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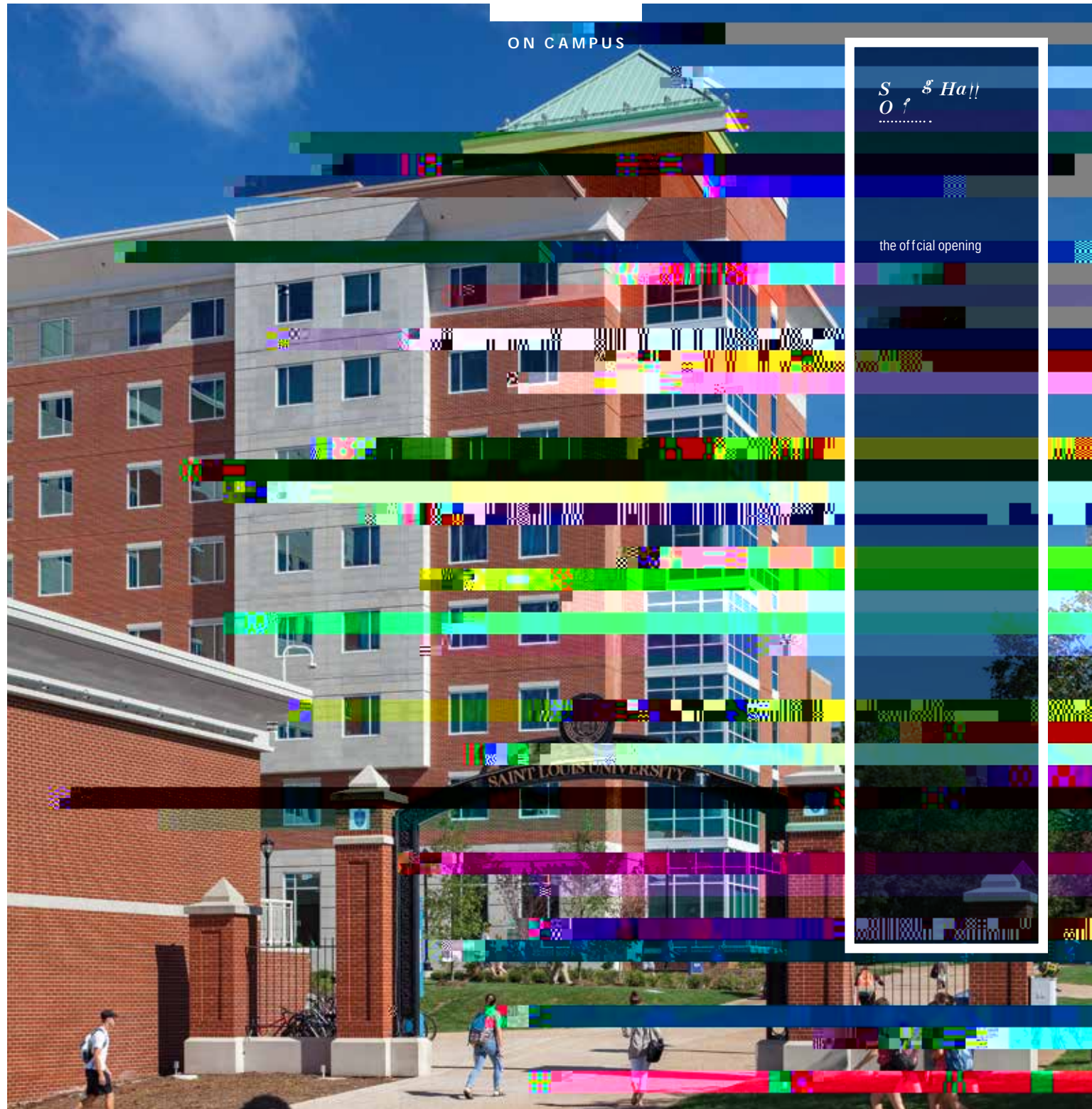
In September 1985, former Saint Louis University President Paul

