



STRATEGIC PLAN 2021-2026 LIGHTING THE WAY

2023 ACCOMPLISHMENT REPORT

The Board of Trustees at Thomas More University approved the 2021-2026 Strategic Plan – Lighting the Way after considerable input from our community, including alumni, faculty, staff, students, Board of Trustees, and members of the broader Greater Cincinnati region. The University has made significant progress. This report highlights some of the major accomplishments of the 2022-23 academic year, provides the metrics by which the University is measuring success within the Strategic Plan, and previews academic, administrative, and physical changes planned for the 2023-24 academic year.



VISION STATEMENT

As Thomas More University enters its second century, the University will propel itself forward through innovation and agility. Built on the themes of student success, academic excellence and innovation, and responsible stewardship, Thomas More University will be the premier regional Catholic University.

GOALS

Student Success

Central to the mission of the University and all academic and co-curricular activities is to ensure that every student (traditional, adult, graduate, and online) who joins the Thomas More community has the opportunity to pursue and complete a degree from Thomas More University.

Academic Excellence & Innovation

Thomas More provides a high-quality Catholic Liberal Arts education within a vibrant, intellectual community to ensure that every graduate has the knowledge and ability to contribute effectively to their place in the world and to fulfill their responsibility to others. The strength of a Thomas More education is built upon a diverse, intellectual, and teaching faculty who embrace their identity as teacher-scholars and are committed to the University's mission and the success of every student.

Responsible Stewardship

The overall success of the University requires strengthening the financial position through enrollment, endowment, and fundraising.

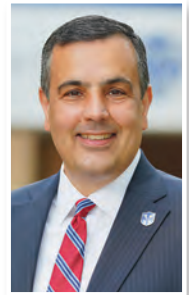


STRATEGIC PLAN 2021-2026 LIGHTING THE WAY

“The Strategic Plan will require all of us to help make Thomas More its best self. Together, we can make an even more promising future for the University as its second century approaches. Thomas More University will define its future rather than reacting to it.”

President Joseph L. Chillo, LP.D.

Thomas More University continues into its second century in a bold and directional way, being guided by the Strategic Plan – Lighting the Way. Prioritizing student success, academic excellence and innovation, and responsible stewardship, our University is buzzing as transformational efforts are being made to ensure that we are truly a student ready institution and that the education students receive will prepare them for success not only in their careers, but also in their lives. More than 35 initiatives have been launched since the introduction of the Strategic Plan and we are proud of the dedication and initiative shown by faculty, staff, and students in striving to ensure their success.



When a student chooses to attend Thomas More University, they can rest assured that the essentials they need to be successful in the classroom and beyond are met. The “Saints Essentials” program beginning in the 2023-24 academic year is a new initiative to promote student health and wellness, ensuring that students can focus on what’s important – their education. The University is also working to ensure students have the best opportunities and facilities needed to succeed. An official groundbreaking was held for the upgraded softball complex, and Saints athletes will now compete in NCAA Division II, as the University was approved to continue into year two of provisional membership. New programming such as Esports and Thomas More Tuesdays are providing students with new opportunities to engage and build connections on campus.

Academic innovation remains a priority as high impact practices are implemented, and new programming is launched. The new Second Century Core enables Thomas More to modernize its approach to liberal arts education while allowing students the ability to supplement their degree program with other areas of interest, uniquely preparing them for modern day career demands. Expert faculty have been hard at work, securing several external research grants, while launching many new degree programs that will no doubt draw students to our Crestview Hills campus. And, of course most visibly, construction continues on our new academic center while other renovations and campus expansions unfold around it.

The University also continues to strengthen its financial position through enrollment, endowment, and fundraising. First-year student enrollment increased for the class of 2023, and our retention rate for returning students improved as well. We again have the largest residential enrollment in history with an occupancy rate of 99%. Thomas More acquired the Five Seasons Family Sports Club facility in December 2022, marking the largest philanthropic gift in University history. Since launching our Strategic Plan, and the corresponding Second Century Campaign: It’s time for More, we have been transforming campus to better serve our students. The Catholic Liberal Arts educational experience provided at Thomas More is strategically designed for student success. By providing our students with the very best facilities, resources, and opportunities, we ensure that they have the tools to thrive in their careers and in their lives.

