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Virtuous Circle

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Virtuous Circle : University of Dayton, Ohio

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Friday February 17, 2023

Virtuous Circle

By Eric F. Spina

(University of Dayton President Eric F. Spina calls Beth Schwartz and Rick Chamberlin "humble servant-leaders who put others above themselves and respect the dignity of every person." Here are the president's remarks from the Feb. 17 Lackner Awards dinner, where the two received the honor for the way they live out UD's Catholic, Marianist character.)

Beth and Rick are simply two of the most caring, compassionate — and loyal — people on our campus. They're kind, positive, and humble servant-leaders who put others above themselves and respect the dignity of every person.

At UD they know they are part of something bigger than themselves. As they have modeled our mission and our values in their everyday encounters, they have made us a better people and a better university. Whether it has been Coach Chamberlin taking his players to the

Immaculate Conception Chapel for Mass as the semester and their season begins, or Beth going that extra mile to check in on someone who is battling a difficult diagnosis.

As director of benefits and wellness, Beth has indeed touched the lives of literally every single member of the faculty and staff for 27 years. She's there at the happiest and saddest times, celebrating promotions and newborns and walking with empathy and compassion with those suffering from sickness or loss.

She's authentic, gracious, professional, trusted, beloved. And she's connected to the charism of this university in a deeply personal way. In her 15 years as a leader among Marianist Educational Associates, she has helped select new members who pledge to strengthen, sustain, and develop the Catholic and Marianist mission and identity of the University of Dayton. She's part of a virtuous circle that aims to keep the Marianist founding philosophy central to every part of campus life. Beth truly walks the walk.

Congratulations, Beth, on this honor. It is so deeply deserved!

We all know that Rick has a ferocious competitive streak — you don't stay involved with football for 50 years without a love for winning! — but there's much more to Rick than Xs and Os. He has always shown a genuine concern for student-athletes and their families that extends well beyond the field. Off the field, he embarks on mission trips with his church and involves football players in community service, whether it's rebuilding houses after Dayton's tornadoes or helping first-year students move into their residence halls.

Coach Chamberlin is literally defined by the teams that he has put on the field over the last 14 years — smart, tough, loyal, high-integrity, and winners. Rick's values are fully aligned with UD's values. Name me a football program around the country where a president can say that. Our football student-athletes have benefited as a result — they are doctors, lawyers, engineers, educators, public servants — each and every one contributing mightily to society.

(Holding up key chain). This is a link of a chain that Rick gave me early in my tenure as UD's president. In a tradition he carried over from his predecessor Mike Kelly, Rick has given everyone who ever played for him a link to remind them they're forever connected to the program, to each other, and to this university.

Like Beth, Rick is part of a virtuous circle at UD. He fully expects his student-athletes to be men of character and integrity and remain connected to each other and the program throughout their lives. Congratulations, Rick, on receiving the Lackner Award!

If I may use a sports metaphor, it is a privilege to celebrate co-MVPs tonight. Beth and Rick put the mission of this university and its people first, inspiring others with their dedication and faith. We are deeply indebted to you. Thank you.