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September 26, 2011

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Distinguished Alumni Award Recipients

DUBUQUE, Iowa --- Seven Loras College alumni were recognized as “Distinguished Alumni” during Homecoming 2011. The following were awarded:

Thomas Goodman ('54) was recognized for Service Provided to Loras by Faculty, Staff, or Administrator

Born and raised in Dubuque, Goodman’s Loras legacy spans many years and through many generations. With three brothers having attended it was natural that he, too, would be going to Loras. All four of his children Tom, Teresa, Tori and Cathy attended Loras, and they are all still active with Loras events; in fact, two children continue in his footsteps as adjunct professors.

After graduating from Loras Academy, Goodman easily transitioned into life at Loras College. He played percussion in the band for two years and kept busy helping behind the scenes with the Loras Players. In 1954 he received his degree in English and began working for WDBQ as an announcer, disc jockey, reporter, radio news man, and program director.

His strong connection to Loras pulled him back in 1958 and he returned with the same enthusiasm he had as a student. Not one to shy away from hard work, he began his career as the Admission and Alumni Director. Goodman spent many of his weekends on the train to Chicago to recruit students from Catholic High Schools in the area.

Staying true to his passion for the spoken and written word, he was the moderator for the *Lorian* and was responsible for beginning the print center. His love for photography was easily integrated into his work life when he became the Director of Photography. Astronomy was also been a hobby for Goodman and he was a key player in the ordering and installation of equipment into the Heitkamp Planetarium. He also wrote and presented many planetarium lectures.

In 1965 Goodman was appointed as a full-time professor of the English Department. Through the years, he touched many students’ lives and contributed to many committees on campus, including the discipline committee, faculty senate and the faculty council. He was also a founding member of the Center of Dubuque Area History for which he photographed over 10,000 pictures for archival storage.

Beyond all his commitments to the Loras community, Goodman also found time to volunteer to teach lifesaving classes at the San Jose Pool through the American Red Cross. In fact, when the Athletic Department at Loras was short on instructors one semester, Goodman stepped in to teach lifesaving classes on campus.

Goodman has been named a member of the Loras Players Hall of Fame for his tech work and he continues to help where he can. Recently, he helped to archive the Loras Players' 100 year history during the 2010-2011 academic year, a tireless job that took weeks to document.

Goodman truly exhibits the Loras way of life, and we are proud to honor him as a member of our campus community. He and his wife, Geri, live in Dubuque, and remain engaged on the campus and in the Dubuque community.

Fr. Melvin ('55), Fr. John ('56), and Fr. Everett ('67) Hemann were recognized for Christian Service and Volunteer Work

It has been said that “the love of a family is life’s greatest blessing.” This holds true for fathers Mel, John, and Ev Hemann; three brothers who grew up among 8 siblings on a farm north of Stacyville, Iowa. All educated in the catholic school system and all went on to serve the church as priests.

These three brothers not only chose to serve the Lord, but also chose a unique way to do this, by becoming pilots. You can see the brother’s photo displayed in the Smithsonian Institute Museum as charter members of the National Association of Priest Pilots. They have solidified their place in Loras history by creating the Hemann Brother’s Scholarship that recognizes a student who is living out his/her faith.

Fr. Mel Hemann said Loras taught him openness, to search for the truth, and the importance of service. He has taken this lesson with him throughout his life. Fr. Mel was a pioneer and leader in most of the family life programs during the last 50 years. He quietly dedicated his time to starting the programs and serving on the boards. He has lived his life as a priest serving in more than 15 Iowa parishes. Fr. Mel lives his life as a priest being Jesus to all. One unique way he has done this is combining his love of God with his passion for flying. Fr. Mel obtained his private pilot license in 1960 and has used this talent to further his ministry. This gift has enabled him to help others pursue their goals by flying missionaries throughout the world.

Msgr. John Hemann’s motto in life is “The life of a priest...to be a part of every family...yet belonging to none.” Fr. John has lived this motto by serving in parishes, high schools, grade schools, and as a military chaplain. Enlisting in the United States Army and serving as part of the Iowa Army National Guard for 28 and a half years. This opportunity allowed him to minister in many different communities including three times on active duty which included time in the Pentagon and twice in Germany. He retired from the Army with a rank of Brigadier General in 1994. In 1963 he logged his first flight off a grass strip on the Hemann farm in Staceyville, IA and obtained his pilot license in 1964. He has flown to 49 states and was present in Carrollton, Kentucky when the National Association of Pilot Priests was organized and has been an active member for the past 47 years.

Fr. Everett Hemann originally wanted to be an astronaut after President Kennedy announced “we are going to the moon.” He started his college career as an aerospace engineer major. However, he realized that God had other plans for him. After his brother Mel gave him flying lessons, he

too obtained his pilot's license in 1963. He served the Loras community as a Hall Director for Keane Hall, worked in Campus Ministry, and was the Chaplain for the College. He also served as the Vocations Director for the Archdiocese of Dubuque. In addition, he currently serves as a Loras Board of Regent helping shape the initiatives of the College, defining its future.

Robert Roth ('60) was recognized for Contributions Made in Public Service

Robert Roth's journey to Loras began with his enrollment in the Academy. As he put it, "I literally progressed up the hill to Loras College." Roth immediately became involved in the campus community and received three varsity letters in baseball and basketball, going on to be the Senior Class president.

In 1960, Roth left Loras with a degree in economics and entered law school at the University of Iowa. After receiving his J.D., he returned to Galena to begin his lifelong career of service in law. Roth has served eight years as the Assistant State's Attorney for Jo Daviess County and ten years as the Assistant Illinois Attorney General (eminent domain). Today he is the Law Partner at Vincent, Roth, Toepfer & Leinen, P.C. in Galena.

