

BIOGRAPHY OF SISTER LINDA BEVILACQUA, OP, PHD

Sister Linda Bevilacqua, OP, PhD returned to her Alma Mater as Barry University's sixth president in July 2004. Her inauguration was truly a homecoming since throughout her diverse and distinguished career in higher education she has remained connected to Barry.

When Sister Linda began her Barry experience in 1958 as a full-time undergraduate student, her leadership skills quickly emerged. She was a student leader holding various club and class offices.

After graduating magna cum laude from Barry in 1962 with a bachelor's degree in elementary education, she entered the Dominican Sisters of Adrian, Michigan, making final profession in 1968. Sister Linda taught first grade for five years and completed her master's degree in guidance and counseling at Siena Heights College (now University) in 1969. She then returned to Barry, her Alma Mater, as assistant dean of students, and was promoted to dean of student affairs in 1970, a position she held until 1978, when she left Barry to pursue doctoral studies.

Sister Linda completed her PhD in higher education administration and leadership at Michigan State University in 1980. She returned to Barry in 1981 as director of alternative programs. The following year, Sister Linda became associate vice president for academic affairs and the first dean of Barry's School of Professional and Career Education where she led the creation and administration of degree programs for working adults at various sites throughout the state of Florida, a Barry feature that continues to this day.

Sister Linda left Barry in 1986 following election as a member of the leadership team of the Dominican Sisters of Adrian, Michigan. She served as administrator of the Congregation for six years and was responsible for overseeing administrative, legal, financial, corporate and real estate matters.

She also facilitated the movement of the Adrian Dominicans' two hospitals in California and Nevada into a multi-state, multi-institution, co-sponsored health system known as Catholic Healthcare West (now Dignity Health). Sister Linda served as a member of System's Board of Directors for seven years and as chairperson of the Board from 1990 to 1994.

From 1993 to 2002, Sister Linda was president of Gwynedd-Mercy College (now University) in Gwynedd Valley, Pennsylvania. During her term, the College constructed four new buildings, doubled its full-time undergraduate population, and raised \$10 million, at that time the largest amount of money ever raised.

Sister Linda has been guiding the transformation of Barry University into an urban, comprehensive, multi-cultural, multi-ethnic university of around 8,000 students enrolled in one of two colleges and six schools.

Since 2004, the University has developed three strategic plans, a Compensation Plan, a Master Site Plan, a Quality Enhancement Plan that shapes undergraduate curriculum, and established the Paul and Margaret Brand Research Center, the Center for Community Service Initiatives and the Center for Human Rights and Social Justice.

In a variety of delivery formats, Barry offers over one hundred bachelors, masters, doctoral and professional degrees throughout the state of Florida, the Bahamas, and St. Croix, the US Virgin Islands. In partnership with the City of Hollywood, the University now offers graduate degrees under the aegis of the College of Nursing and Health Sciences.

The University's School of Law in Orlando gained full accreditation from the American Bar Association in 2006; over 20 other degree programs have been re-accredited by national associations. Barry was awarded ten year re-accreditation from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges in December 2014.

During Sister Linda's tenure the University has constructed two residence halls, an administrative office building for the School of Podiatric Medicine, a state-of-the-art Legal Advocacy Center at the Law School, and the signature Sylvester Tower, along with undertaking dozens of campus renovation projects.

Since 2004, Barry's student athletes have won eleven NCAA Division II national team championships and one individual national championship bringing the University's total of national team championships to sixteen.

Currently, Sister Linda is a member of civic, educational and professional organizations - Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce Board of Governors; Orange Bowl Committee; Beacon Council's Coordinating Council and Academic Leaders' Council; International Women's Forum, Florida Chapter; United Way of Miami Dade Advisory Council; Independent Colleges & Universities of Florida - Executive Committee; Executive Committee, Life Sciences South Florida (LSSF); NCAA Sunshine State Conference President's Council; Dominican Higher Education Council; Florida Association of Colleges and Universities-2013-2014 president; Florida Campus Compact Executive Committee; Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities 2015 National Conference Host Committee; Independent Sector 2015 National Conference Host Committee; Honorary Board member, Holocaust Documentation and Education Center.

Since 2004, Sister Linda is the recipient of the following awards: initial inductee into "Hall of Fame" of the Diocese of Brooklyn, New York; first recipient of the Barry University "Distinguished Adrian Dominican Sister Alumna Award;" first recipient of the Barry University School of Education "Leadership Award;" "Outstanding Community Service Award" from the South Florida Chapter of the American Society for Public Administration; "Chairman's Award" from the Beacon Council; "Top Women-Led Not-for-Profit Businesses" from The Commonwealth Institute of South Florida; "Founder's Award" from Florida Campus Compact; "Service Award" from Samaritan Counseling Centers; and the Greater Miami Shores Chamber of Commerce "2016 Citizen of the Year."

Sister Linda was awarded the Doctor of Laws degree ("honoris causa") from the University in 1992. In addition to her Barry roots, Sister Linda has deep ties to the South Florida community since her family has lived in Miami-Dade County since 1958.

Sister Linda is a member of four national academic honor societies - Delta Epsilon Sigma, Kappa Delta Pi, Kappa Gamma Pi, and Phi Delta Kappa. As an undergraduate, she was elected to lifetime membership in Barry's honor society, Lambda Sigma.

In addition to her Barry roots, Sister Linda also has deep ties to the South Florida community. Her family has lived in Miami-Dade County since 1958 – the same year she began her undergraduate education at Barry. She was born on March 7, 1941 in Queens, New York.