

September 8, 2008

Dear :

The College of Saint Benedict has been offered a wonderful and exciting opportunity by one of our Alumna and current board members, Ms. Stephanie Wolf. Stephanie is providing the college the opportunity to use a process called "DesignShop®" to engage in a dialogue about leadership. This "Leadership Summit" will bring together engaged leaders, alums, faculty, students, and staff to examine ethical, meaningful leadership models that can prepare leaders for the challenges and opportunities facing our communities and our world.

You have been identified by the lead team as someone who would be a key contributor to this process. The commitment is great but the outcomes will be rewarding and, we hope, lasting. I invite you to very seriously consider this rare opportunity.

The purpose of this Leadership Summit is to engage in a dialogue and to create a vision of a leadership style that is capable of empowering young women and men to have the courage to create a life that is full of meaning for themselves and the people and issues that they care about.

The specific objectives are:

- To articulate a "branded" St. Ben's leadership model unique to the school and grounded in the values of St. Benedict.
- To create aligned, integrated sponsorship (faculty, staff, students & trustees) for the leadership vision and all the initiatives, programs and activities necessary to support the vision.
- To examine "leadership reluctance," especially in women, and identify ways to overcome it.
- To identify the most leverageable programs, components and the resources (funding, staff, research, mentors, etc) that already exist and that might contribute to the vision and therefore to continue the brilliant work already being done on campus.
- To examine potential intersections with the Center for Ethical Leadership or any other center or initiatives that might be created in the planning process.
- To create a plan for implementing the leadership vision that can be tested, proven, documented and implemented in other colleges and universities.
- To promulgate the leadership model in such a way as to credit, acknowledge and share the remarkable work being done at CSB/SJU.

DesignShop is a creative, engaging and active process structured to help large groups of diverse stakeholders achieve months' worth of creative work in a matter of days. This will take place in a unique collaborative environment we will create here on campus.

Many of the world's most effective organizations have used this process to help deal with the greatest challenges and opportunities. A version of this process has been used at the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland and by many Fortune 500 organizations.

I strongly urge you to join us for three days, November 6-8 (Thursday to Saturday). Both Thursday and Friday will be very full days and may last into the early evening. Saturday will be a half day. We know this conflicts with class schedules but we sincerely hope you can work around them and attend as much as possible during this time period.

If you are from out of town and need to stay overnight we're happy to provide accommodations for you. Should you so desire, please indicate this need when you RSVP. We will also provide plentiful, delicious and creative meals and snacks, scintillating conversations and a role in developing the next iteration of leadership on these campuses. More details will be supplied once we have confirmed our list of attendees. Ideally the group of participants will reach about 50.

Please send your RSVP to Shelly Athmann at [sathmann@csbsju.edu](mailto:sathmann@csbsju.edu) or call 320.363.5601. Preference will go to those who can attend most of the workshop; however, exceptions will be made for faculty and students with class conflicts.

Please consider this opportunity to serve the College of Saint Benedict and help implement the leadership training ground of tomorrow. I look forward to seeing you on November 6.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "MaryAnn Baenninger". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

MaryAnn Baenninger  
President