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Unwavering Champion

09.21.2012 | Service and Giving, Campus and Community, Catholic

Orville and Wilbur Wright. Paul Laurence Dunbar. Father Leo Meyer, S.M.

Bro. Ray Fitz, S.M., has joined some of the giants in Dayton history on the Dayton Walk of Fame. He is being honored for his lifelong commitment to social justice.

"Bro. Ray's passion for helping the poor and marginalized in our community has never wavered over the years," said Deborah Feldman, former Montgomery County administrator who now leads

Children's Medical Center of Dayton. "He has truly been relentless in his commitment to the most vulnerable citizens of our community."

Fitz, the longest serving president in school history, was inducted on Sept. 20 with Milton Kantor, Doris Ponitz, John D. Siebenthaler, Tony Stein and Rudolph F. Wurstner. The Walk of Fame is located on the sidewalks along West Third Street in the historic Wright-Dunbar Business District

A deeply humble and spiritual man, Fitz was praised for his systematic, persistent approach to addressing complex community issues. In the 1990s, he chaired Montgomery County's Child Protection Task Force after five children in Dayton's child welfare system died. He also helped to shepherd the county's last two human services levy campaigns to victory. For the past decade, he has served as the Ferree Professor of Social Justice at the University of Dayton.

"I remember his methodical approach to mapping the complicated and often times disconnected steps involved in serving our abused and neglected youth and their families," Feldman said. "What made Bro. Ray unique was that this process engineering approach was balanced with his deep concern for the lives of the children and families involved in the system. This balance is what has defined Bro. Ray over the years."

Clearly moved by the honor, Fitz thanked colleagues and the Dayton community, saving his most heartfelt thanks for last: "Thank you to all our children and mothers who have suffered so much pain. You have taught me so much."

Teri Rizvi, associate vice president for University communications, at 937-229-3241.