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SMC president announces retirement

By Vera Kochan



SMC President James A. Donahue Photo provided

Saint Mary's College President James A. Donahue made an official announcement last month to the Gael Nation, sharing his plans to retire in June 2021, at which point he will have served eight years. "It seems there is no perfect moment for announcing one's future retirement," Donahue said, "but I believe the right time for me to do that has come now."

Donahue is currently the 29th president of SMC, having previously been president of the Graduate Theological Union (a consortium of nine independent theological schools and Affiliate Centers) in Berkeley. He is the first layperson to serve as president in SMC's 150-year history.

Looking back over his eight-year tenure, Donahue acknowledged his pride in leading such an academically rich institution. "What makes this the right time to transfer the reins of leadership is that Saint Mary's today stands securely in a strong position with a promising future." Donahue added, "We are fully prepared to move on to our next stage - academically, financially, culturally, and educationally." He credits the passion of the students, faculty, staff, alumni, the Christian Brothers, the board of trustees, donors and the Moraga community with SMC's success.

Among the many achievements that Donahue is proud of is that SMC continues to be a diverse community with regards to race, religion, economic class, ethnicity and gender. He also made mention of the athletic program's remarkable student-athletes who have raised SMC's profile globally. Most recently, The Campaign for the Future of Saint Mary's has exceeded its goal to raise \$125 million which will help strengthen the college's programs and infrastructure.

Donahue ascertained that SMC will rise to the challenge presented by the coronavirus and adapt in whatever way is necessary to fulfill every student's academic needs with strength, creativity and commitment.

"The Saint Mary's community will always be my home going forward," Donahue stated. "Be assured I will continue to provide service in whatever ways I can."

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