

Ambassador Day 2020 - “State of the University”

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Introduction

Good morning! For those of you who are new to the University of St. Francis family, my name is Arvid Johnson, and it is my privilege to serve as the 9th president of this dynamic, Catholic, Franciscan university – indeed, Joliet’s only four-year university.

As a reminder, we are recording this presentation and plan to make it available later this week at stfrancis.edu/ambassador-day.

I would like to begin by thanking you for joining us for our seventh annual Ambassador Day, which is designed to educate our friends and community partners about the University and to offer our expertise and resources to you and your organizations, in return. Before I begin my address, I would like to acknowledge your ongoing support of our University. This year, each of us and our respective organizations have had to navigate a variety of challenges presented by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Times such as these magnify the impact of a supportive community, so I would like to pause for a moment to say “thank you” to each and every one of you. We consider you an important part of the USF family.

This morning, you will learn more about the past year at USF and how, even in the face of challenges, we have pivoted, persevered and continued to serve as Joliet’s university. We continue to live our mission through instruction that has happened in-person, virtually, and through hybrid combinations of the two, while also finding creative ways to celebrate our university’s centennial. Our hope is that, as you go out and work in our community, you will recall what you heard and learned today about the University of St. Francis and can talk about us and the impact we have on our students, the community, and beyond when the subject arises. By the end of your time with us this morning, it is my hope that the University of St. Francis always comes to mind when you are chatting with someone who is interested in high quality, higher education.

Again, it’s wonderful that so many of you have made time in your busy schedules to be with us here this morning. I’d like to acknowledge the presence of the many elected leaders – at all levels of government – who are with us this morning. In addition to these leaders, I also am pleased to welcome some of my 30 or so bosses – namely, the members of our USF Board of Trustees – who are here...As well as members of our founding and sponsoring congregation: the Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate.

I would also like to acknowledge and recognize the members of my cabinet and the many other USF employees who are with us today. It is through them and their hard work that our mission is made real each and every day.

Of course, whether you are a member of one of our four colleges' Advisory Councils, a community partner, a local business owner, or a neighbor...we sincerely welcome you to this year's event!

So, what is the "state" of the University of St. Francis?

I am pleased to report that the state of the University of St. Francis continues to be strong. As each year passes, there continue to be many challenges facing higher education, both locally and nationally. I can assure you that the University of St. Francis is solidly-positioned and moving forward. We are exceling in many areas, and I'm excited to share some of our accomplishments with you this morning.

Operating in a COVID-19 Pandemic World

As you know, universities and other organizations across the planet were challenged this spring to respond to the widely-resonating impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. For the University of St. Francis, this meant a quick transition to online instruction for the remainder of the spring 2020 semester – which, fortunately, benefitted greatly from our over 20 years of experience as a nationally-ranked provider of online learning.

Because of the importance and value of our highly-interactive, face-to-face undergraduate classes, we were happy to be in a position to welcome students back to our on-campus learning environment in August. That said, the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic still exist; and, as a result, things look and are a little different now – because the safety of our students, faculty, staff, and campus visitors is and remains a top priority.

Positioning ourselves to remain on campus for in-person instruction relies on the continued, collective efforts of the entire USF community. To prepare for the return to campus in August, dozens of faculty, staff, administrators, and other members of the USF community worked diligently over the summer to create an official, health department-approved USF "Preparedness Plan" for the return to campus and the resumption of in-person instruction. The Plan shares guidelines that positioned us for a successful semester. I invite you to review the Preparedness Plan and our Return to Campus Guide, which are available at stfrancis.edu/saints-united.

This is our Year of Compassion – in our 4-year cycle – when we focus on our value of compassion for all people, always aware of the call to love our neighbors as ourselves as we strive to open our hearts to all others. We are asking students and everyone else on our campus to practice compassion by agreeing and adhering to the "Four General Practices" of our Preparedness Plan.

These four practices call for a greater mindfulness of others and a commitment to the safety and health of the USF community, both our students and employees. These practices include:

- wearing a face covering and USF ID;
- exercising appropriate physical distancing;
- practicing frequent hand washing; and
- self-screening daily and taking proper action, if exposed.

Our Centennial-year-goal is to have a 100% safe fall semester. Collectively, we are making our return to campus successful. Collectively, we are Saints United. And, to that end, I am happy to say that, at this time, we have had only one instance of on-campus COVID-19 transmission since August.

