



COLLEGE OF THE
Holy Cross

aspire

OUR STRATEGIC VISION
FOR A HOPE-FILLED FUTURE

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The College of the Holy Cross is the nation's only undergraduate Jesuit liberal arts college. Our unique identity positions us to pursue excellence and innovation in teaching, learning and research while remaining grounded in deeply held values in service of spiritual and moral development and the promotion of justice. Thirty years ago, Holy Cross articulated in its mission statement a set of core questions that guide and inspire us today:

What is the moral character of learning and teaching?

How do we find meaning in life and history?

What are our obligations to one another?

What is our special responsibility to the world's poor and powerless?

To engage in dialogue and inquiry into these fundamental human questions is integral to our distinctive educational experience. And these questions resonate with relevance and urgency in today's world—in which we often feel overwhelmed by the enormity of the world's social and economic problems and by the need for solutions grounded in justice to heal our planet, unite people where they are separated, and help those who are estranged, vulnerable, or alienated. The challenges are great, and the deepening divisions within our society make solving those challenges ever-more difficult. Importantly, then, we believe that the transformational power of our Jesuit, Catholic liberal arts education lies in the development of generations of people of integrity who will take up responsibility for themselves, for others, and for the earth that we all inhabit.

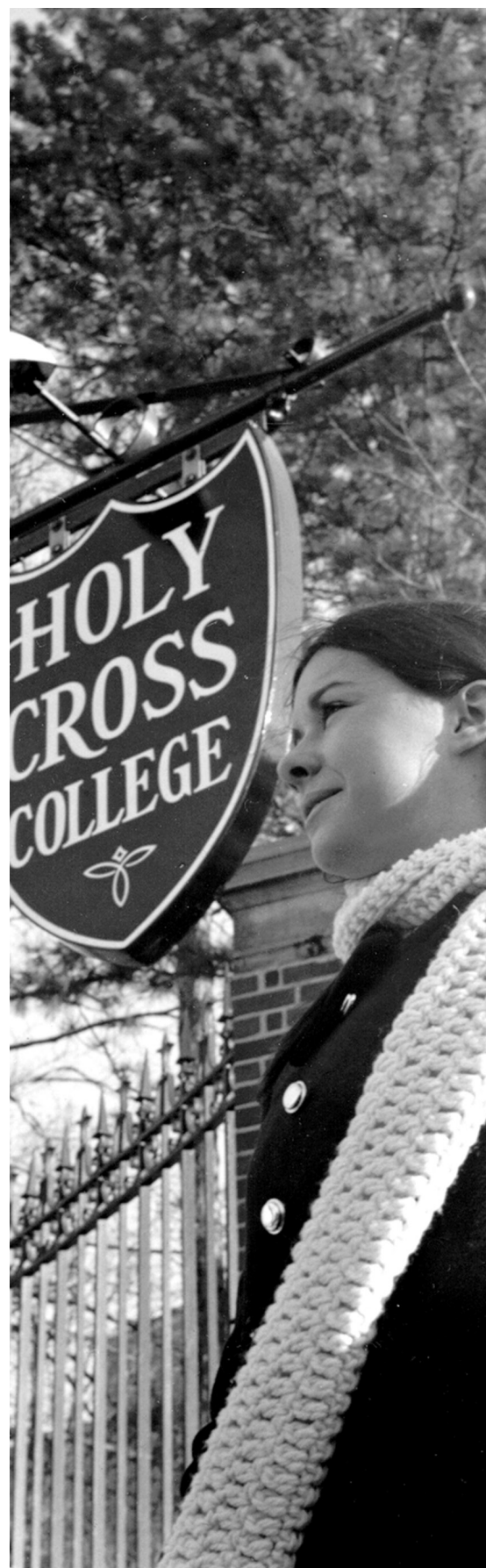
In the years ahead, we will build upon

long-standing excellence and the high intellectual and ethical standards that have guided us since the College's founding in 1843 to aspire to new heights in offering among the finest—and most relevant and valuable—liberal arts education in the world. The Jesuit mission has always sought to engage with people of all cultures, value systems, and faith traditions. One way this is accomplished is by bringing people of all backgrounds and beliefs to campus and engaging them in a robust Jesuit, Catholic liberal arts education, characterized by an openness to new ideas, a passion for truth, and respect for the views of others.

We seek to do this work not isolated on an idyllic campus on The Hill, but rather in our dynamic, diverse, and growing home city of Worcester, a place that provides us with the opportunity and responsibility to co-create and contemplate our collective future and our roles in the wider world. As we advance toward this future for Holy Cross, we aim to share our story and our distinctive value proposition with the wider world, thereby deepening our impact on that world.

Our highest mission at the College is to accompany the young in the creation of a hope-filled future. What gives us hope? First, that even as complex challenges loom large for our planet and people, the astonishing rate of innovation and knowledge creation yields great prospects for solutions. What's more: that future generations of Holy Cross graduates will be at the forefront of inquiry and understanding, solving these problems not as individual actors, but rather in community, for and with others.

