



Mater Dei High School

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PROMINENT RELIGIOUS LEADER AND COMMUNITY SERVANTS HONORED BY MATER DEI HIGH SCHOOL

ANAHEIM, CA (May 12, 2006) – Bishop Tod D. Brown, Diocese of Orange, the Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange, and Dave Utick, Orange County businessman and alumnus, were honored by Mater Dei High School at its annual Founders Circle and Ring of Honor Dinner held May 9 at the Anaheim Stadium Diamond Club.

The Mater Dei Ring of Honor, which debuted in May 2001, seeks to recognize individuals who have achieved local, state, national or international recognition through their church, school, community or professional life.

The theme echoed by honorees throughout the evening was, “We stand on the shoulders of those who have gone before us.” Each credited individuals who were significant to the establishment and growth of Mater Dei High School in its 55-year history.

Bishop Tod Brown, a native of Northern California, remembered attending his first Mater Dei football game as the new Bishop of Orange in 1998 when the Monarchs played then Northern California rival De La Salle. He quickly learned of the rich traditions the school had established and has since supported the school’s mission to provide a holistic, college preparatory education for all deserving students.

During the induction, Father Steve Sallot of St. Edwards church and former Mater Dei rector recalled, “When Patrick Murphy and I first met with Bishop Brown in 1998, we met a Bishop who was willing support our endeavor to secure the future of Mater Dei High School.” He began by supporting the school’s MD 2000 Capital Campaign to redevelop its aging campus. The campaign is now nearing completion of Phase II with the construction of an Athletics & Aquatics Complex. Brown was also presented with an honorary Mater Dei High School diploma. “I am honored and humbled by this gift,” Brown said. “It is my privilege to have this new and wonderful bond with Mater Dei.”

The Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange, a contemporary group of religious women that was formed in 1650, were recognized for their contributions to Catholic education to help prepare students for academic and life-long success. "The Sisters of St. Joseph is a religious community that is truly all about the service of others," said Frances Clare, Mater Dei principal. "The Sisters' education ministry has supported and helped to create environments that facilitate the growth of students as compassionate, responsible, proactive members of the Church and citizens of the world."

The third inductee, 1961 graduate David Utick, was overwhelmed by the honor. In a acceptance that brought tears to the eyes of his family members who attended, Utick said, "I was greatly humbled when I was told I would be inducted into the Ring Honor along with Bishop Tod Brown and the Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange, people who have dedicated their entire lives to the service of God and his people." Though he is not one of the religious, Utick is no doubt an extremely spiritual and faith-filled man who has dedicated his life to God and has given back to the community through philanthropic endeavors. His family has been a part of the Mater Dei family for generations upon generations. "My brothers and sisters, and my children have all gone to Mater Dei," Utick said. His father's name, Frank Utick, appears as a patron in the 1951 program of the dedication of the then new Santa Ana Catholic high school. "We are all proud Mater Dei graduates and there are so many who spread the spirit and pride of Mater Dei everywhere," Utick said.

He proceeded to recite words from the 1951 *Solemn Dedication of Mater Dei High School*, "They will prepare themselves in a splendid school for life in a world that is sorely in need of the knowledge that there is a God, and that our eternal happiness will depend upon the friendship we cultivate for Our Divine Savior and His Blessed Mother."

These words summed up the reason for the Founders Circle dinner, which was also held to recognize those who contributed to the Mater Dei Annual Fund, from which 100 percent of donations do toward need-based financial aid. The Annual Fund and other sources of support such as foundation, corporate and individual contributions have allowed Mater Dei to provide the 30 percent of its student body that rely on financial aid with approximately \$750,000 in aid each year.

With the addition of the 2006 inductees, the Ring of Honor has grown to 19 members including: Dick Coury, Josef D'Heygers, John Huarte, Julie Inman, Bishop Jaime Soto, D.D. '74, Bishop Norman McFarland, D.D., JCD, Rev. John Weling '72, and Juan Zarate, among others.

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