



INSIDE THE PRESIDENT'S CIRCLE

Introducing the 12th President of Siena College Christopher P. Gibson '86, Ph.D.



The life of Christopher P. Gibson '86, Ph.D. has been dedicated to public service. On July 1, this son of Siena College became its 12th president. The execution of his immediate, short-term and long-range goals for the College will draw on his leadership skills as a scholar, author, decorated military veteran and three-term member of Congress.

Underlying everything Dr. Gibson does is an unwavering commitment to the values on which Siena was founded. He is consistently inspired by the servant-leadership of St. Francis of Assisi.

“The Franciscan tradition that sets Siena apart will inform every decision as I work with the Siena community to advance the legacy of my predecessors and promote the mission of our College.”

As the first layperson to serve as permanent leader of Siena since its founding, Dr. Gibson

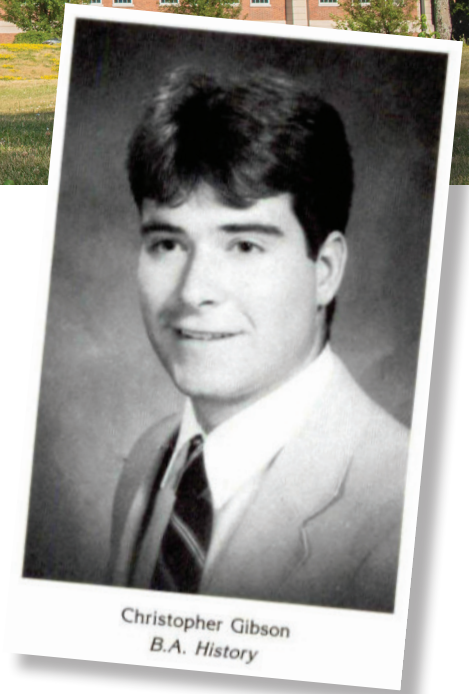
faces a formidable set of challenges as he takes the helm. The College will welcome students and faculty back to campus following a months-long shutdown due to the coronavirus pandemic; this, while the country is facing a national reckoning on race.

“During my transition, I have witnessed our community in action; we are already rising to answer these critical calls. I firmly believe Siena’s best days are ahead – we will not only survive, we will flourish. As we go forward to overcome our current existential threats and help lead our country to higher planes of justice, including racial justice, we take inspiration from the past, including the sterling example of Saint Francis.”

The start of the fall semester has been moved up two weeks to August 24, and will conclude by Thanksgiving to help mitigate the possible impact of the pandemic. Dr. Gibson and Provost Margaret E. Madden, Ph.D. have been co-leading Siena’s coronavirus recovery and reopening efforts since the spring, which have involved every department on campus working in synergy to offer students a safe, in-person educational experience.

“We’re developing a series of actions and policies, both proactive and reactive, to make sure we’re being as safe and competent as possible,” he said. “We’re looking at how many students will be in a classroom, what PPE will be required, how often areas will be disinfected, how dining and residence life will be affected and more.”

No less important will be Dr. Gibson’s commitment to lead Siena’s ongoing efforts to address issues of social and racial inequality. Online town halls were held this month to



Above: Dr. Gibson with his wife, Mary Jo. Left to right: With Gen. Colin Powell; Dr. Gibson's yearbook photo.

conduct important conversations on race, and campus committees will move ahead with their ongoing work to promote equality and justice.

“Siena and the future leaders we educate will rise to the moment to meet the challenge of healing our nation. We will continue our role as an agent of change.

Dr. Gibson will also bring energy and enthusiasm to fulfilling the College’s current five-year strategic plan – Tradition. *Transformed.* – which positions Siena as an innovative leader in higher education grounded in the Franciscan and liberal arts traditions.

Once the immediate goals of recovery and

reopening have been successfully achieved, Dr. Gibson and the leadership team will work to expand Siena’s mission-centric, in-demand academic offerings; explore partnerships that will strengthen the College’s market position; grow and develop new master’s and professional certificate programs; and bring to fruition Siena’s facilities plan, which includes expansions and renovations of several campus buildings and offices.

“I have had three professional lives to date,” said Dr. Gibson, “and of all the callings I’ve had, this one is the strongest.”