Financial Strength Continues to Enable Strategic Investments

We are continuing to share and spread the word about the high-quality education that USF offers to our students. Our visit days and information sessions, which are being offered in a combination of in-person and virtual formats, continue to see a steady stream of interested students who know they will receive a high-quality education when they enroll at USF.

With COVID, we had some concerns about enrollment. But, we are thrilled that the University of St. Francis fall 2020 new student enrollments are just nine fewer than last fall – thanks, in part, to strong graduate enrollments, particularly in our doctoral program in Educational Leadership and our graduate Business certificate programs in Management and Accounting.

Another growth area was USF's adult degree completion programs. These online programs are designed to help working adults transfer credit to St. Francis and accelerate their path to a bachelor's degree. All three programs – an associate-to-bachelor's degree program in Nursing, a bachelor's degree in Healthcare Leadership, and our popular bachelor's degree in Business Administration – grew by more than five percent this fall.

That said, what began as a record-breaking recruiting year changed rapidly in the spring with the spread of COVID-19. The closure of on-campus teaching at Midwestern high schools and the closing of much of our international recruitment pipeline from Europe and Asia put a damper on new undergraduate enrollments this fall.

COVID-19 did not slow USF's enrollment growth this summer – as we saw 18 percent enrollment growth this summer, marking the third summer in a row of enrollment increases.

Still our financial outlook continues to be strong, even during these turbulent times. We remain in a solid fiscal position after the close of the 2020 fiscal year last May. I am happy to report that USF's operations once again resulted in an operational surplus for an 8th consecutive fiscal year!

Our financial capacity continues to expand, with a \$23 million increase in the past 7 years, and our total net assets are at \$52 million.

Even in the face of challenges, USF continues to serve students and alumni from across the globe. We are also proud educational partners with many international institutions, including Brno University of Technology in the Czech Republic, the University of Finance-Marketing in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam; the University of Economics and Business in Hanoi, Vietnam; Cairo University in Egypt; and the Sichuan University of Science and Engineering (SUSE) in China.

Our Students Remain Central to Our Mission

While we are excited about this progress, we cannot – and will not – forget the most important reason the University of St. Francis is here, which is to prepare women and men – that is, our students – to contribute to the world through service and leadership. We do this through challenging academic programs, by which we provide our students with the depth and breadth of knowledge that they will need to be ready to hit the ground running both today and in the future. We also realize our mission through the many co-curricular activities that enrich our campus life and culture.

About 60% percent of this year's freshman class are first-generation college students – that is, they are the first in their family to attend college. In fact, over the course of the past decade, an average of 59% of each of our incoming freshman classes were first-generation college students. I am inspired by this because not only are we continuing to support our mission but also we are successfully communicating the value of a college education to students with very little previous exposure to higher education... all while impacting future generations through these students' experiences at USF. Additionally, and as importantly, 46% of our freshman class identifies as a minority.

Keeping College Affordable

College affordability remains a concern of many families. To help ease this burden, the University of St. Francis provides virtually all of its students with some level of financial assistance and support – whether academic or athletic scholarships or other, need-based funding. Last year, over \$23 million in institutional aid and scholarships were provided to our students. As a result, USF students have maintained a loan default rate that is lower than many of our peers and half that of the state and national averages.

Our institutional support is funded by donors who give to the annual fund, special events like Caritas – which I will speak of later this morning – and through planned giving. Many of you are on this Zoom meeting today...and we thank you for your continued generosity and the impactful role that this generosity plays in the lives of our students!

As you can imagine, COVID-19 has threatened countless students' access to a college education. In an effort to offset that challenge, I am also pleased to share that, after eliminating most student fees in 2019, the University of St. Francis has frozen all tuition and housing rates at the current level until fall of 2022.

In the face of COVID-19's disruptions to families, Illinois, and the wider economy we wanted to hold university costs the same this year. By freezing tuition, USF can make planning for college easier and increase the value of our offerings to students.

Recognized Academic Excellence

Last year, 100% of our teachers' education program students – once again – successfully completed all state certification tests. 97% of our physician assistant students passed their PANCE national certifying exam, and 86% of our nursing program graduates passed the National Council Licensure examination on their first attempt and received their RN.

In addition, our students not only graduate, but 98% of our graduates report being employed or attending graduate school within six months of graduation – the vast majority in positions directly related to their fields of study. This is made possible, in part, because virtually all of our undergraduate majors provide internship opportunities with local organizations and other community partners...like so many of you here with us today.

