President's Founders' Day Address Fred P. Pestello, Ph.D.

November 16, 2012

Thank you, each and every one of you, for joining us on this festive night. You are an essential part of what makes our College so special.

I am pleased to report that Le Moyne continues to thrive. Ours is a great story. Beginning with philanthropy: we have been the recipient of amazing generosity—from the fifty million-dollar McDevitt gift, the largest single gift to any non-profit in the Syracuse region, to the Madden gift, naming the newly created School of Business. In addition to Mr. Madden's seven million-dollar commitment, the second largest in the College's history, we received three additional million-dollar gifts during the past year—the Jack Collins, Harriet O'Leary and John and Kathy Purcell gifts—as well as many more in the tens and hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Thanks to your support we are in the midst of improving facilities across the campus, moving many of our tired spaces to state-of-the-art. We began this calendar year with the opening of our new science building, which recently won an architectural award for its design. A month later we opened the new Campus Pub, a popular spot for our students, faculty and staff to gather. This past summer we renovated a substantial portion of the Coyne Science Center, completed construction on a new softball field, and entirely transformed the LaCasse Dining Center. We are creating awesome spaces that further enhance the campus experience.

The new Dining Center is a prime example. Over the summer, Le Moyne College became number six among Sodexo's accounts to have the highest level of campus dining—"Dining by Design." One of six out of over 1,000 colleges that Sodexo manages! And we are now one of 18 of that same group of higher education accounts that is part of Sodexo's guest chef program. Just last week, Toulane chef Tom Beckmann came to Le Moyne to cook some of his signature southern style dishes. I can testify

that they were delicious. In a welcomed turnabout, this fall representatives from other colleges have been coming to Le Moyne to study our dining complex. Thank you, Sodexo!

Our faculty has long been known for its dedication to both outstanding teaching as well as advancing knowledge, particularly in collaboration with our students. We continue to hire impressive professors. To provide just one example, last January we welcomed world-renowned scientist Father George Coyne, S.J. to Le Moyne as the first McDevitt chair. Father Coyne continues a long and rich tradition among Jesuit astronomers that goes back to Father Christopher Clavius, who helped Galileo Galilei get his first teaching position. Several top Jesuit universities pursued Father Coyne. After visiting and seeing life at Le Moyne, he chose us!

On the Student Development side we have extensively modified our policies, practices and opportunities for student growth. Students are both initiating changes and responding very positively to them. They are feeling heard

and empowered and regularly express this at the meetings.

I have with student leaders.

Allow me to share with you a story of one remarkable student, Andrew Lunetta. While here at Le Moyne, Andrew began Le Moyne Sandwich Makers, where our students made sandwiches so the homeless would have something for lunch since the homeless shelter provided only breakfast and dinner. Next he formed Pedals to Possibilities, where he took the homeless on bike rides, providing them with incentive, fellowship and exercise. Andrew acquired the bikes and after ten rides each person gets to keep a bicycle. Following commencement in May, Andrew embarked on a 3,200 mile cross country bicycle trip that raised \$5,000 for the Brady Faith Center. This is only some of what Andrew accomplished serving the disadvantaged while he was here at Le Moyne.

On Monday I looked at the Post Standard and the story covering the front page featured Andrew's latest venture. He has leased a home and is sharing it with homeless men who have graduated from the Pedals to Possibilities

Program. He wanted them to have a place they could call their own. Andrew is the embodiment of the Catholic and Jesuit spirit of this College and he is here with us this evening. Andrew, please stand and know that we are all very proud of you.

We continue to invest in a number of programs to strengthen Le Moyne's Catholic and Jesuit identity. Among these programs are three lecture series we are featuring this year—one on Religion and Science; a second reflecting upon the Second Vatican Council, now fifty years past; and the third, discussions with theologians from the Woodstock Theological Center. True to our mission, we are becoming a vital place in the region where good minds gather to contemplate matters of religion and faith.

Of course, men and women do not thrive on the intellect alone. On our campus we are also celebrating the arts. Earlier this fall James Ehnes, arguably one of the world's top violinists, joined with Andrew Russo for a spectacular concert performed to a packed house. For weeks afterwards people from across the community were thanking me for hosting the event. Classical music does not get any better than what we heard that evening.

Our involvement in the arts covers the entire spectrum. Recently we staged a student performance of Shakespeare's The Tempest that received rave reviews in the press. Theater has always been a vibrant part of our College and we have produced some great actors, including John Douglas Thompson. In May of this year The New Yorker magazine did a six-page feature, which stated that some regard J.D. as "the best classical actor in America." You heard me right, the man whom The New Yorker said is regarded by some as "the best classical actor in America" and by several top theater critics as "the best American actor in Shakespeare, hands down" is a graduate of Le Moyne.

Our Catholic and Jesuit nature remains at the center of the force propelling us forward. This approach to education is perhaps best described by the International Commission of the Apostolate of Jesuit Education (ICAJE): "The

objective of a Jesuit education is to assist in the fullest possible development of all of the God-given talents of each individual person as a member of the human community." (Paragraph 25)

Le Moyne College delivers on this promise and our approach to education leads to some impressive successes. Our "One Year Later" survey shows that for the class of 2010, the class on which we have the most recent data:

Forty percent of Le Moyne 2010 graduates accepted a job before graduation.

Ninety-four percent of 2010 graduates were employed or enrolled in graduate school within a year of graduating.

Eighty-seven percent of 2010 graduates report that their job is related to their career interests and objectives.

Ninety-three percent of 2010 graduates reported that their education at Le Moyne prepared them for life in the workplace.

These recent graduates join you, our faithful alumni and friends, as men and women for and with others—people who are connecting with others and creating necessary and positive change in a world in which many face cynicism and despair, feel alone or have to go without, or suffer from acts of exploitation or violence. The world needs them as it needs you.

Tonight we join together to pay tribute to a dear couple who model this Jesuit way. They have given much to Le Moyne and to our community. I ask that you now direct your attention to the video screens for a tribute to Joan and Armand Cincotta.

[AT THIS POINT THE VIDEO ROLLS]

Ladies and gentlemen, I am honored to present to you Le Moyne College's 2012 Simon Le Moyne Award winners, Joan and Armand Cincotta.