Roth is the co-founder and longtime board member of the Galena Arts and Recreation Center. He is also part of the Galena Community Development Fund, a member of the Galena Hospital Board serving two years as its president, and a member of the Galena Vision 2020 Selection Committee. Roth also created a memorial event for a good friend that is now in its 24th year, and he is the lector and past parish council member at St. Michael's in Galena.

Loras' mission and values had a true impact on Roth's life. He states, "Loras is special in its efforts to develop responsible contributors in its graduates and to foster support of volunteering and civic engagement. I have tried to be part of that effort." His public service and volunteerism speaks to this commitment. At Loras he has dedicated time over the years to the All-Tournament selection committee for the National Catholic Basketball Tournament, volunteered time as a Mock Trial judge for Loras' annual competition each winter, and provided countless hours of mentoring for Loras students and graduates

In addition to all his service to Loras, Roth offers legal counsel for the Galena Public Library District, Midwest Medical Center, Jo Daviess County Housing Authority, Galena Emergency EMS District, and Jo Daviess County Workshop.

Roth shares that he is proud of Loras' faith-centered focus in educating its students. Roth and his wife, Mary, live in Galena and are the proud parents of five children and several grandchildren.

Albert P. Ruffalo ('69) was recognized for Professional Achievements and Contributions Made to Loras

Al Ruffalo came to Loras from Kenosha, Wisconsin, after graduating from St. Joseph's High School. Loras is special to Ruffalo because, "it was my home for four years and taught me to think outside the box." That dynamic thinking has allowed Ruffalo to achieve great success in his personal and business life.

While at Loras, he participated in Intramurals football, wrestling and softball, and served as Vice President of the Commerce Club. He received his bachelor's degree in Accounting and wasted no time establishing his career.

Ruffalo worked as the marketing manager with the National Oats Corporation, held various positions at TelecomUSA, was president of a subsidiary of MCI Direct, and served as the executive vice president in a variety of departments at McLeod USA.

While serving at McLeod USA, Ruffalo teamed with Clark McLeod, Blake Fisher and Stephen Gray to form RuffaloCODY, a direct marketing and telemarketing services company. When the company started in 1991, they began with 50 employees, and by 2009, the company had grown to 3,000 employees in 85 locations! In 2007, *Inc. Magazine* named RuffaloCODY as one of America's 5,000 fastest-growing private companies.

In the fall of 2005, Loras College was one of the pilot schools for the new Graduate Services phonathon program that RuffaloCODY was implementing. The program was a huge success and Loras College still uses RuffaloCODY's services today for the annual phonathon fundraiser.

Ruffalo has been very generous to Loras, serving on the Board of Regents from 1998-2007 and was named Regent Emeritus in 2008. He and his wife, Martha, have generously supported many projects across campus, including the walkway connecting the Academic Resource Center and the Alumni Campus Center which was named in their honor.

A few of the honorable awards Ruffalo has earned include: Midwest Emerging Entrepreneur of the year by *Inc. Magazine*, Junior Achievement Business Hall of Fame, and Cedar Rapids Chamber of Commerce Entrepreneur of the Year Award. In his spare time, Ruffalo has donated his time as a member of both the Board of Trustees for Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Eastern Iowa and Junior Achievement of Eastern Iowa, and has also served as chair for the Mount Mercy Scholarship campaign.

Ruffalo is proud to have his son Paul continue the Loras legacy by becoming a Duhawk and receiving his degree in 2000.

Colleen Savory ('09) was recognized as a Distinguished Young Alumni

While growing up in Evergreen Park, Illinois, and attending Mother McAuley Liberal Arts High School, Colleen Savory never imagined she would be helping to create a memorial award in memory of her dear friend who also attended Loras College. However, as Savory learned, life takes some major turns and you have to be open to the changes that come your way and in turn honor those who aided in your journey.

As one of her nominators stated, "She represents the beginning of a new era in the Loras Alumni Community. She is a strong example of friendship and community." With all Savory has on her plate, it would have been easy for her to say no to the opportunity to help establish this memorial award, but she understood the importance of honoring her friend's memory and educating others of the disease that took her too soon.

In March 2008, Audrey Fitzgerald passed away from meningitis while attending Loras College. A small group of her classmates, led by Savory, dedicated themselves to helping Audrey's legacy live on. The group created a memorial award in honor of Audrey to help future Loras students

pay for their education. It is Savory's goal to provide not only an outlet for supporting the memorial award, but also to educate others about the impact of meningitis. She has created a website, planned promotional events, and is working closely with Loras College and the National Meningitis Association to promote education, awareness, and fundraising related to this award. Savory has said that this memorial award has grown beyond her wildest dreams; "This overwhelming, complicated and emotional process by far is one of my proudest moments."

Savory graduated from Loras College with a degree in Social Work, and recently completed her Master's Degree. Dedicating her life to helping others has been a major part of her life. Savory also donates her time and talent to organizations like "Sleep out Dubuque," the American Cancer Society, and has worked with three different organizations to help with the rebuilding efforts in New Orleans. She has also worked with youth through the "Hidden Talents" program and was a leader/mentor to many middle school students.

It was the feeling of community that drew Savory to Loras. During her years here as a student she was a resident assistant and worked hard to make sure all the students living on her floor experienced that same sense of community. She prepared programs and activities for the girls to do together. It is Savory's dedication to the Loras community and the friendships developed that have made her efforts for the Audrey Fitzgerald memorial award such a success.

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