President Joseph L. Chillo, LP.D.

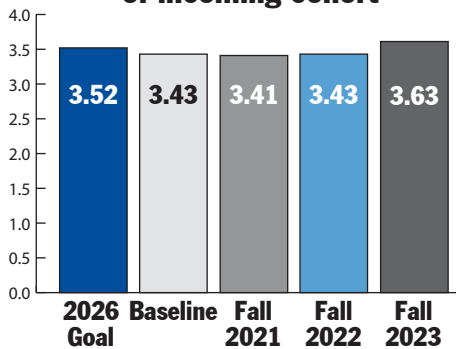
GOAL: Student Success

Central to the mission of the University and all academic and co-curricular activities is to ensure that every student (traditional, adult, graduate, and online) who joins the Thomas More community has the opportunity to pursue and complete a degree from Thomas More University.

Key Strategies:

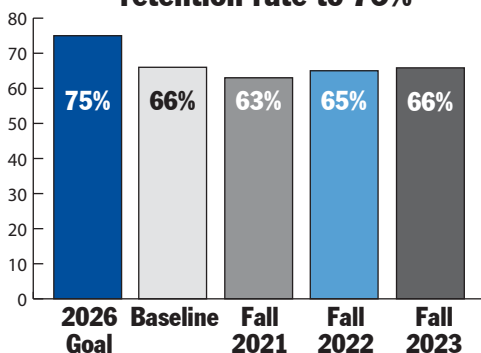
- strategically use the University's resources to attract, retain, and graduate an academically prepared and diverse student body
- improve the student experience for all students
- create a vibrant campus community with a wide range of cultural, intellectual, creative, spiritual, and social activities
- foster a diverse and inclusive environment
- strengthen the first-year and second-year experience to establish a firm foundation for success
- provide academic and student support services to ensure students can be successful

Average high school GPA of incoming cohort



79% of first-year students engaged in activities of the **Thomas More University Success Center**, including career planning and preparation, disability services, peer tutoring programs, and academic coaching. Students who participate in success center programming have a 5% higher retention rate than the University average.

Improve first-year retention rate to 75%



Based on end of year surveys

82%

of students are satisfied with their experience

86%

of graduating students felt their experiences fostered reflection on the University mission

IN SUPPORT OF KEY STRATEGIES FOR STUDENT SUCCESS:



Thomas More Tuesdays hosted weekly by Student Affairs for students to meet, learn, and engage with faculty, staff, and other students to learn about new opportunities for networking, leadership, and events

Twelve students participated in a new **College Prep program** launched in partnership with Lloyd High School to help high school students stay academically engaged during the summer and to keep college on the horizon as a post-high school option

Benedictine Library

- renovated two new study rooms to support student collaboration
- hosted annual Write-In led by English Department to help students finish their semester writing assignments
- presented Constitution Day workshops and out-loud readings of the Constitution
- developed fully on-line academic integrity and plagiarism model to educate students
- awarded first annual award for best use of library resources in a scholarly project at the Student Research Forum. Inaugural winners were Hannah Mullane '23 and Jonathan Litzler '23



