



Celebrating **Fifty Years** **of Service**

Sister Marcella Marie Garus, CSSF, announces her retirement effective June 30, 2018 after fifty years of faithful service to Villa Maria College.



After 50 years of ongoing service to Villa Maria College and its thousands of students, faculty, and alumni, Sister Marcella Marie Garus has announced her upcoming retirement, effective June 30, 2018.

A Buffalo native, Sister Marcella served for 40 years as Villa Maria College president, making her one of the longest-tenured presidents of a higher education institution both in both Western New York and across North America.

General information:

Name: Marcella Marie Garus, CSSF

3rd President of Villa Maria College

Business Administrator: 1968 to 1978

President: August 1978 to June 2018

Born: Buffalo, NY

High school: Bishop Colton High School

College: D'Youville College, Business

Graduate School: University of Detroit, MBA

Entered religious life as a Felician Sister: 1961, formally The Congregation of the Sisters of Saint Felix of Cantalice



Recent Highlights

Career Accomplishments

- Transformed VMC from Associates to Bachelor's degree granting institution, adding 6 associates degrees and 14 Bachelor's degrees under tenure.
- Campus construction and expansion: Constructed the Art Shop, the St. Joseph Memorial Walkway, erected the Saint John Paul II statue, and acquired the Athletic Center, Felician Hall, and St. Francis Residence.
- Campus renovations and improvements: Paul William Beltz Family Art Gallery, Library updates with major stained glass window, front entrance and foyer, recital hall, and updated athletic facilities.
- Modernized the College's administration.
- Led all of the fundraising efforts of the College, raising millions of dollars to benefit students in her tenure.
- Recipient of numerous awards including: the Bishop's Medal for Catholic Education in 2006, the Governor's Award for Excellence in Education, and New York State Senate Women of Distinction award in 2009, the Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities Higher Education Leadership Award, the Cheektowaga Chamber of Commerce Appreciation Award, and the Am-Pol Eagle Citizen of the Year Award and voted Best Places to Work by Buffalo Business First in 2015 and 2017.
- Celebrated 25th and 50th anniversaries of the College.
- Started the first community food pantry at a local college.

- In 2014, launched the Visionary Plan setting the vision for Villa Maria College as the "premier student-centered institution in WNY".
 - As a result of the Visionary Plan in 2015 and 2016 the College re-launched intercollegiate athletics, enhanced student support, started the Achieve Program for students with learning differences, started new academic programs in Occupational Therapy Assistant, Digital Filmmaking, and Digital Media and Communication.
 - Notable results from 2014-2017 include a 30% growth in enrollment, and nearly 10% increase in retention.



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