A Running Start

University of Dayton

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A Running Start

On his first day as president, Eric F. Spina is emphasizing his commitment to Catholic, Marianist traditions, engagement with the greater community, support for students and faculty, and research excellence.
"The University of Dayton has an extraordinarily rich history and a bright future," said Spina, the 19th president of the University. "The legacy of past presidents Brother Ray Fitz and Dan Curran and the work of so many others have created a strong momentum that will continue to propel the University forward in quality, impact and relevance.

"The strength of the University is found in our students, faculty, staff and alumni. Their passion for social justice and community engagement, drive for excellence, and commitment to an inclusive community is truly inspiring; I am honored to be invited to play a part in the continued growth of this great university."

Spina's schedule on his first day reflects his commitment to key characteristics of the University and its Catholic, Marianist identity. His day includes attending Mass in Immaculate Conception Chapel, lunch with Marianist brothers, meeting with the president of the Academic Senate and the provost, discussing research with students, interacting with international students and meeting many of the University's community partners in social justice and education.

Karen, his wife, will join him at several events. The Spina family, including daughter Kaitlyn and son Emery, moved to the Dayton area last weekend.

"The University community has already been so welcoming and gracious," Karen said. "I look forward to becoming a part of this special campus community through interactions with students, faculty and staff and also connecting with and contributing to the larger Dayton community."

As the second lay leader in the University's 166-year history, Spina said the mission of the University aligns with the personal values he learned from his parents — both teachers — and in 12 years of Catholic education, including four years at Canisius High School, in Buffalo, New York.

The University announced Spina's appointment in September; he succeeds Daniel J. Curran, president since 2002, who is stepping down after presiding over an era of unprecedented growth.

Spina previously served Syracuse University for 28 years, including nearly nine as vice chancellor and provost. He joined the Syracuse faculty in 1988 as an assistant professor and rose through the ranks as department chair, dean, and vice chancellor and provost, the university's chief academic officer. He also served as interim chancellor and president in 2013.

Spina earned his doctorate and master's degree from Princeton University in mechanical and aerospace engineering after graduating from Carnegie Mellon University. A prolific researcher and author with a 20-year research focus on experimental high-speed fluid mechanics, he has worked on multi-million dollar grants from NASA, the National Science Foundation and the Environmental Protection Agency. He holds two U.S. patents and authored, co-authored or edited dozens of academic publications.

Get an up-close look at his first day from the University of Dayton's Twitter, Snapchat, and Instagram accounts and join the conversation on the social wall.
You can also follow the new president on his blog and social media accounts for an inside look at his life as president.

Instagram: daytonprezspina
Twitter: @DaytonPrezSpina
President’s Blog: From the Heart: udayton.edu/blogs/president/

For more information, contact Cilla Shindell, director of media relations, at 937-229-3257 or shindell@udayton.edu.

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