Now is the time to commit, invest, and join in creating a bold future for Holy Cross that brings to bear all of the College's distinctive gifts in service of a more just and humane world. ■



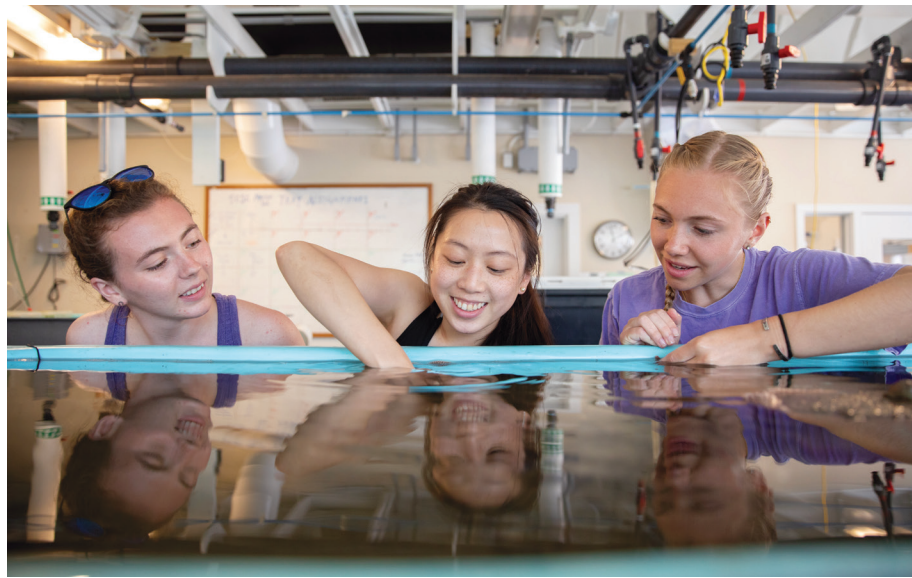
**STRATEGIC
AREA OF FOCUS**

PILLAR ONE

ACADEMIC POWERHOUSE

**Offer a liberal arts education
that is among the finest in the
world and be recognized
broadly for doing so.**

- Charge the Provost and Dean of the College with collaborating with the faculty to develop an Academic Excellence Strategic Plan.
- Deliver an exceptional student learning environment and experience centered in inclusive excellence (for example, invest in more tenure and tenure-track hires and create favorable faculty recruitment conditions; improve classroom experience holistically; and support faculty development and mentoring).
- Provide every student with a meaningful pathway to postgraduate success (for example, promise and deliver at least one experiential learning opportunity to all students).
- Charge the Vice President for Communications and Marketing with collaborating across the College to build the reputation and visibility of Holy Cross as an academic powerhouse and a diverse intellectual community.
- Develop and implement strategies for increasing our national and international presence and leveraging financial aid effectively (increase/expand our geographic reach through national and global partnerships, and ensure the College remains accessible and affordable to all students). ■



**STRATEGIC
AREA OF FOCUS**

PILLAR TWO

TRANSFORMATIONAL STUDENT EXPERIENCE

**Provide and promote a
transformational, residentially based
student experience rooted in
Jesuit, Catholic formation.**

- Create a four-year student formation plan, grounded in Ignatian spirituality, that embraces the Jesuit values of human flourishing and developing “contemplatives in action,” and complements the curricular plan, emphasizing deep and broad thinking, personal excellence and responsibility, discernment of gifts and talents, and effective, ethical leadership and citizenship in local and global communities.
- Create conditions for students to pursue and achieve excellence: promise and deliver at least one high-impact co-curricular opportunity for every student over the course of their time at the College; develop a comprehensive and coordinated mentoring program so that all students have regular touchpoints with trained alumni/friends of the College who serve as a guide for career success; deliver a sustainable varsity athletics experience that maximizes opportunity for ongoing excellence; foster personal and community wellness, and provide multidimensional student support for well-being and mental health.
- Foster an inclusive culture of belonging and an open and respectful exchange of diverse ideas and beliefs.
- Adopt and advance a campus master plan in a manner and sequence that addresses living and learning spaces and ensures that they are welcoming and affirming.
- Ensure that a comprehensive College marketing and communications strategy aids in advancing these strategic objectives through compelling storytelling; the positioning of influential, expert voices of students, faculty, staff, and alumni; and marketing efforts that build awareness of and appreciation for our distinctive, Ignatian values-based residential student experience. ■



STRATEGIC
AREA OF FOCUS

PILLAR THREE

INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE

**Commit campus-wide to
an inclusive excellence framework
in furtherance of our mission.**

- Charge the Vice Provost and Associate Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion with partnering across the campus in the creation of an inclusive excellence strategic plan and related divisional plans that are grounded in our Jesuit mission and include, among other charges, advancing anti-racism.
- Advance inclusive excellence College-wide (for example, improve the recruitment and retention of faculty and staff from underrepresented and underserved communities; foster a campus culture of belonging, respect, recognition, and support; promote and support inclusive excellence broadly in teaching and learning; and ensure equity in policies and procedures).
- In alignment with the diversity, equity, and inclusion goals of the College, strengthen and expand efforts to attract, recruit, and retain an academically talented student body that is truly representative of the world in which we live, informed by the presence of diverse experiences and perspectives. ■



STRATEGIC
AREA OF FOCUS

PILLAR FOUR

IN AND OF WORCESTER

Embrace and promote the world of opportunity in our backyard and be an active partner in the City of Worcester's continued success, growth, and revitalization.

