



January 16, 2023

Dear Friends,

With the beginning of Women's History Month and the University's year-long celebration of 50 years of coeducation kicking into high gear, I want to pause for a moment to reflect with gratitude upon the countless ways women have contributed to our University community and beyond.

Today, it is hard to imagine The University of Scranton without women students but, just five decades ago, that was the case for our residence halls and for classes taught to our full-time student population. The University had been enrolling women students into its evening college since 1938 and into our graduate school since its inception in 1950, but the undergraduate day college had been for men only. That changed in 1972 when the University began enrolling women as both commuter and residential students.

As I reflect further, I am grateful for the vanguard of women who began as full-time students in 1972 and blazed a trail for more women to follow in their footsteps. I am grateful for the faculty, staff and fellow classmates who made our new cohort of students feel welcomed and an integral part of the University community. I am grateful for the Fulbright Award won in 1976 by Grace Hosie, a member of that first cohort of students, and for the numerous academic awards that became so routinely won by women in the years that followed.

I am delighted to acknowledge the championships and awards won by our women's athletic teams over the past five decades, including the national championship won by our women's basketball team in 1985, and the most recent conference championship won by our Lady Royals last Saturday. Our alumni have been extremely successful in healthcare, law, business, communications, education, service and too many other fields to name. They continue to make contributions here on campus in our classrooms, labs, residence halls, student organizations, advisory boards, cabinet meetings and board meetings. The University changed greatly in 1972 – all for the better.

I wish to thank the members of the committee who planned the "Celebrating Women: 50th Anniversary of Coeducation" program of events and the committee co-chairs Elizabeth Garcia, J.D., Executive Director, Office of Equity and Diversity and Special Assistant to the President, and Lauren Rivera, J.D., M.Ed., Interim Vice President for Student Life and Dean of Students. I also want to thank the many departments and offices that have offered support for our programming.

Events planned for the month-long celebration include theatrical productions, the Women of Vision and Courage Award Presentation, an alumni panel discussion, and a lecture by Sister Nathalie Becquart, XMCJ, who is highest-ranking female official at the Vatican. She will discuss "Pope Francis, Women and Synodality" at a talk on March 29.

There are many other events planned to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of coeducation at Scranton, and I hope you will be able to attend some of them so that together we can express our appreciation for the many contributions made by women to our University and our mission.

Yours faithfully,

Joseph G. Marina, S.J.  
President