Siena is tentatively planning for his formal presidential inauguration in 2021.

Class of 2020 Virtual Celebration

With the Class of 2020 watching from home with their families, Siena College leaders and friars met on campus for a Facebook-streamed ceremony to honor newly-minted graduates.

As the bells from Siena Hall rang out at 10AM on May 17, Fr. Mark Reamer '83, O.F.M., D.Min., vice president for mission and guardian of the Siena friary, opened the ceremony with a blessing:

“In this time of pandemic and social distance, we have much to grieve in our world, and yet today we have much to give thanks for in the gifts and talents of the class of 2020.

Good and gracious God, we invoke your Holy Spirit upon our graduates this morning, for we know you are with us in every moment of transition and change.”

“Today is no traditional graduation day by any means,” said Charles Seifert, Ph.D., interim vice president for academic affairs. “While we must delay our in-person celebration until it is safe to gather, we are still united in spirit and joined from locations across the globe to honor you and your many accomplishments that brought us to this day.”



Margaret E. Madden, Ph.D., interim president, virtually bestowed 757 bachelor's degrees and 61 master's degrees on the graduates.

“You will always be remembered as a special class for your commendable resilience in the face of extraordinary challenges.”

All of Siena's friars in residence sang “The Blessing of Saint Francis” for the new graduates to conclude the celebration. The world has more Saints today thanks to the Class of 2020.

GOOD AND GRACIOUS GOD

We give you thanks for the summer!
For Brother Sun who gives us warmth and light.
Thank You for the beauty that surrounds us and for the opportunity to be outside and enjoy Your creation. Thank You for the increased time we have to be with our friends and family, and for the more casual pace of the summer season. Draw us closer to You this summer. Teach us how we can pray no matter where we are or what we are doing. Enlighten our souls with the awareness of Your presence and guide us on our paths with Your love and mercy. As we enjoy Your creation, create in us a clean heart and a hunger and a thirst for You.
Amen.

Fr. Larry Anderson, O.F.M. College Chaplain





**Saints Don't
Sit on the
Sidelines**

Saints Don't Sit on the Sidelines

For the past four months, the Siena Annual Fund has been highlighting alumni, friends and companies who are going above and beyond in their communities in a weekly email series entitled "Saints Don't Sit on the Sidelines." Every Friday at 11am, an email is sent to the entire Siena community spotlighting the good works of our Saints to send everyone off into the weekend with good news.

Stories have ranged from Ostroff Associates, featured above helping Feed Albany and the

South End Children's Café; to Elaine Carey '20, supporting Siena despite the pandemic by donating a portion of her housing refund back to battle the COVID relief efforts on campus; to Das Nobel '06 and the MTX Group, who have implemented the only CDC-supported coronavirus contact tracing solution, currently being used by 17 states and counting, which is necessary to facilitate the re-opening of the U.S. economy.

These Saints are making a difference every day and leaving the world a better place than they found it.

Do you know a Saint who doesn't sit on the sidelines? Please email us at annualfund@siena.edu and let us know. We would love to hear about all the good work our Saints are doing!



SIENA SENIOR SAINTS

A new social series has been announced from the Development & External Affairs Office. Senior Saints are those who have celebrated their 50 Year Reunions at Siena and have witnessed the College grow from the vision of seven friars to the institution it is today.

If you're a Senior Saint, we invite you to join us for quarterly coffee hours to hear what is happening at Siena, engage with presenters, and share your stories. The inaugural event took place on July 15 with Dr. Christopher P. Gibson '86, President of Siena College, sharing his vision for the future. The next event will be held on October 22nd at noon with a preview of the upcoming basketball season.

PLEASE ENCOURAGE YOUR FELLOW SAINTS TO REGISTER BY GOING TO [SIENA.EDU/ALUMNI/EVENTS](https://siena.edu/alumni/events)

EVENTS

- 8/13 – Penelope Bourbon Virtual Tasting
Owned and operated Michael Paladini Class of 2004
- 8/19 - Freshman Move in Day
- 8/24 - First Day of Classes
- 9/15 – 2nd Annual Putt Putt/Cocktail Reception to benefit Siena College Pre-Dental Students
- 10/4 – Feast of St. Francis
- 10/22 – Senior Saints – Basketball Preview