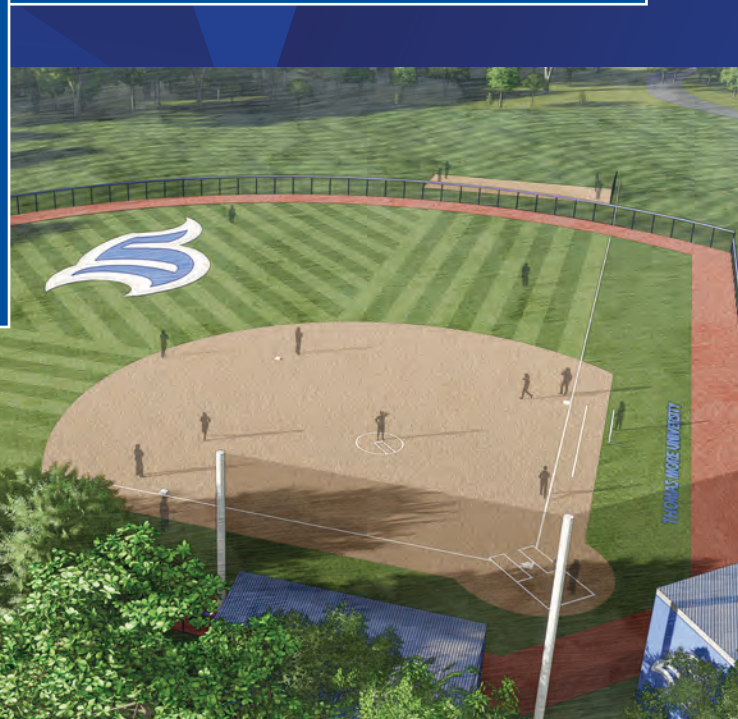
BIO PACE mentorship program developed for STEM students offers insights into the field and network connections to support postgraduate success

Saints Essentials program launched to promote student health and wellness. Instead of an exhaustive list of fees, a multitude of benefits to meet students' social, academic, spiritual, and physical needs will now be included in the price of tuition. These benefits include an All Access Dining Pass, expanded access to the Northern Kentucky Five Seasons Family Sports Club, a \$300 credit per semester toward the purchase of textbooks and course materials, parking, year-round TANK bus transportation, intramural sports programming, unlimited access to wellness services, unlimited printing, and admission to all home athletic events.

Saints Center renovations completed with the **Food Lab**, which will offer rotating menus to provide exciting variety and quality

Ground-breaking for **new softball field and facility** to include turf outfield and 3,000 square foot facility with locker rooms, athletic training facilities, and space for our coaches and equipment

Esports launched in spring 2023 with 13 students, one of whom went 15-2 in Super Smash Bros finishing in the conference semifinals. Over 30 students will participate in the upcoming 2023-24 season



NCAA approved the University for year two of provisional membership in the Great Midwest Athletic Conference. During their time in the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) and the Mid-South Conference, the Saints have earned several major accomplishments and notable overall/conference records, including one team National Championship, two National team Runner-Ups, two individual National Runner-Ups, and one National Team Semi-finalist.



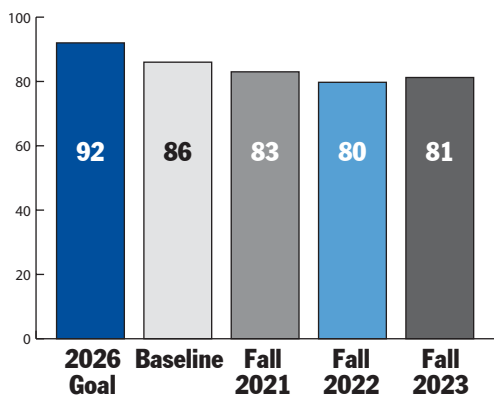
GOAL: Academic Excellence & Innovation

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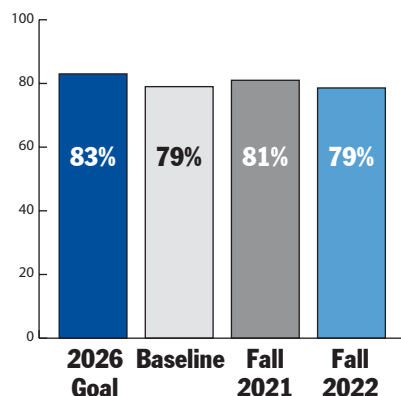
Key Strategies:

- expand and strengthen the regional academic reputation and reach of Thomas More
- enhance efforts to attract and retain highly qualified faculty dedicated to their teaching, scholarship, and service to the University and our students
- infuse diverse and global perspectives in curricular and co-curricular education
- integrate high impact experiences into the curricular and co-curricular experience of every student's learning program
- support the professional development of the faculty
- enhance the positioning and reputation of the Robert W. Plaster College of Business
- revise general education requirements to reflect the values of a liberal arts education
- increase and enhance quality online undergraduate and graduate programming
- intentionally infuse our mission and values into all aspects of the teaching and learning experience

Number of full-time faculty



Full-time faculty with terminal degrees



Based on end of course ratings

92%

of students felt they effectively learned new content and skills in the course

IN SUPPORT OF KEY STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE & INNOVATION:

Zembrodt Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation

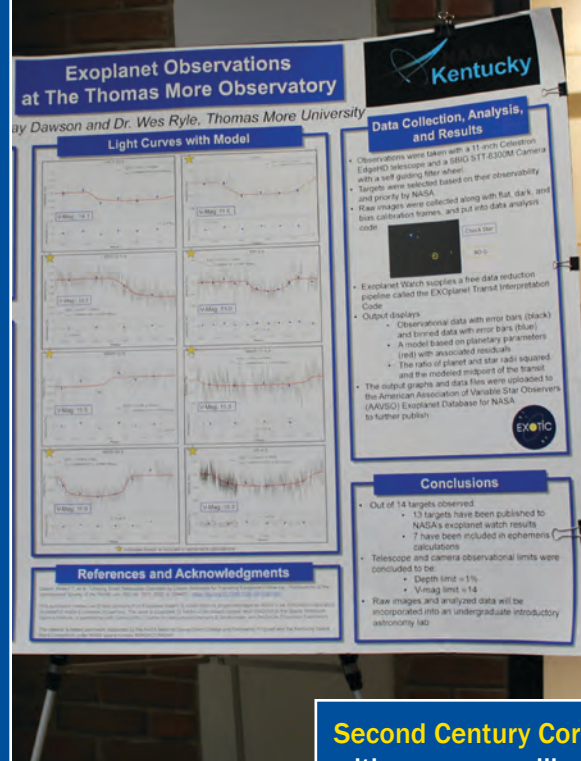
launched several initiatives to equip students from diverse disciplines with essential, real-world skills that empower them to succeed in any field

- New minor in entrepreneurship and innovation
- Students engaged with local entrepreneurs to discuss innovation and available support resources within Northern Kentucky
- High school students participated in the annual Square1 NEXT High School Final Pitch Event on campus and 1st-place winners received full tuition scholarship to Thomas More



External Grant Awards

- Climate Resiliency Grant through Duke Energy to continue the Biology Field Station's water quality research and conservation efforts
- Pittsburgh Conference Memorial National College Grants Program to fund innovative equipment for chemistry labs
- Northern Kentucky Urban and Community Forestry Council Grant to support the William S. Bryant Arboretum
- Network for Vocation in Undergraduate Education supported a professional learning community of faculty and staff to strengthen vocational exploration and discernment programming for students
- NASA Kentucky Space Grant Program funded two Research Experience for Undergraduates at the Observatory on main campus. These students presented their research at the Conference for Women in Physics, Kentucky Area Astronomical Society at Austin Peay University, and at Thomas More's Student Research Forum.



