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Villa Maria College Board of Trustees Appoints Interim President

BUFFALO, NY - Dr. Matthew Giordano has been named interim president of Villa Maria College, Board of Trustees Chairperson Catherine Grantier Cooley announced today.

Giordano will succeed Sister Marcella Marie Garus, C.S.S.F., who announced her retirement in March 2018 after serving as president for 40 years. Giordano will begin service effective July 1st and remain until the permanent appointment of the College's 4th president can be named.

Giordano, who has served as vice president for academic affairs at Villa Maria College for the past 6 years, was selected from a competitive pool of internal and external candidates.

"Dr. Giordano is a proven leader who knows Villa Maria College extremely well and is perfectly suited to guide the College through this next year or more" said Catherine Grantier Cooley, partner, Hodgson Russ, LLP, and chairperson of the Villa Maria College Board of Trustees. "As Vice President, Dr. Giordano worked closely with the Board and Sr. Marcella Marie Garus to help realize much of the success the institution has experienced in recent times and is deeply committed to the College's mission and vision of being the premier student-centered institution in Western New York."

Giordano was named vice president for academic affairs at Villa Maria College in June 2012. In that role, he has been instrumental in planning and implementing the College's visionary plan, resulting in major enrollment growth and increased retention, launching new academic programs, including an honors program, and helping to secure grant funding in support of student success, including a \$1.8 million Title III grant. He has overseen all aspects of academic leadership at the College; highlights include increasing the number of faculty, starting on-line learning, overseeing assessment, and significantly enhancing student success efforts.

Prior to this, Giordano served as the chairperson of the liberal arts department at Villa Maria from 2009 - 2012, and has been a faculty member in English at Villa Maria from 2005 to 2012. He was a visiting lecturer in English at Florida International University from 2004-2005.

"I am deeply humbled, excited, and optimistic about building off of Sr. Marcella's monumental legacy and leading Villa Maria College into the future." said Giordano, interim president of Villa

Maria College. "Through Villa Maria, the Felician Franciscan Sisters have impacted and transformed countless lives in our community, and with Villa Maria's mix of high-quality academic programs, its Catholic mission and values, its supportive student-centered culture, and its dynamic co-curricular student life, they will continue to do so for a long time."

Giordano has a Bachelor of Arts degree in English and Philosophy from Binghamton University and both a Master of Arts and Ph.D. in American literature from the Ohio State University. He successfully completed the Executive Leadership Academy of the Council of Independent Colleges and the Felician Leadership Institute this past year.

Giordano is originally from Rochester, NY and is married to Jennifer Desiderio, a professor of English at Canisius College, and has three daughters. Giordano resides in Snyder, NY.

About Villa Maria College

Villa Maria College is a private, Catholic college, founded in 1960 by the Felician Sisters. Located in Buffalo, NY, Villa Maria is the premiere student centered college in Western New York characterized by an unyielding commitment to student success.

Offering Bachelors and Associates degrees in 18 different academic programs, Villa Maria's strength lies in studio-based education, a 9:1 student to faculty ratio, and educators who bring their real world experience into the classroom. Students learn and grow with a culturally diverse population that lives its core values instilled by the Felician Sisters. Students participate in intercollegiate athletics in eight sports as the Villa Vikings and are involved in nearly 20 clubs and organizations on campus. Villa Maria is home to the Achieve Program for Students with Learning Differences, and an academic success center which provides robust academic support for all students. For more information call 716.896.0700 or visit www.villa.edu.

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