- Expand the College’s presence and deepen and communicate its engagement in the Worcester community by, among other things, strengthening efforts to recruit students and employees from Worcester, as well as enhancing partnerships with area institutions, organizations, and businesses.



- Create and celebrate opportunities for all members of the Holy Cross community to both experience and learn from all Worcester has to offer by engaging and contributing as active members of the community (including student opportunities for internships, research, and service to the community and institutional collaborations with higher education peers in the region).



- Create, sustain, and convey a more welcoming campus environment for Worcester community members and others. ■



STRATEGIC
AREA OF FOCUS

PILLAR FIVE

WORLD-CLASS WORKFORCE

Attract, support, and retain a best-in-class workforce that will develop and sustain best practices and policies that support the College's overall excellence.

- Strengthen our culture of professionalism and pride, mutual trust and respect, and appreciation and recognition to allow us to flourish individually and collectively.
- Promote employee mentoring, continuous learning, professional development, and advancement in the context of the new landscape of how we work and what is needed to thrive.
- Improve administrative and operational effectiveness and efficiency.
- Advance innovative practices and creative solutions to steward and sustain human, fiscal, and environmental resources.
- Develop strategies and tactics to improve internal communications across campus. ■



STRATEGIC
AREA OF FOCUS

PILLAR SIX

CULTURE OF PHILANTHROPY

Reimagine our approach to philanthropy and engagement to support Holy Cross' sustained vibrancy and strength today and tomorrow.

- Double the size of the College endowment through a combination of philanthropy and investment management.
- Develop philanthropic capacity and maximize sustainable annual and longer-term philanthropic achievement to underpin the College's strategic funding priorities and ensure its strong future.
- Collaborate strategically with the Board of Trustees, the Institutional Advancement Committee, and volunteer leaders to strengthen the College's culture of philanthropy and grow alumni engagement.
- Charge the next Vice President for Advancement with structuring and leading the Advancement team to maximize strategic constituent relationship-building and philanthropic achievement.
- In collaboration with the Vice Provost and Associate Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, position the Office of Alumni Relations to embrace, best engage, and sustain relationships with the full diversity of Holy Cross constituencies.
- Ensure that a comprehensive College marketing and communications strategy provides communications leadership, aligns key College messaging, and coordinates communications to guide advancement-specific marketing and communications and aid in instilling a culture of philanthropy and inspiring unprecedented levels of support. ■



FROM THE
PRESIDENT

VINCENT D. ROUGEAU

LOOKING AHEAD

As we strive toward the ambitious goals articulated in this strategic plan, we have in mind both near-term successes and the long-term future of Holy Cross.

While this plan will guide us for the next five to 10 years, we look ahead as well to the College's bicentennial in 2043, when a new generation will be the beneficiaries of our work and will, themselves, have taken up the task of our highest mission: to accompany the young in the creation of a hope-filled future.

In measuring our success, we will look to specific indicators and broad trends, including meaningful metrics such as:

- Improved student retention and completion rates.
- Greater recruitment and retention of faculty and staff from underrepresented communities.
- Experiential learning and co-curricular opportunities for all students.
- Significant expansion of the College's philanthropic capacity.

Detailed plans will grow from the areas of strategic focus we articulate here. For instance, success toward our academic aims will be defined first by developing a strategic plan for academic excellence, one with measurable goals for delivering an exceptional learning environment and an experience centered in inclusive excellence, and for supporting faculty in their development as teachers and scholars.

The work to realize our vision is our collective endeavor. Senior leaders will guide each of the focus areas, though the work will be highly collaborative and evolving.

We will report to the community regularly on progress toward our aims. ■



Vincent D. Rougeau
President



ABOUT ASPIRE

This strategic plan envisions a bold future for Holy Cross. Students, faculty, staff members, and alumni alike have contributed to its vision and will be key to its success.

In early 2020, a committee of faculty and staff members was appointed to oversee the preparation of a new strategic plan for the College. That committee held a series of campus discussions before hosting numerous subcommittee discussions and visioning sessions about the future of Holy Cross. Soon after President Rougeau was appointed in the summer of 2021, he launched a second phase of strategic planning – Calls to Conversation. Using the major themes and questions generated in Phase 1, the Calls to Conversation phase engaged community members in targeted discussions about the future of Holy Cross. Over the course of 17 focus group conversations with more than 150 students, faculty, and staff members, and over 100 additional alumni and parents, Worcester community partners and admitted students, a clear set of strategic initiatives emerged.

The work of the initial strategic plan steering committee and the input from community members in the Calls to Conversation led to Aspire, the vision you see reflected here. Every person who contributed a comment, question, or idea over the course of the past three years had a hand in Aspire's creation. We express our gratitude to each one of you.



COLLEGE OF THE
Holy Cross