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Vice President and Dean for Academic Affairs, Fontbonne University

Born and raised in Cape Girardeau, Missouri, I graduated from St. Mary Cathedral Grade School and from Notre Dame High School. I received my B.S. in Secondary Education, majoring in English, in 1978 and my M.A. in English in 1980 from Southeast Missouri State University. In 1991, I received my Ph.D. in Educational Psychology from Southern Illinois University at Carbondale.

After receiving my master's degree, I taught as an adjunct at Southeast Missouri State University from 1980-1987 and also part-time at Notre Dame High School during the 1986-1987 year. In fall 1987 Southeast Missouri State University offered me a position as a faculty member in the Department of English and as a mid-level administrator of the multi-tiered writing assessment program. My position was ultimately converted to tenure track, and I earned tenure and the rank of associate professor in 1998 and achieved the rank of professor in 2001.

During the 1998-1999 academic year, my faculty peers elected me as chair of the Faculty Senate; during the following summer, I attended the Harvard Management Development program. That fall, I became an associate in the Provost's Office where I completed a variety of administrative tasks for the Provost and President, including chairing the Strategic Planning Committee and writing the university's five-year strategic plan, evaluating and revising the academic advising system on campus, merging two departments in different colleges and chairing a search committee for an academic dean.

The Provost at Southeast nominated me to be an American Council on Education fellow for the 2002-2003 academic year. I served my fellowship under President Patricia Cormier at Longwood University in Farmville, Virginia; the Provost and the Vice President for Facilities and Information Technology also mentored me, and I served as the academic liaison to Student Affairs. At the end of my fellowship year, the Provost asked me to stay at Longwood for an additional year as the interim associate provost, a position I accepted after taking an unpaid leave of absence from Southeast. During the second year at Longwood, I served as the Executive Director of the Southern Virginia Higher Education Center and as the dean of graduate studies and supervised the directors of the honors program, the academic support center and the On-Trac programs.

In July 2004, I assumed my current position as Vice President and Dean for Academic Affairs at Fontbonne University, a Catholic institution sponsored by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, in St. Louis. There, I've had the privilege to work with 78 full-time faculty, 250+ part-time faculty and 63 academic staff, including my 20 direct reports. Since my arrival at Fontbonne University, I have spearheaded the following projects, working collaboratively with other members of leadership and the faculty:

- Approval was granted from the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) for the university to offer its first online degree program; two additional online degrees have since been approved by the HLC.
- The first endowed chair, the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet Endowed Chair in Catholic Thought, was established. I wrote the proposal, made 'the ask,' and received a 7-figure gift to fund the chair.
- The dedicated semester was implemented. Beginning in 2007, each fall semester now focuses on a different theme around which approximately a dozen courses and many co-curricular events revolve. The first two themes were Judaism and Its Cultures and the 8 U.N. Millennium Goals. The fall 2009 semester will focus on immigration. Social justice service projects have resulted from the most recent dedicated semester.
- Working with Campus Ministry, I planned the first Fontbonne Day on May 1, 2008. Now an annual event, Fontbonne Day features a nationally-recognized speaker on one aspect of Catholic social teaching principles and then allows all members of the Fontbonne community to complete service projects throughout St. Louis for the remainder of the day.

- The board granted approval in October 2008 for the reorganization of Academic Affairs from 11 academic departments into three colleges.

Additional accomplishments, occurring since July 2004, at Fontbonne include the following:

- With the VPs for Enrollment Management and Student Affairs, leading the student retention initiative
- Designing and allocating funds for the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning which opened in fall 2008
- Initiating agreements with universities in Japan and China, bringing undergraduate and graduate students to Fontbonne
- Bringing a chapter of The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi to Fontbonne, one of only 298 institutions at that time to host a PKP chapter
- Developing the annual Fontbonne Scholar/Artist award recognizing the work of a Fontbonne faculty member
- Revising the faculty and academic policy manuals
- Implementing a tuition assistance program for faculty who do not have terminal degrees
- Achieving accreditation of the dietetics program by CADE and re-accreditation of the education unit by NCATE/DESE; in progress with ACBSP for accreditation of the business programs
- Increasing the number of full-time faculty, the number of faculty sabbaticals granted and professional development funds provided to faculty
- Designating money for faculty research with students, for salary increases for faculty receiving rank advancements and for professors completing the voluntary post-professorial review
- Speaking to student groups and classes, serving as honorary coach of all sports teams for the 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 academic years, developing a fund for students to present their research at conferences
- Providing leadership development and training in budget management for my direct reports
- Ensuring diverse candidate pools in the hiring process in the academic affairs division

Until my arrival at Fontbonne, I had presented at one or more national conferences annually and submitted articles for publication regularly; however, due to the change in the focus of my work, I have changed my emphasis to service at the national level, serving as a consultant-evaluator for the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Schools and Colleges, as the national chair of the College Board Committee for the CLEP Examination in English Composition, as the Missouri state coordinator for the American Council on Education, and as a member of the Chief Academic Officers' Advisory Task Force for the Council of Independent Colleges. My tenure on the editorial board of *Assessing Writing* and on the national board of The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi ended recently.

I am a practicing Catholic who has served as a parish organist, taught CCD classes for elementary school children, served as the president of the St. Mary Cathedral School board, taken a leadership role in fundraising at Notre Dame High School, and recently completed a 15-month formation process which culminated in my making a commitment as a CSJ Associate to live out the charism of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet. My husband Tim and I are the parents of three adult children.