

THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**SCRANTON**  
A J E S U I T U N I V E R S I T Y

November 8, 2021

Dear Friends,

Today, November 8, The University of Scranton joins hundreds of institutions across the country in celebrating first-generation college students during the National First-Generation College Celebration. This year's annual celebration falls on the 56<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Higher Education Act of 1965, which increased access to higher education for millions of Americans.

The celebration today is organized by the THR1VE program, which was created in 2019 to provide additional support to our first-generation students. These Royals make up approximately 22% of the undergraduates at Scranton. And so our campus celebration today recognizes the successes of first-gen students, faculty, staff, and alumni. I happen to be a first-gen student myself and I'm sure many of you are as well.

We encourage you to stop by the DeNaples Center Patio from 11 a.m. – 2 p.m. to join in our festivities. Students can participate in activities and may receive a limited-edition t-shirt! Faculty and staff who identify as the first in their families to earn a college degree can pick up a THR1VE pin, mingle with students, and share their experiences as first-gen students and graduates through social media with the hashtag #FirstGenRoyal.

On November 9, members of our University community are invited to listen to and learn from the stories shared at our Fail Forward Panel featuring several faculty, staff, and administrators who identify as first-gen. The event will be held at 7:00 p.m. in the McIlhenny Ballroom on the 4<sup>th</sup> Floor of the DeNaples Center. Free t-shirts will be given to the first 250 students who attend.

Since our earliest days as St. Thomas College, an important part of our mission has been and will continue to be educating those who are the first in their family to earn a college degree. The accomplishment of earning a college degree is a transformative experience for all students, but for students who are the first in their families to go to college, earning a degree can be life-changing for not only students, but their entire family.

Please join us as we celebrate the contributions of our first-generation students to our campus community!

Yours faithfully,

Fr. Joseph Marina, SJ  
President, The University of Scranton