



Remarks at Ryan Center for Science Dedication (Excerpts) **October 3, 2024**

Delivered by: President Brian McGee

Today, we are here because an essential renovation project for Quincy University, begun in 2012, transformed an aging and underutilized classroom and administration building into an exceptional space for science education. Today, we are here, at long last, to identify and honor the generous and, until now, anonymous donor who made this transformation possible.

The visionary renovation of this now-venerable building, which began its life as a Franciscan seminary for the training of future Catholic priests, is a great story. It's an exciting story of important work done on behalf of current and future generations of students.

But as remarkable as that story about this center for science might be, there's still a better story to tell.

It's the story of a young Catholic man, from a very small town in Illinois, who came to Quincy College, learned from a remarkable collection of friar faculty, studied abroad, graduated, served his country in Vietnam, earned two master's degrees from elite research universities, and went on to an extraordinarily successful business career.

Thirty-four years ago, it's no surprise that Quincy College – still not yet Quincy University – recognized this distinguished alumnus with an honorary and richly deserved doctorate.

During and after his career, that same man gave back, time and time again. He supported and sustained the arts and, in many ways, the Catholic Church. He went on to serve on the Board of Trustees at Quincy University, where he gave generously of his time and considerable talents to help his alma mater through challenging times. And, at a time when large financial gifts were very rare at Quincy University, he saw the need for modern science facilities at QU and he rose to the challenge of meeting that need.

For over a decade since Richard O. Ryan first committed to create this center for science, his innate and very Franciscan humility prevented us from acknowledging his vision publicly. Today, we have finally prevailed on him to allow us to recognize his vision and his desire to create exciting new possibilities for science education at QU. We hope that students will study at the Ryan Center for generations to come and will be inspired by the example of this one amazing alumnus.

Dedications of this sort often happen when a renovation is complete, or nearly so. Today, though, we will not smell new paint or carpet.

Since Dr. Ryan made this generous gift over a decade ago, 1,000s of students have walked these halls, sat in these classrooms, and completed assignments and research projects in these labs. Today, we will not see a newly completed construction project, but a building already well-used and well-loved by our students, faculty, and staff. Indeed, our next renovation project will soon begin on the ground floor, with the expansion of a cadaver lab and with new laboratory spaces. The Ryan Center, now properly named, will continue as it has for the past several years, as a vibrant space for learning and for creating new knowledge.

Time has demonstrated the enduring significance of this gift, as new science and health science majors have been inaugurated at QU over the past decade. Further, biology is one of the largest majors at the university.

Rich, thank you for showing us the power and impact of philanthropy. Even more importantly, thank you for showing us what a Quincy University education can mean to one young woman or man from a small town. We're honored to know you and to see you recognized today.



Dr. Richard O. Ryan