



March 1, 2024

Cardinal João Braz de Aviz  
Prefect, Dicastery for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life  
Piazza Pio XII 3  
00193 Roma, ITALIA

Re: First Annual Report

Your Eminence,

The Ursuline Education Foundation (“UEF”) was designated a pontifical ministerial public juridic person (MPJP) in November 2022. In January 2023, eight Canonical Stewards were appointed by the Member, the Ursuline Provincialate, Central Province of the United States of the Roman Union of the Order of St. Ursula

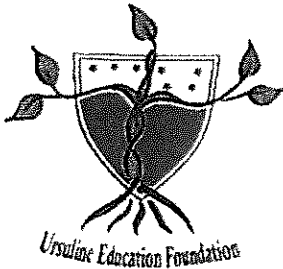
The UEF continues to develop trusting relationships with the heads of our schools through virtual conferences and emails. An in-person meeting with the school heads, principals and mission directors will be held in March 2024. It is with them that we will inspire our students to build a world reflective of the gospel values. Although the official transfer of sponsorship has not yet happened, we foresee that it will take place in the coming year.

The UEF Corporation, a legal entity, was established as a nonprofit organization under Missouri law in 2016 to prepare for its eventual MPJP status. From the beginning, a quality formation program was an important part of our meetings. The Formation Plan is attached.

We value the designation of UEF as an MPJP and are grateful to the Dicastery for allowing us this privilege. The Ursuline Sisters of the Roman Union support this designation and promise ongoing support. Our schools have played an important part in the Catholic Church in the United States for almost 300 years. We are grateful for this opportunity to continue working with the Church through our mission as Catholic, Ursuline schools.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Sister Elisa Ryan, OSU  
Provincial Prioress  
Roman Union of the Order of St. Ursula  
St. Louis, Missouri



## FIRST ANNUAL REPORT

### URSULINE EDUCATION FOUNDATION

353 S. Sappington Road  
St. Louis, MO 63122 USA  
March 1, 2024

**DECREE:** Ursuline Education Foundation (UEF), established by the Roman Union of the Order of Saint Ursula, to succeed and carry on the educational ministry conducted by the Ursuline Provincialate, Central Province of the United States (the Province), upon the petition of the Roman Union of the Order of Saint Ursula, was granted pontifical public juridic personality by decree of the Dicastery for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life on November 25, 2022 (Prot. N. S. 161<sup>-1</sup> / 2021) (the decree).

**INITIAL SPONSORS COUNCIL:** On January 18, 2023, the Provincial Prioress, having taken the vote of her Council, appointed the following Canonical Stewards to serve on the initial Sponsors Council of the UEF:

Win Bell (two-year term)<sup>1</sup>  
Sister Mary Ann Dooling, OSU (two-year term)  
John Grimes, Chair (three-year term)  
Margaret Hesse (three-year term)  
James MacLaren (two-year term)  
Sister Margaret Mary Moore, OSU (three-year term)  
Regina Sullivan (three-year term)  
Erin Valentine (two-year term).

Also serving on the Sponsors Council are:

Sister Ann Barrett, OSU, Director of the UEF (*ex officio*)  
Karen Mortillaro, Director of Mission and Identity (*ex-officio*)  
Heads of Schools for each educational institution (*ex-officio*) (see below).

The individuals who were appointed as Canonical Stewards have participated in formation exercises led by the Province since the official formation of the UEF as a civil corporation in January 2016.

**EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS:** The following educational institutions are currently sponsored by the UEF:

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. Bell resigned as a Canonical Steward effective November 21, 2023, in order to serve on the Board of Trustees of Ursuline Academy of Dallas.

Ursuline Academy of New Orleans, located in New Orleans, Louisiana

Mount Merici Academy, located in Waterville, Maine

Ursuline Academy, Kirkwood, located in St. Louis, Missouri

Ursuline Academy of Dallas, located in Dallas, Texas

Ursuline Academy of Dedham, located in Dedham, Massachusetts

Each of the sponsored educational institutions carries out its activities through distinct corporations that are duly recognized by the appropriate civil authorities.

**TRANSITION:** Although the official transfer of sponsorship has not yet occurred, the Sponsors Council is meeting regularly to learn their role and responsibilities and to organize working committees. Each member of the Sponsors Council executed a Conflict of Interest agreement and a Confidentiality Agreement. A missioning ceremony for the Sponsors Council was held in February 2023. The Sponsors Council elected its Officers:

John Grimes, Chair

Regina Sullivan, Secretary

Sister Mary Ann Dooling, Treasurer

The Sponsors Council also formed the following committees, all of which report directly to the Sponsors Council:

**Mission** – The Mission Committee is responsible for reviewing and approving the assessment of each sponsored educational institution, i.e., the Ursuline Identity Assessment, which is coordinated by the Central Province Director of Mission and Identity. This will include a review of each visiting team report, self-reports of the institution, and recommendations to the Sponsors Council for continuing sponsorship, along with the monitoring of action plans and interim reports.