Evanna Farris
Astronomy

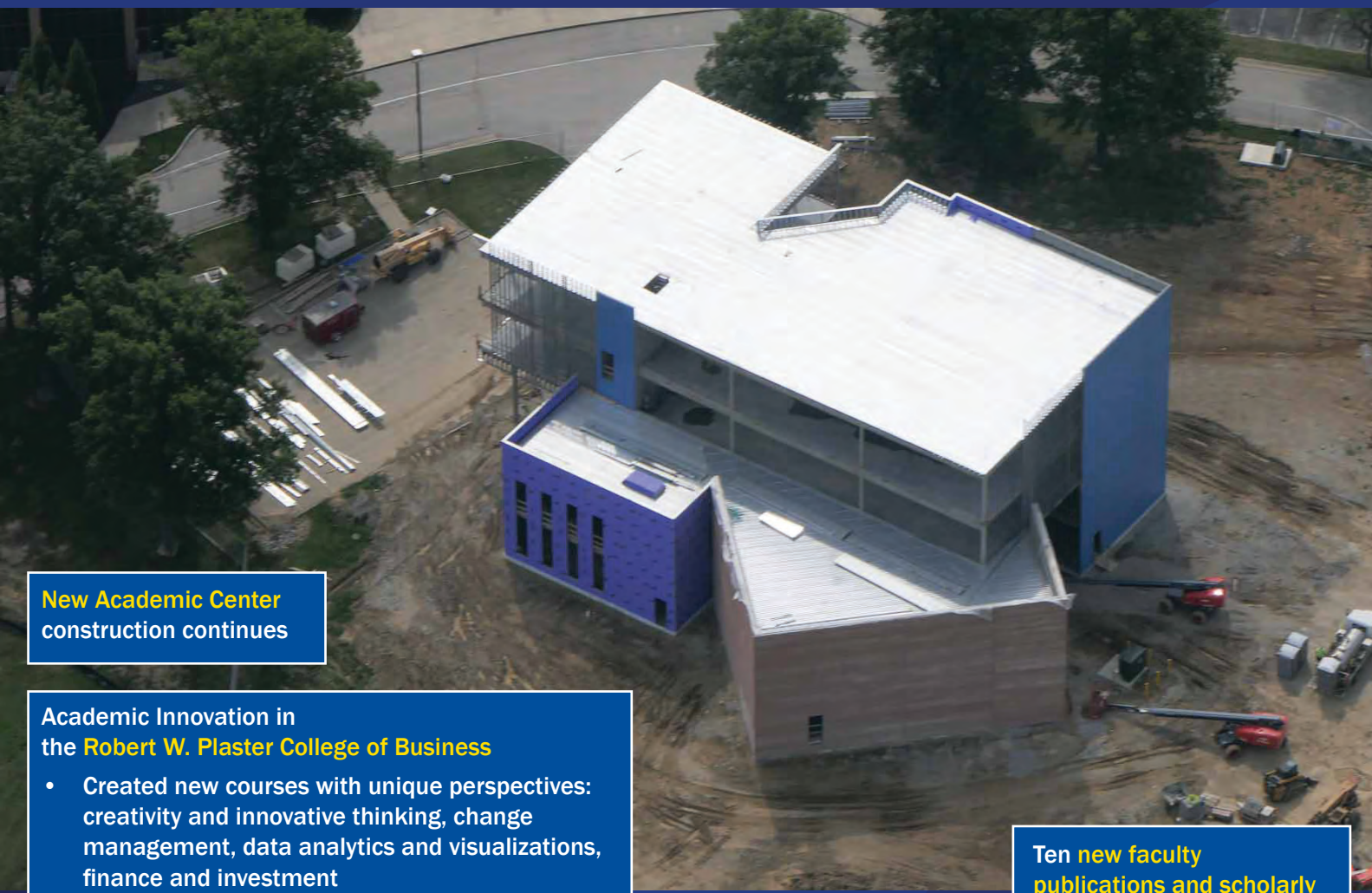
Second Century Core provides students with a common liberal arts experience and choice among a variety of interdisciplinary options to supplement their degree program

Center for Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship

- Renovated two new study rooms to support student collaboration
- Annual Write-In led by English Department offered support for students to finish their semester writing assignments
- Faculty learning community focused on effective use of technology for classroom instruction
- New colloquium series, CRAFT (Creativity, Research, and Fulfilling Teaching), included monthly faculty talks on research, sabbatical experiences, and implications of generative AI for the classroom
- Hosted annual writing retreat for faculty to support scholarly publication
- Joined Online Learning Consortium to advance quality digital teaching and learning experiences
- Added "Films on Demand" subscription to enable faculty access to thousands of videos for teaching

Launched **Master of Public Health** to prepare students with skills in a wide range of areas necessary to address complex and ever-changing public health challenges, such as climate change, educational disparities, poverty, racial inequities, health justice, chronic disease, physical activity, air pollution, maternal health, and more.