Indeed, the U.S. Department of Education's "College Scorecard" provides further testament to the effectiveness and impact of a University of St. Francis education, especially in comparison to our local peers – which include Lewis University, Benedictine University, St. Xavier University, and Dominican University. The percentage of our students paying down their debts is higher than the average of our peers – in part, because our average annual cost is below their average. And, in terms of outcomes, our graduation rate, percentage of students who return after their first year, and our average salary after attending are all above our peer average. We are understandably pleased by this, but we are also committed to continued progress and improvement across these metrics.

I would be remiss if I did not share how your support continues to impact and provide for USF students and programs – and translates into the University's ongoing recognition by national ranking organizations that celebrate the work being done here. So far this year, USF has again been named to *The Princeton Review's* "2021 Best Colleges – Midwestern" rankings. We have also been included in College Consensus' "Best Catholic Colleges and Universities" national ranking – with the sixth highest Student Consensus score in the nation. USF was also recently recognized as part of *Money's* "2020 Best Colleges for Your Money" annual listing and *U.S. News and World Report's* "2021 Best Colleges" listing.

And, just last month, the personal finance website WalletHub, released its 2021 College and University Rankings, which compared more than 1,000 higher-education institutions across 30 different measures. University of St. Francis was named as one of the top five overall higher-education institutes in Illinois. WalletHub's rankings also placed USF in the top 25 overall in the Midwest, and ranked USF #1 in Illinois in the "Cost & Financing" and "Campus Safety" categories.

As we continue to celebrate our Centennial year, national recognitions such as these demonstrate the University of St. Francis' longstanding and ongoing commitment to student success – whether in terms of retention and graduation rates or in terms of in-field job placement.

In addition to the recognition our academic programs receive, our student life programs are also noteworthy.

Every other year, USF invites its students who live on campus to participate in the nationwide EBI Resident Assessment Survey, which measures student satisfaction and learning outcomes in the residence halls through the lens of nineteen different factors. Out of the more than 250 academic institutions that participated in the survey, USF was named as one of three winners of this year's Assessment and Impact Award for housing and residence life programs.

These rankings demonstrate that our staff and students are able to successfully create a learning-focused environment in the residence halls. They also show the effort that goes into building a positive, community experience for students choosing to live on campus.

Our students are doing a great job of representing the University on the athletic fields as Fighting Saints, as well as in the classrooms, as student-athletes. Almost 450 student-athletes participate in one or more of our 22 athletic teams.

While COVID-19 did impact athletic competitions last spring, our teams still had an impressive 2019-20 season on the field with 6 of our 22 squads advancing to NAIA national tournaments. Several student-athletes earned individual accolades, as well, including our 57 All-Conference athletes and our 23 NAIA All-Americans.

And, because our student-athletes are "students" first, I am particularly proud that a school record 20 of our 22 qualifying athletic teams were named NAIA "Scholar Teams," for having a team GPA of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale this past year. Also, 25 percent of our junior and senior student-athletes were named NAIA "Scholar Athletes" for boasting a 3.50-or-higher cumulative GPA and nearly one-third of our eligible student-athletes received academic all-conference recognition for having a 3.20 or higher GPA. Additionally, our student athletes set a new spring semester cumulative GPA school record at 3.20.

While the 2019-2020 NAIA "Learfield Cup" was canceled due to COVID-19, USF finished third in our conference's All-Sports Cup standings and had three coaches named "Coach of the Year" for their respective sports. Go Fighting Saints!

It is important to note the University of St. Francis' degree programs are fully accredited by the Higher Learning Commission, a regional accreditation agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. We are also especially proud of the rigorous, specialized accreditation that our programs have earned from national associations, including:

- the Council on Social Work Education;
- the Council on Accreditation of Parks, Recreation, Tourism and Related Professions;
- the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for Physician Assistants;
- the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs;
- the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education;
- the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education,
- the Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiological Technology; and
- the Illinois Certification Board.

The quality education that USF provides our students ensures that they will be ready and prepared to become the next generation of servant leaders...and will join our strong, growing

community of almost 51000 alumni.

Indeed, these women and men can be found just about everywhere – with:

- over 2,300 in Joliet alone;
- close to 7,800 in Will county; and
- over 21,000 in the state of Illinois.

Another 29000 of our alumni are spread across the country...and the world.