**Governance** – The Governance Committee is responsible for assuring adherence to the bylaws and statutes of the UEF, reviewing, and approving the members of the boards of trustees of each sponsored educational institution, receiving the self-evaluations of the boards of trustees of each sponsored educational institution and the evaluations of each head of school, and reporting to the Dicastery. This Committee is also responsible for identifying, inviting, and recommending candidates to the Member for consideration as new Canonical Stewards.

**Finance** - The Finance Committee is responsible for overseeing the financial condition of the UEF, including budgeting, financial planning, internal controls, audit and compliance, fundraising guidance for the UEF, investments and the annual contribution from each educational institution. Once the UEF has assets, the Finance Committee will prepare an annual financial review to present to the Sponsors Council and to the Dicastery for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life. This Committee is also

responsible for developing, reviewing, and evaluating the financial viability of candidate educational institutions for sponsorship by the UEF.

The Provincial Council, Province Corporate Treasurer and the UEF have worked collaboratively to determine the financial needs of the UEF, which principally support the Office of Mission and Identity and the office of the Director of the UEF. The Province has been the primary funding source for the UEF since its establishment as a civil corporation in 2016. Since July 2019 each sponsored educational institution has made an annual financial contribution. It has become clear that neither the Central Province nor the schools have the resources to finance the UEF, and work will soon begin to establish an endowment to guarantee the work of the UEF into the future.

Formation on the roles and responsibilities of the Canonical Stewards, including the selection of future Canonical Stewards and the Sponsors Council's role in the assessment of each sponsored educational institution continues.

A private web portal accessible to the Sponsors Council was established. This contains important documents related to the UEF, including the decree, the canonical statutes, the canonical bylaws, the civil articles of incorporation and bylaws, meeting minutes, Catholic and Ursuline formation materials, mission formation materials and Canonical Stewards responsibilities.

**ACTIVITIES:** The Sponsors Council has accepted the responsibility for and oversight of each school's Catholic and Ursuline identity, which includes a comprehensive initial and ongoing formation process for all Canonical Stewards. The formation process is intended to enable the Canonical Stewards to understand, integrate, and articulate the essential elements of a Catholic Ursuline education. The UEF employs a Director and Director of Mission and Identity, both of whom support formation for the Sponsors Council, assist the Sponsors Council leadership in assessing formation needs, provide opportunities and experiences for formation, and oversee formation resources for the Sponsors Council.

The formation process for the Canonical Stewards (see Formation Plan for UEF, attached hereto) includes the following areas:

1. Catholic Identity of each educational institution
2. Ursuline Identity of each educational institution
3. UEF roles and responsibilities

Formation is provided at regular meetings of the Sponsors Council and Canonical Stewards, and materials are also available to the Sponsors Council on the web portal.

Prior to receiving the decree, the board of directors of the UEF, the heads of schools, and the Provincial Council participated in twelve (12) formation exercises. (See Formation Elements - UEF, attached hereto.)

Since the decree, the Canonical Stewards have met five times through videoconference. Topics for formation were:

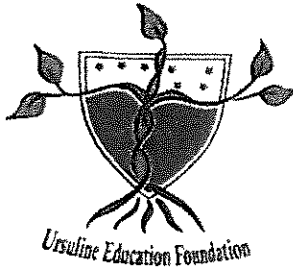
- Commissioning Service of Canonical Stewards
- Understanding the Work of the Mission Committee
- Understanding the Work of the Governance Committee
- Understanding the Work of the Finance Committee
- Understanding the Approval Process for New Canonical Stewards

In January 2024, the provincial council appointed two new canonical stewards to the Sponsors Council to begin service immediately: Thomas Merkel and Eugene Priestley.

The Sponsors Council, along with the directors of mission for each sponsored educational institution will meet in-person at Ursuline Academy of Dallas in March 2024 for, among other discussion topics, additional formation in Catholic and Ursuline identity and leadership, Mission, Governance, and Finance. Each committee will regularly report to the Canonical Stewards.

As noted above, a Finance Committee has been established and is charged with analyzing the financial needs of the UEF, preparing a recommended budget, and determining the financial contribution of each sponsored educational institution. The Finance Committee will have an annual audit prepared once the UEF has assets, which will be presented to the Sponsors Council.

**SPONSORSHIP OF OTHER CATHOLIC EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS:** The Central Province as the Founding Member of the UEF has been approached by other Ursuline Catholic schools in the United States which want to explore the possibility of sponsorship by the UEF. This is provided for in the Canonical Statutes (3.2.2). The Provincial Council has begun dialogue with the leadership of the Congregations who have expressed interest in joining the UEF. Currently a committee is working on a three-step process called "Pathways To Joining the Ursuline Education Foundation," to help both parties assess whether becoming part of the UEF is a viable option.