New Academic Center
construction continues

Academic Innovation in the **Robert W. Plaster College of Business**

- Created new courses with unique perspectives: creativity and innovative thinking, change management, data analytics and visualizations, finance and investment
- Accelerated undergraduate BBA program revised to add tracks in finance, data analytics, and management
- Revised MBA with an accelerated option and available concentrations in finance, data analytics, management, and healthcare
- Bachelor of Arts in marketing launched

Ten new faculty publications and scholarly works in 2022

Cabrini Hall renovations continue in support of the School of Education and Department of Psychology with state-of-the-art technology, labs, and atmosphere for student success

Elevating Academic Opportunities

- Hosted viewing and discussion of documentary film “Unguarded” with special guests Simonetta d’Italia Wiener, director and producer of the film, and Alberto De Simoni, program manager for the Restorative Freedom Initiative
- Environmental attorney Robert Bilott discussed his work that became the basis for “Dark Waters,” a 2019 film, and its relevance for today’s environment
- New York Times best seller author Jamie Ford engaged with students about writing on race, identity, love, connectivity, trauma, and perseverance

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences developed college-level definitions for High-Impact Practices to ensure students engage in collaborative work, complete diversity and global learning courses, produce culminating works, demonstrate growth and reflection, excel in writing, conduct research, and participate in service learning

94%
of seniors participate in high-impact practices
data source NSSE 2022

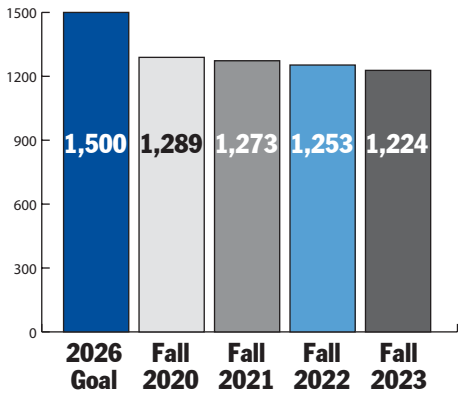
GOAL: Responsible Stewardship

The overall success of the University requires strengthening the financial position through enrollment, endowment, and fundraising.

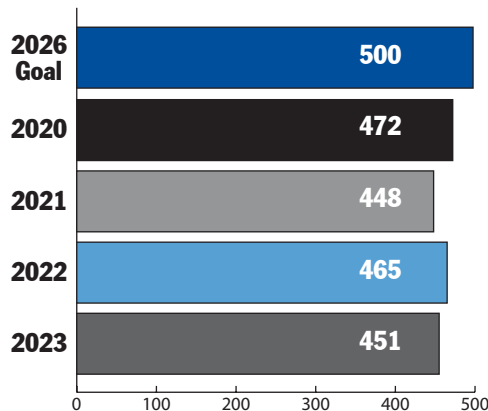
Key Strategies:

- grow enrollment through strategic enrollment management
- add additional graduate and professional programs
- assess existing undergraduate programs to ensure that they are mission-effective, contribute to the financial and enrollment objectives, and fulfill learning outcomes
- grow the endowment through increased contributions, planned giving, strategic investment of funds, and appropriate fiscal policies
- strengthen the institution's financial position
- build external connections to lead and positively impact our regional community
- foster a strong sense of community and engagement for our alumni and donors
- launch the Second Century Campaign - It's time for More

