option of adding more degrees as our economy and the needs of employers shift, but research clearly indicates that it's in the best interest of students to focus on a few areas of study rather than a plethora of options."

Perhaps the most innovative feature of the two-year college is the employer partnerships that are being established to help students make connections between learning and earning. Marian University faculty will work closely with specific central Indiana employers to ensure that students of the two-year college will be able to recognize connections in what they are learning in the classroom and their future jobs. Students will develop a foundation for lifelong learning while progressing toward their associate's degree. Flexible class schedules will be established, allowing students to work, if they choose. "Our students will earn while they learn," Elsener said.

Applications are being accepted now for fall 2019 enrollment at marian.edu/saintjoeindy.

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