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President Bruess Upbeat on New School Year

Brian Bruess

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President Bruess Upbeat on New School Year

Dear SNC Parents and Families,

Welcome, and welcome back, to all of you and to your Green Knight students! It has been a pure joy to once again see students on campus, and we're eagerly anticipating the arrival of many more in the coming days – many who will be moving onto the St. Norbert campus for the first time. Welcome home!

A new year is an opportunity for new beginnings. I hope you and your students are eager and excited for what lies ahead. But I know you're also likely experiencing feelings of frustration, or of concern, as the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic evolves and continues to present challenges. I share those feelings. For those who are new to our SNC family – and even those who joined us in the last two years and have yet to experience a “typical St. Norbert College school year” – I'd like to offer some reassurance. You and your students are in good hands. You are part of a remarkable community.

Our community is strong. It is resilient. It adapts and perseveres. Most importantly, our community knows that we are at our best when we are together. For the past 19 months (and counting) our community has proven that we can overcome any challenge when we can rely on each other and can trust one another, when we show empathy and respect, and when we practice deep listening and stay grounded in our core values. So while we continue to confront those challenges presented by COVID, I have the greatest faith that each member of our community will join in the shared responsibility of caring for one another.

It's a noble charge to lay on students, I know. But it's one they have time and time again carried with profound grace and determination. And for that, I have never been more proud. This will be a year to recognize and share our gratitude for the sacrifices our students have made and continue to make for one another, to acknowledge and applaud our collective success, and to celebrate being together.

In fact, “Celebrating Community” is our college-wide theme for 2021-22, a year that marks the 900th anniversary of the Norbertine order as well as one that hopefully will see our entire SNC family – students, faculty, staff, alumni, friends of the college and you – our Green Knight families – back together again. I hope to see many of you here on campus next month when our annual and beloved Family Weekend and SNC Day make their return after a one-year hiatus.

We all had hoped we could be moving our students onto campus and sending them off to their first days of class without masks, and we hope to again return to more relaxed masking policies as soon as transmission rates in Brown County fall to moderate or low levels. Despite what feels like a temporary setback, I assure you that all of us here at St. Norbert are still experiencing the hope, anticipation and excitement that a new year brings. We begin this year having overcome these challenges, and more before, and we know that we can do it again. We begin this year knowing there could be more ups and downs ahead, but we rejoice in the return of our much-loved traditions and in simply being together on campus, in community. And we begin this year stronger in our shared resolve to continue relying on one another for mutual support and compassion.

This year will again be one like no other. We will continue to find new ways to reflect and pray, to dialogue and heal, to stand together as a community, and to celebrate our 900-year history.

Thank you for being part of this community. Thank you for raising such impressive young adults and for entrusting us with them. We always learn a lot from them, and every year we look forward to experiencing the myriad ways they impact all of our communities, both locally and globally, and to seeing them find their footing in their pursuit of the common good.

Peace,
Brian

Aug. 19, 2021



About President Bruess

Brian J. Bruess '90 is the eighth president of St. Norbert College. Bruess is only the second St. Norbert graduate to hold the position of president. (The Rev. Dennis Burke, O. Praem., '26 was the first.)

Bruess and his wife, Carol, who also is a 1990 graduate of St. Norbert College, have two children.

Also in This Issue

This article first appeared in the August 2021 issue of Parents of St. Norbert College. Other features in this edition included:

President Bruess Upbeat on New School Year

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