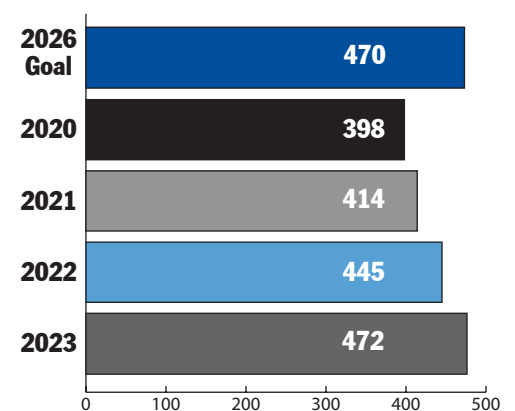
Traditional full-time enrollment



New student enrollment



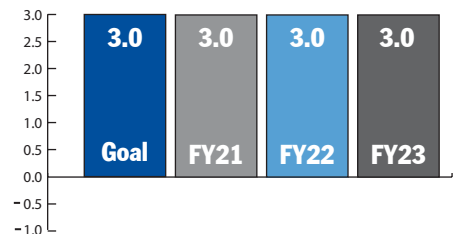
Residence halls – largest residential population in University history



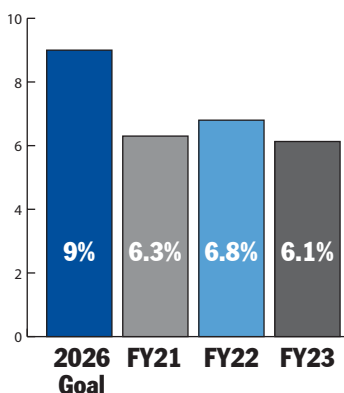
Top five incoming majors:
Business Administration
Nursing | Biology | Education
Exercise Science

U.S. DOE Score

Achieved perfect score of 3.0. The DOE Financial Responsibility Composite Score reflects the overall relative financial health. Range is -1.0 through +3.0

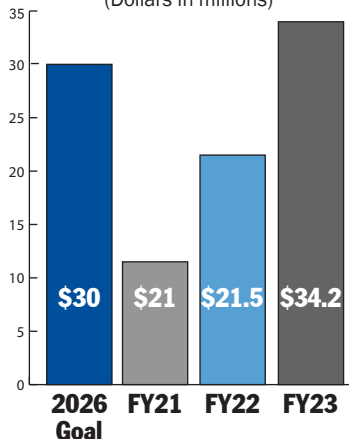


Alumni giving



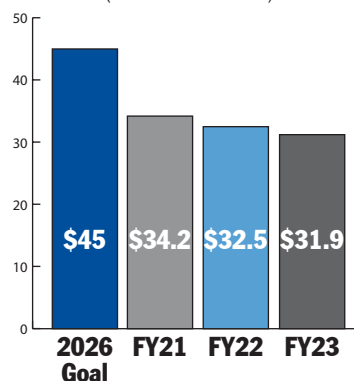
Second Century Campaign

accrued amount raised towards goal (Dollars in millions)



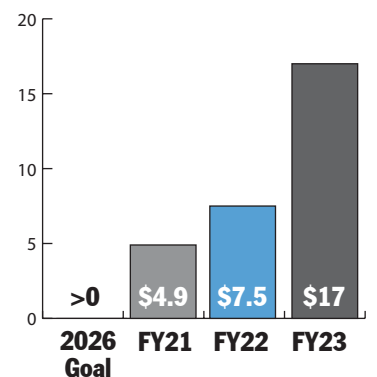
Endowment

Increase the value of the endowment by market returns with a five-year strategic goal of achieving \$45M. (Dollars in millions)



SACSCOC measure of unrestricted net assets

Exclusive of plant and plant-related debt (UNAEP) Dollars in millions



Transitioned the student information systems and databases to **Jenzabar One**, which will improve the student interface, create efficiencies for faculty and staff, and integrate modern communication solutions

Initiatives to support and **engage a modern workforce**:

- Thomas More Up-close seminar series provides on-boarding and engaging experiences for new faculty and staff about the mission, history, culture, and vision of Thomas More
- Administrative council formed to coordinate strategic efforts and provide a forum for the open exchange of information and ideas to strengthen workplace culture and engagement
- Staff Compensation Plan developed to ensure staff members are compensated in alignment with established benchmarks, position, and individual performance
- Hybrid Work Policy approved to create a work program built on flexibility and trust that develops performance and community
- Paternal Leave Policy approved to offer extended benefit for employees to provide meaningful bonding time for families
- Vacation Policy enhanced to provide staff with more time to recharge and spend with loved ones away from campus

Acquired **Five Seasons Family Sports Club** facility which expanded Thomas More's acreage by 9% and facilities square footage by 24%. The Crestview Hills campus now spans 126.7 acres, with a total facility square footage of 577,594



Developed Risk Management and Response Guide to identify, evaluate, mitigate, and respond to any risks that could impact Thomas More's ability to achieve our mission and goals



Corporate Engagement Program offers high impact presentations to competitive and dynamic employers who are taking proactive steps to create a better workplace environment, encourage more positive interactions, and develop and train their employees. Thomas More University faculty have presented 79 sessions at 29 organizations to 1,774 participants on topics such as effective communication across lines of difference, building teams with effective management, workplace stress and burnout, managing a remote workforce, supervision and management, thriving during crisis, successful negotiations, effective presentations, harassment, emotional intelligence, persuasive leadership, and effective conflict management.



**In the first two years of the Second Century Campaign:
It's time for More
\$34M Total Commitments**



\$13.7M

towards construction of the new academic center

\$6.8M

additional funds committed to the University's endowment

\$4.8M

towards the Fund for Thomas More University

31

endowed scholarships established or increased via major gift

20

naming opportunities have been established

129

donors (households, companies, or foundations) have contributed +\$9,605 to the campaign

\$3M

in support from the active Board of Trustees



WHAT'S NEXT IN 2023-24

Strengthen the University's Catholic identity

- Launch the Center for Faith, Mission, and Catholic Education
- Develop Strategic Plan for mission integration
- Implement employee formation program

Expand programming and services to support student engagement, belonging, and retention

- Enhanced Monsignor Cleves University Honors Program fosters a learning community with an expansive interdisciplinary curriculum and focus on diverse perspectives
- Additional Veteran support services, scholarships, and events
- Expand opportunities at Five Seasons Family Sports Club
- Open additional dining facilities on campus
- Development of first-year experience to enhance academic success, build connections across campus, and enrich student belonging and wellbeing
- Ensure gender equity plan promotes equality across all athletic programs

Modernize academic learning space and technology

- Open new academic center in Fall 2024 with ten new classrooms
- Develop maintenance plan for academic facilities to ensure classroom environments are conducive for student learning
- Conduct classroom utilization and space planning to prioritize classroom renovations in existing buildings
- Expand Zembrod Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation
- Open Centennial Incubator to serve as a collaborative hub where students, faculty, staff, and community partners have an opportunity receive mentorship and experiment with their ideas
- Launch a Fellows program to build student participation, mentorship, and a supportive environment
- Advise Business Innovation Society to cultivate and elevate the business and entrepreneurship experiences of students on campus and in the community

Introduction of the Education VILLA: Visualizing educators of excellence through Innovative methods promoting Leadership and Learning through an Atmosphere of growth, critical thinking, and research

- Dyslexia Institute introduced as a preeminent source to disseminate the latest research, share practical resources with the community, and transform instruction and intervention for all dyslexic children and adults
- Professional development provides P-12 educators and leaders with opportunities to enhance their pedagogical knowledge and skills
- School of Education Honors Cohort - undergraduate program, applications begin January 2024
- Advanced graduate programs in education: master's degree and educational specialist in instructional leadership coming Fall 2025
- STEM institute: preliminary work being completed to be in place Fall 2026

The Saints compete in their first official NCAA Division II contest at Republic Bank Field with men's soccer on Aug. 31, 2023 - Go Saints!



For additional information on these initiatives or goals please contact
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THOMAS MORE
UNIVERSITY

Make It **More.**