Formation for the  
Ursuline Education Foundation  
March 1, 2024

The call to responsibility for and oversight of each school's Catholic and Ursuline identity requires a comprehensive, ongoing formation process for all members of the UEF Sponsors Council. This leadership formation process enables those in UEF to understand, integrate and articulate the essential elements of a Catholic Ursuline education. It brings clarity and strength to the Council's sponsorship role. It enables them to lead confidently in a dynamic, mission-focused manner that witnesses to Gospel values and to the charism of St. Angela Merici.

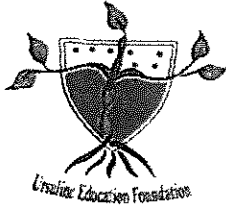
The multi-dimensional formation process includes the following:

1. Catholic identity of the school
  - a. Catholic education as a ministry of the Church
  - b. Essential elements of Catholic identity as found in Scripture, the teaching tradition of the Church, contemporary Church documents and Catholic social teaching
  - c. Living faith as expressed in prayer, community and service
  - d. Servant leadership
2. Ursuline identity of the school
  - a. Life, spirit, charism and writings of St. Angela Merici
  - b. History, internationality and contemporary reality of Ursuline education
  - c. Core values and essential characteristics of an Ursuline school
  - d. Leadership in an Ursuline school
3. UEF Sponsors Council roles and responsibilities
  - a. Canonical, legal and financial responsibilities
  - b. Sponsors Council roles and functions
  - c. Overview of each school for whom the Council bears oversight responsibilities
  - d. Ursuline Identity Assessment tool

Opportunities for Sponsors Council formation are provided at regular council meetings as well as at workshops, retreats, and in-service experiences, held both in-person and virtually. In addition, on-line formation resources are available to all council members.

**The Office of Mission and Identity has a significant role in the formation of the UEF Sponsors Council. The Director:**

- a. Supports the critical necessity of Council formation**
- b. Assists Sponsors Council leadership in assessing the Council's formation needs**
- c. Provides experiences and opportunities for Council formation in conversation with Council leadership**
- d. Oversees the on-line formation resources available to Sponsors Council members.**



## Report of the Formation Elements for the Ursuline Education Foundation

### October 2015

- Life and Charism of St. Angela Merici and her influence in Ursuline Education — Sr. Diane Fulgenzi, OSU
- Overview of the development of Ursuline education in the Central Province

### March 2016

- Future of the Sponsorship Office —Sr. Madonna O'Hara, OSU
- Canon law presentation: PJP Catholic School Governance—Sr. Deborah Cerullo, SSND
- The Call to Mission-grounded Leadership—Sr. Diane Fulgenzi, OSU

### August 2016

- Discussion: From CEO to Mission Leader—2005 article in *America* magazine

### October 2016

- Ursuline Sponsorship Plan and Vision—Sr. Madonna O'Hara, OSU & Sr. Diane Fulgenzi, OSU

### April 2017

- Part 1 Essential Characteristics of an Ursuline School—Sr. Madonna O'Hara, OSU & Sr. Diane Fulgenzi, OSU

### November 2017

- Part 2 Core Values of an Ursuline School —Sr. Madonna O'Hara, OSU & Sr. Diane Fulgenzi, OSU

### April 2018

- Structural Options for Retaining Catholic Identity of Educational Institutions—Sr. Lynn Jarrell, OSU, JCD

### October 2018

- Catholic Social Teaching: Elements and inclusion in education—Sr. Mary Ann Dooling, OSU

### April 2019

- Sponsorship Vision & Description of Ursuline Identity Assessment—Sr. Madonna O'Hara, OSU
- Continuing to Cultivate the Vine: Ursuline Sponsorship 2019-2021—Sr. Diane Fulgenzi, OSU & Karen Mortillaro



**November 2020**

- Canonical Bylaws and Statutes—Bernard Huger, JD (Province attorney)

**April 2021**

- Review of document *Cultivating the Vine* which describes the structures of the various levels of governance and the Ursuline Identity Assessment process

**October 2021**

- St. Ursula, Model of Courage and Leadership—Sr. Madonna O’Hara, OSU & Sr. Diane Fulgenzi, OSU

**February 2023**

- Commissioning Service of the Sponsors Council by the Provincial Council

**April 2023**

- Discussion: Understanding the work of the Mission Committee

**August 2023**

- Discussion: Understanding the work of the Governance Committee

**December 2023**

- Discussion: Understanding the work of the Finance Committee

**January 2024**

- Discussion: Ministerial Public Juridic Person: Model for Canonical Governance—article in RCRI Bulletin #28, Winter 2022 by Sr. Sharon Euart, RSM, JCD