Indeed, we find it as a great source of pride that many of our alumni use the education and experiences they had at USF to continue making a positive impact on our local communities. In the tri-county area of Will, Grundy and Kendall Counties alone, nearly 1000 USF alumni are teachers, administrators and staff members in private and public education, and over 600 USF alumni are employed in a variety of capacities in healthcare fields.

We will maintain our commitment to turning our students into dedicated, passionate, impactful, servant leaders who will remain connected to University of St. Francis family for years to come.

Telling Our Story

I can tell you with great confidence that our mission guides us day in and day out. This is who we are – our mission ensures that we will remain true to legacy of our founding congregation, the Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate.

While our mission makes sure that we remain respectful of our past, it also ensures that we are conscientious of our future... serving our students the best that we can and encouraging them to be the best they can be.

We “make real” our mission through four statements that embody what sets USF apart from other institutions. These statements include:

- that we are a “Welcoming Community of Learners”;
- that we provide our students with an “Ethic of Care”;
- that we are a “Campus of Doers”, and;
- that we “Serve Those who Serve Others.”

The first statement, that we are ‘Welcoming Community of Learners’ is born from our value of RESPECT. We often hear from our students that USF “feels like home”. We achieve this sense of belonging by supporting our students from all walks of life. This support includes our world-class faculty, who make educating students their top priority, and our administrators and staff, who work tirelessly to care for our students in non-teaching – but equally important – ways.

Our second statement, that we provide an ‘Ethic of Care’, comes from our value of INTEGRITY. As a small, high-touch institution we can give students one-on-one attention. With a faculty/student ratio of 13:1, we know this to be true. We are genuine in our care for each student as an individual and demonstrate who we are through our thoughts and actions.

One example of this “care” took place last spring following our transition to a modified operations plan that had all students transitioning to remote learning. A large team of employees called each and every one of our undergraduate students to personally check in and see how their learning transition was going, and to also connect students in need with resources to help ease that shift.

In the very best of our Franciscan tradition and heritage, we are a ‘Campus of Doers.’ Inspired by our value of SERVICE, the members of the USF community are active experimenters. Our students learn by doing – by student teaching, practicing in skills labs, presenting in mock trials, or creating a business plan for a local non-profit organization. Our patrons, Saints Francis and Clare of Assisi, were doers and we are committed to ensuring their example remains relevant in the 21st century.

Finally, ‘Serving Those Who Serve Others’ comes from our value of COMPASSION. The vast majority of our students are earning degrees that focus on serving people, such as nursing, healthcare, business, and education. We feel strongly that the best way to model compassion is by modeling service and putting others’ needs before our own.

These four statements try to summarize the USF experience – which is not limited only to our traditional undergraduate students. We want to ensure that this influence is felt by our commuters, our online students, our graduate students, and even our visitors through the efforts of the staff and faculty members that help to make USF the warm, wonderful place that it is. Indeed, we hope that you will see these statements modeled out in the community, in the hospitals, in the board rooms, in the classrooms, and in the homes our graduates serve and inhabit every day. They – and each of us – are called to serve and called to lead.

To that end, although much of the nation’s attention is focused on the COVID-19 pandemic, let us remain actively vigilant with respect to the pandemic of racism that continues to challenge our nation. As members of the USF’s welcoming community, we embrace our Franciscan values of respect, integrity, service and compassion and bear witness to the pain of our Black colleagues and students.

Honoring the call of our Sister Sponsors to stand in recognition of and opposition to the systemic racism that permeates our world, USF’s Catholic Franciscan Charism Committee and our Diversity Committee are working together this year to address issues of inequity on our campus and to build actively a campus culture where communities of color are heard, supported, and thrive. Let us commit with the proponents of Black Lives Matter “to struggle together, and to imagine and create a world free of anti-Blackness, where every Black person has the social, economic, and political power to thrive.” As people privileged by education and opportunity, it is my hope that we all act against bias and injustice, and pursue equity and inclusion, not just during times of crisis but in daily acts of courage.

Joliet’s University

Not only are we partners with agencies and organizations in Joliet and the greater Will County area, but we also invest in their future. Last spring, USF introduced its new “Will County

Access Initiative” to Will County and its high schools. This is a mission-inspired approach to offering a high-quality, private university education to students who may have never realized that this option was open to them. This will create additional opportunities for local students to earn their college degrees without the worry of incurring student loan debt. Created specifically for students at Will County high schools, the initiative is a way to create a new path to high-quality, private, higher education right here in Will County. If you know of prospective students, I encourage you to share this and our many other scholarship and aid options with them.

