



MEDIA CONTACT

Hugh Drummond

617.962.1834

hdrummond@annamaria.edu

For Immediate Release

Anna Maria College Names Dr. Sean J. Ryan as Next President

PAXTON, MA - [March 6, 2025] - The Board of Trustees of Anna Maria College is pleased to announce the appointment of [Dr. Sean J. Ryan as the institution's 12th president](#), effective July 1, 2025. The Board's vote was unanimous. Dr. Ryan will succeed President Mary Lou Retelle, who has led the College since 2015.

Dr. Ryan joins Anna Maria College from Bellarmine University in Louisville, Kentucky where he currently serves as Senior Vice President, directing for Administration, Strategic Initiatives, and Trustee Affairs. Since joining Bellarmine in 2007, Dr. Ryan has held positions of increasing responsibility, including Vice President for Enrollment Management and Dean of the School of Continuing and Professional Studies.

"After a comprehensive national search, we are delighted to welcome Dr. Sean J. Ryan as the next president of Anna Maria College," said David P. Trainor, Chair of the Board of Trustees. "Dr. Ryan's impressive track record in leadership, commitment to Catholic higher education, and proven success in enrollment growth and financial management make him exceptionally qualified to lead Anna Maria College into its next chapter. The Board approached this search with great care and dedication, confident that this decision will have a positive and lasting impact on Anna Maria College. Dr. Ryan's passion for our mission and ability to articulate our values while honoring the College's rich tradition founded by the Sisters of Saint Anne perfectly aligns with our vision for the future."

A New England native with strong regional ties, Dr. Ryan brings extensive experience in strategic planning, enrollment management, and resource development. During his time at Bellarmine, he successfully led the university through an NCAA reclassification from Division II to Division I, co-chaired an 18-month strategic planning process, and collaborated with academic leadership to create 23 new academic programs.

Dr. Ryan's administrative expertise encompasses all facets of higher education leadership. In his current role, he oversees Human Resources, Athletics, the Center for Academic and Support Services for Student Athletes, University Communications, and Information Technology. He recently served as Interim Vice

President for Development and Alumni Relations where he led efforts that raised \$7 million in just seven months. His responsibilities included advising the President on administrative and academic matters and acting as the primary liaison to the Board of Trustees in the President's absence.

"I am honored and humbled to be selected as the next president of Anna Maria College," said Dr. Ryan. "Anna Maria's mission to educate students to become ethical leaders and community-oriented professionals resonates profoundly with me as an individual and my passion for higher education. I look forward to returning to Massachusetts to work alongside the talented faculty, staff, and students and build upon the strong foundation established by President Retelle. Together with the Board of Trustees, faculty, staff, administration, and the Anna Maria community, we will chart an ambitious path forward that propels the College to new levels of academic excellence and distinction."

Dr. Ryan's commitment to community engagement is evident in his active participation in local and regional organizations in the Louisville area. He has demonstrated a strong fundraising record throughout his career. Separate from his time as Bellarmine's Interim VP for Development, Dr. Ryan raised nearly \$6 million for academic programs, student scholarships, and student success initiatives.

Dr. Ryan holds a doctorate in education from the University of Pennsylvania and has periodically taught undergraduate and doctoral students at Bellarmine. His Catholic education, from kindergarten through his master's degree, instilled a deep appreciation for Catholic identity and values. He holds an undergraduate degree from St. Anselm College and a graduate degree from Regis College.

"Dr. Ryan's collaborative leadership style, fundraising expertise, and commitment to shared governance will serve our community exceptionally well as we write the next chapter in Anna Maria's distinguished history," said Kimberly A. Kennedy, Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees. "Throughout the search process, we were impressed by his ability to balance strategic innovation with respect for tradition, his success in developing new academic programs while honoring the institution's mission, and his genuine enthusiasm for engaging with all members of the college community."

The appointment concludes a thorough search process involving input from the entire Anna Maria College community. Dr. Ryan is excited to begin his presidency by connecting with students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community partners to build a shared, inspiring vision for the College's future.

A campus announcement event will be held in the coming weeks.

About Anna Maria College

Founded in 1946 and located in Paxton, Massachusetts, Anna Maria College is a private, co-educational institution inspired by the ideals of the Sisters of Saint Anne. We prepare our students to become ethical leaders by combining a values-based, service-focused education with strong functional knowledge and the skills necessary to address the rapidly changing needs of their world. Anna Maria delivers undergraduate and graduate degrees along with certificate programs on campus and online. For more information, visit www.annamaria.edu.