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## Nationally Recognized Service Learning Center at SMC Receives New Endowment

*Submitted by Michael McAlpin*

A new endowment, The Mulvaney Family Head, Heart and Hands Endowment Fund, was recently established to support the work of the Catholic Institute for Lasallian Social Action (CILSA) at Saint Mary's College. CILSA provides Saint Mary's students with academic and service learning leadership opportunities through a variety of domestic and international service and civic engagement courses and community-based research projects with community partners and College faculty.

The fund will allow CILSA to broaden its programming and enable greater participation by Saint Mary's students in its community engagement and service efforts. The new fund was made possible through the generous donation of \$500,000 from Lafayette philanthropists Karen and Tom Mulvaney. To encourage giving by others to the fund, the Mulvaney family will match all financial contributions to the endowment, up to \$50,000 per year, over the next five years.

"We are extremely grateful to the Mulvaney family for their support," said Saint Mary's Provost Beth Dobkin. "Civic engagement and service learning opportunities offered through CILSA are hallmarks of the College's academic experience. The impact on students and the communities they serve are clear and compelling, bringing us repeated recognition by the White House through the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll Award." Widely respected for their community activism, philanthropy and support of Lafayette schools and the city's new library, the Mulvaney family said the endowment is borne out of a family tradition of giving back.

"Tom and I both came from families that have a great sense of service," offered Karen Mulvaney. "Leave a place better for having lived there and do your best to lighten the loads of others when possible," a belief she attributed to her mother's wise counsel. Her husband recalled a similar experience. "What have you done to help someone today?" was a question he said his father asked regularly when he was a young boy at the dinner table. The couple says those early messages about the value of service have contributed to their appreciation for the hundreds of hours of volunteer service that Saint Mary's students provide through CILSA.

"It is a tremendous thing that Saint Mary's is trying to achieve, in creating a culture of service in its students, and we wholeheartedly support that effort," said Tom Mulvaney. The couple's belief in the importance of CILSA's goals also stems from an appreciation of their daughter's experience at Saint Mary's. After alumna Marguerite "Meg" Mulvaney traveled to Rwanda as part of a CILSA sponsored January Term course, she was profoundly inspired. Meg's "spectacular experience," said the Mulvaney family, was yet another reason to support Saint Mary's, to help others benefit from similar CILSA initiatives. "We hope our gift can expand opportunities for more students, inspire other families to support the program and, overall, help Saint Mary's students make a positive impact in society," said Karen Mulvaney.

In the 2012-13 academic year students at Saint Mary's provided more than 22,500 hours of volunteer service through CILSA. Founded in 1999, the center supports students, faculty, staff, campus units and community partners to work together to promote intellectual inquiry and student leadership and development. For more information about the Mulvaney Family Head, Heart and Hands Endowment Fund, contact CILSA director Marshall Welch at (925) 631-8135 or at [mjw6@stmarys-ca.edu](mailto:mjw6@stmarys-ca.edu).

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