In another demonstration of its investment in the Joliet area, USF recently introduced its “Joliet Agency Leadership Scholarship”. This scholarship is designed for local, not-for-profit agency directors and leaders who serve the greater Joliet community and assists them with earning their MBA through USF. As the Joliet region’s university, this is a direct way to impact the region’s community members.

At least one scholarship will be awarded annually – subject to demand and external funding support. Recipients must commit to maintaining a board-approved leadership position at their respective agency for two years beyond degree completion.

The inaugural recipient of this new scholarship was Veronica Gloria, who is the Executive Director of the Spanish Community Center in Joliet. While I could explain the importance and impact of this scholarship, please allow me to share Veronica’s take on it: [quote]

“What excites me most about this opportunity is that it creates sustainable access to higher education for myself and other professionals dedicated to the public good in Joliet. The more prepared we are as a sector, the more we can strategically make a difference in our local community. A quality education at USF can provide us with essential tools to creatively face challenges as change agents in our institutions, communities, and broader systems.”

This is a true investment in our community that we are confident will pay substantial dividends over time while also expanding the reach and impact of our Franciscan values of service, respect, compassion and integrity.

Another example of our investment in Joliet and the greater Will County area took place last spring, as the early impact the COVID-19 pandemic affected the economy and, more importantly, many Joliet area businesses. Professors at the University of St. Francis partnered with the Joliet Region Chamber of Commerce to quickly prepare a fact sheet to explain the then-new Federal CARES Act Program and how local businesses could apply for a portion of those funds. In addition to the fact sheet, Dr. Steve Morrissette (a USF business professor...and a USF alum!) and Mike Paone (Vice President for Government Affairs with the Joliet Region Chamber of Commerce...and another USF alum!) appeared live on 1340 AM WJOL to talk about the program in an effort to reach and, more importantly, to help as many local businesses as possible in an incredible time of need.

Franciscan Values

Indeed, as mentioned earlier this morning, service is one of the core Franciscan values upon which the University of St. Francis is founded. Thanks to a generous gift from Patricia '67 and Robert Wheeler last fall, our College of Business and Health Administration (COBHA) is building upon our Franciscan tradition to offer a premiere, spiritually-focused curriculum centered on Catholic Franciscan values that will be integrated into academics, service to others, and faith-based values. COBHA's goal is not to simply prepare students for a successful career but to prepare them for a purposeful life through three key principles: academics, service, and faith. This generous gift and its purpose bring us back to the "who we are" as a university and have been since being established in 1920.

Speaking of 1920, I would like to segue into the part of today's presentation that focuses on a once-in-a-lifetime milestone we have been celebrating all year: our university's Centennial.

USF's Centennial

Founded by the Sisters of Saint Francis of Mary Immaculate – more commonly known as "the Joliet Franciscans" – we were first called "New College," then "Assisi College," followed by the "College of St. Francis," and finally reaching university status in 1998.

The University has a rich history. Over the years, we transitioned from exclusively preparing the Sisters to teach, to becoming an all-women's college, to becoming coeducational in 1971, to affiliating with the Saint Joseph College of Nursing in 1997. Throughout the years, we have maintained our focus on offering a Catholic, comprehensive educational experience, focused on Franciscan values and rooted in the liberal arts, to each and every student.

While this has been a year of celebration, it has also been a year of pivoting. COVID-19 challenged us in many ways regarding our Centennial celebration plans. I want you to know that many of the events we had originally planned for this year have NOT been canceled; they have simply been postponed to a year I like to refer to as "2020.1". Of course, 2021 is not technically our centennial year, but we are committed to using "2020.1" to host celebratory events that we were or will be unable to host in 2020. Please keep an eye out for event details as they become available.

We are happy, though, that we have been able to celebrate the University's Centennial in some ways. We have issued monthly centennial e-newsletters to our university community and planted three new oak trees in front of Tower Hall in honor of the start of a new century for USF. These trees will represent, symbolically, the foundation of our first 100 years, even while they grow independently to reach ever-new heights.

The University also commissioned an artist to create a three-dimensional "Centennial Collage" that is on display on the 1st floor of Tower Hall. This wonderful, visually-stunning celebration of our first 100 years is also viewable virtually at stfrancis.edu/collage.

As part of its 100-year celebration, USF embarked on a Centennial Campaign with strategic initiatives that would beautify our campus, increase scholarships, and honor our heritage. This campaign is an important part of how USF is enhancing the learning environment, showing its commitment to affordable excellence, and ensuring that a USF education remains within reach for bright, hard-working students and their families as we continue “Building a Franciscan Future... Together, in Our Second Century.”

