

2-5-2014

Marianist Spirit

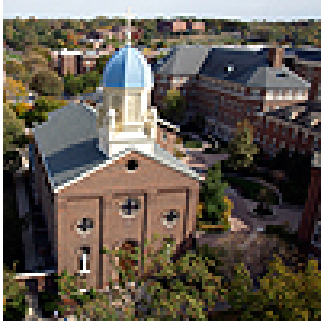
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Recommended Citation

"Marianist Spirit" (2014). *News Releases*. 2871.
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Marianist Spirit

02.05.2014 |

The University of Dayton employees will receive one of the University's highest honors.

Professors Elizabeth Gustafson and Joseph Untener will receive the 2014 Lackner Awards, which are given to full-time lay faculty or staff who, during a significant period, have made a noteworthy contribution to the Catholic and Marianist character of the University of Dayton.

The University will honor Gustafson and Untener at an invitation-only dinner Friday, Feb. 28, in the Kennedy Union ballroom.

The University named the awards in honor of Bro. Elmer Lackner, S.M., whose influence throughout 45 years of service permeated nearly all areas of University life.

Gustafson, an economics professor, came to the University in 1983. In 1997, she became department chair; after nine years as chair, she served as interim dean of the School of Business Administration in 2007-08. Since then, she's served as associate dean.

During her career, she said she has seen the University become more intentionally mission-driven.

"In the late 1980s, the University began working on ways to retain its Catholic, Marianist identity," Gustafson said. "We began having mission retreats. In the business school, we began talking about what it means to be a business school in a Catholic, Marianist university. We don't have the answer completely figured out, but we stay at the table about it, and that makes us better. And a lot of that comes across in how we deal with students."

During the course of his quarter century at the University, Untener has taught in the department of engineering technology, serving as its chair from 1996 to 2000. He served as associate provost for faculty and administrative affairs from 2003 to 2010 and returned to teaching.

For Untener, there's just something special about the University of Dayton classroom. He talked of a class he's teaching on strength of materials in which students were discussing product liability and the making of safe products. In reaction to certain specifications for a product, one student wrote, "To have something with a design factor that low would be immoral."

"That's exactly right," Untener said. "Here, we can talk about things a little bit differently. If I were just teaching equations, I'd rather be using those equations. I like to connect with students who have a sense of mission."

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