Paul V. Restell

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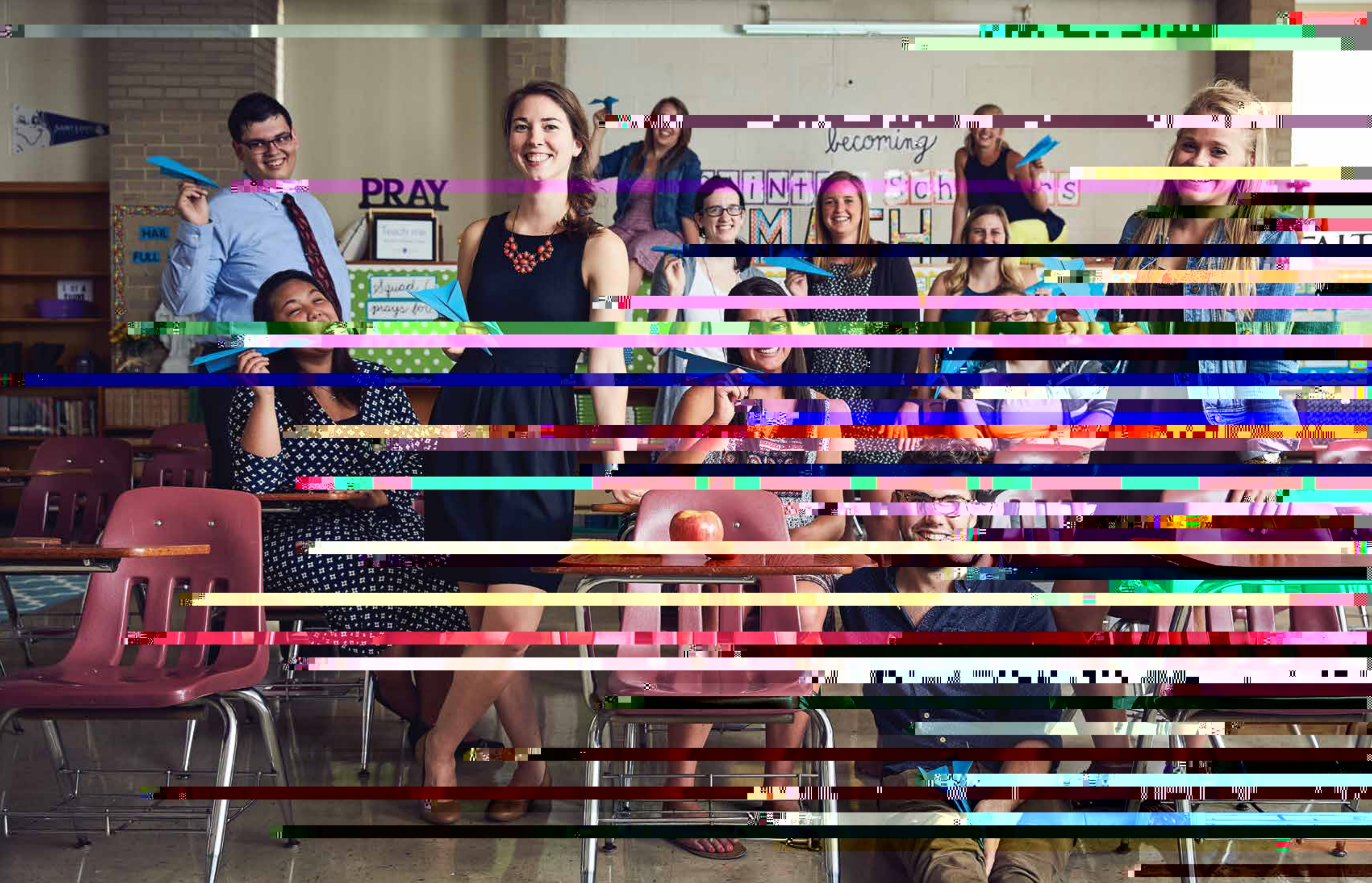


Bruemmer Awarded Papal Knighthood

Former dean of student affairs Mary Bruemmer (A&S '42, Grad Ed '60) was named a Dame Commander of the Order of Saint Sylvester Pope and Martyr in June.

The honor was a surprise during a retirement party for the 96-year-old who served as a full-time SLU volunteer for the past 26 years. (She first





“The Billiken Teacher Corps is a program with three interlocking pillars,” said Dr. John James, a School of Education faculty member who helped make the program a reality. “One, teaching in a high-need, urban, Catholic school. Two, earning a tuition-remission master’s degree at Saint Louis University. And three, living in an intentional faith community, which involves prayer and personal spiritual development.”