When arriving to campus from the north on Route 30, you are now welcomed by Saint Francis himself, along with a representation of our mascot, a Saint Bernard. This statue is at the center of our Centennial Gateway, which include the names of 100 USF supporters (a tie-in to our 100-year anniversary). Thank you to everyone who supported the Gateway!

Also, on our main campus in Joliet is the new Centennial Quad, which hosts the Margaret and William Benoit Commons. This new area is perfect for gathering together and enjoying camaraderie and the outdoors. The Benoit Commons creates an attractive, western entrance to the Quad between the Sullivan Center and Tower Hall – as well as a beautiful outdoor gathering area, which is needed now more than ever before. The Benoit Commons, complete with a water feature, provides the USF community with a space to study, reflect, collaborate, dine, and enjoy fellowship.

USF hosted a virtual dedication ceremony for the Centennial Gateway and Benoit Commons on September 17, and I would like to share a brief highlight video from the event.

[video]

Service, as you know, is one of the University of St. Francis’ four Franciscan values – and, I would argue, is central to its mission and identity. As part of our year-long centennial celebration in 2020, the University has set a goal of accumulating 100,000 hours of service and we are inviting alumni, employees, families, friends and the community to contribute to the effort.

From now through December 31st, we’re asking individuals and groups to complete acts of service and then visit stfrancis.edu/centennial to record the hours. For each 1,000 hours of service recorded (which will represent one year of USF’s history of service), a timeline on display in Tower Hall and a counter on the USF centennial website will be updated to reflect progress toward the 100,000-hour service goal. To date, almost 80,000 hours have been logged as part of this historic initiative!

So... this brings me to an invitation/challenge to you. If you are performing acts of service during these challenging times (e.g., making masks, delivering food, etc.) – and I am confident that many of you are! – please be sure to log your service at stfrancis.edu/centennial so that it contributes to our collective efforts to reach our Centennial goal.

I have already shared several examples of how COVID-19 has challenged USF to pivot and find success through an alternate route, and it is my hope that you will consider being a part of one such effort as we host our annual Caritas Scholarship Ball in a way we have never hosted it

before: virtually! Caritas is one of Joliet's longest-running black-tie events. For over sixty years, the annual Caritas Ball has served as USF's primary fundraiser for student scholarships. We know how important of a role this financial support is when it comes to making a college education possible for USF students.

The University of St. Francis is bringing Caritas to your home through a special digital experience with the theme "From Our Home to Yours" on Saturday, January 30, 2021. This exciting event is being co-chaired by Corey & Steve Carbery and Ann & Steve Randich. While we may not be able to see you in person, it is a privilege to invite you to attend this year's Virtual Caritas from the comfort of your own home! Please visit stfrancis.edu/caritas for more information.

Closing

As I begin to close this 7th Annual Ambassador Day, I would like to thank you once again for being with us this morning – and for being “ambassadors” for the University of St. Francis. We are grateful for your time and support...and for your membership in the ever-growing “USF Family.”

Later this afternoon, please keep an eye open for a follow-up email from us. The email will include links to the following digital supplements to this morning's program.

- This year's update of our “Effective and Affordable” piece is there for reference to help you tell our story. It's filled with facts and figures that we hope you'll find of use.
- You will also find a quick, one-page handout with admissions information and a listing of programs available here. USF offers undergraduate and graduate degrees with flexible enrollment dates and online classes designed for busy professionals like each of you...and your employees.
- And, because you're our ambassadors, we'd like to share the three special “Centennial-ized” issues of the *Engaging Mind & Spirit* magazine so you know some of the great things that have been happening on campus over the past several months. Please, also keep your eyes open for our quarterly *Community Impact* e-newsletter from the USF Community & Government Relations Office as a way to keep up with university news and events.
- Finally, we kindly invite you to complete the Partnership Information Form included with the supplements. This form will allow us to learn more from your perspective about the existing partnerships we have with you, while also gathering your ideas on how we can potentially expand those partnerships or even create new ones. We introduced this component as part of last year's Ambassador Day and look forward to using the responses we receive this year to make our community partnerships even stronger.

Again, I thank you for joining us this morning for the 7th annual Ambassador Day. And, in our Franciscan tradition, I wish you “Pace e Bene” – “peace and all good things”!

Thank you!