The program launched in June 2015. Participants are recent college graduates, some with undergraduate degrees in education and some without, who have a drive to serve and a desire to teach. The inaugural six Billiken Teachers have started their second year in the program and welcomed a new cohort of seven this past June.

The Billiken Teacher Corps is based on the Alliance for Catholic Education at Notre Dame, but anyone familiar with service-driven programs will notice similar elements. It’s like the Jesuit Volunteer Corps, but with a teaching component. It’s like Teach for America, but all participants live together.

Michelle Ehrhard, a second-year Billiken Teacher Corps student who is originally from St. Louis, heard about the program during her senior year at Truman State University.

“It’s like my personality was shifted into a program,” Ehrhard said. “I was somewhere between being Catholic and wanting to teach, but wanting it to be more than just a career — wanting to show God through it.”

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Each student in the program is placed in an under-resourced school in the St. Louis region to teach for two years. Elise Earley teaches middle school science at St. Cecilia School and Academy in

St. Louis. She has always wanted to effect change in the world. But because she did not decide to become a teacher until after she graduated from college, she was without the student-teaching experience that undergraduate education majors have.

The photos Cengiz Yar takes are hard to look at and even harder to look away from. Amid dusty earth tones — the rubble of fallen desert cities, crisscrossed with dark wire; camouflaged fatigues; fragments of bone out of context — he captures swaths of verdant countryside and snaps of deep red — carnations atop a casket, a kaffiyeh scarf, a smear of blood. Whether devastating or beautiful or both, the shots invite the viewer to take a closer look: This is the face of suffering. This is humanity.

A documentary photographer and freelance photojournalist, Yar (Cook '09) has focused recently on two main subjects: the ongoing conflict in the Middle East and the proliferation of gun violence in the United States.

His work takes him from Kurdistan to Ferguson and back, to places probably unfamiliar to most of his fellow Saint Louis University alumni.

But his background, at least the SLU portion of it, is certainly familiar. Like so many students, Yar came to Saint Louis University from his hometown of Milwaukee because of a scholarship (in his case, the Martin Luther King Jr. Scholarship) and because he's a legacy (his aunt and uncle, Marge and Pete Donegan, graduated in the mid-1970s). Add in a series of good grants, and SLU was his best option, although maybe not the most obvious path to what he planned to do with his life.

Yar fell in love with photography in high school and knew it was the career for him. But Saint Louis University offered only a few photography courses.

"It didn't make sense to me to go to school for photography," Yar said. "I went to SLU knowing I'd want to run my own business someday, and that I'd be able to get a good business education there."

He studied in the John Cook School of Business while gravitating toward extracurriculars with a visual bent, including video production for SLU TV and a summer internship at a small media company in St. Louis.

Then he decided to study abroad.

"I wanted to be as far away from my comfort zone as possible," Yar said. So he chose the program farthest away, ending up at Beijing University of International Business and Economics through an exchange program sponsored by Loyola University Chicago. As soon as he got to China, his perception shifted.

"Beijing was a complete shock," he said. "I was immediately overwhelmed by how many other people there are in the world."

The frame around him was expanding, quickly. He returned to America and to SLU with a global perspective, and decided to concentrate on international business.

After graduating, Yar spent a year and a half teaching English and developing his photography skills in Thailand, and then moved to Chicago, which he still considers his home base. Since 2012, he has traveled in and out of the United States, mostly to the Middle East. At the end of October 2015, he relocated to northern Iraq.

Not affiliated with a specific news or photo agency, Yar is entirely freelance, which essentially means he's putting that business education to good use. He does all of his own pitching, marketing, fundraising and accounting. And then there's the work of photography, of course.

"Less than 5 percent of my work is actually taking photos," he estimated.

He splits his work between creating stories for nongovernmental organizations and producing material for news organizations and magazines. His work has been published and mentioned by some notable news sources, as well: BBC World News, *The Guardian*, *The Telegraph*, *Macleans Magazine* and Mashable among others. In 2015, he was awarded the Online News Association's inaugural James W. Foley award for conflict freelancers.

Accepting the award, Yar said, "For a freelance journalist, specifically one that has



When John O'Leary (Cook '99) was 9 years old, he decided to experiment with fire and gasoline in his family's garage. His innocent undertaking

Platinum Crown (\$5,000,000+)

Natalie and John Alberici

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