

Woodstock's program on business ethics lands at Le Moyne College

Tom Gallagher | Oct. 9, 2013 Mission Management

The Woodstock Theological Center was an independent, Jesuit-sponsored research institute at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., that was founded in 1973 but closed this year. Key personnel quickly landed other positions, including Jesuit Fr. Thomas Reese, who joined *NCR* as a senior analyst.

Even though the center is shuttering operations, some of its programs have found new homes and will continue. The Catholic Studies Program at Georgetown University will administer the Woodstock Figge Student Fellowship for undergraduates, which gives students an opportunity to undertake "theological reflection on the human problems of today."

[The Arrupe Program in Christian Social Ethics for Business](#) [1] has joined Le Moyne College -- a Jesuit school based in Syracuse, N.Y. -- and will become part of the newly established [Madden School of Business](#) [2]. The business school is named after alumnus Michael Madden, who runs a private equity firm in New York City and was the former chairman of Le Moyne's board of trustees.

Le Moyne has 2,300 full-time undergraduate students in liberal arts, business, science and pre-professional studies and 800 full- and part-time graduate students in nursing, education, business administration and physician assistant studies.

Fr. Pedro Arrupe (1907-1991) was superior general of the Jesuits from 1965 to 1983 and is sometimes referred to as "the second founder" of the religious order because of his leadership during a period of great change and renewal after the Second Vatican Council.

The decision to transfer the Arrupe Program and its endowment of \$1.5 million to Le Moyne required the permission of an anonymous donor, which was received this spring.

Since 1994, the Arrupe Program has collaborated with theologians and business leaders to explore the practical applications of business ethics. A key component is the work of the 14 Woodstock Business Conference chapters in the U.S. and Europe, providing a network of groups of about 25 individuals who meet bimonthly to explore the intersection of faith and work. The theme of these chapters is "affirming the relevance of religious faith to business practice." The current Arrupe Program director, John Fontana, will continue to lead the program.

The program will complement, and become integrated with, Le Moyne's Jesuit Case Studies Series, which is a repository of real-world business cases upon which students can reflect from the perspective of the Ignatian tradition.

"Le Moyne's Jesuit Case Series provides a unique opportunity for the integration of the work of WBC chapters in the U.S. and abroad," Le Moyne Provost Linda LeMura said.

LeMura recognizes that it will take time for the integration of the Arrupe Program into the business school

curriculum. Nonetheless, "it allows differentiation in terms of business education," LeMura said.

"We want to add a faithful component of Catholic social teaching and Catholic intellectual tradition that is imbued with the Jesuit cross-discipline connection and ethical dimension into business education," she said. "We expect that every business education standard will be touched."

"The fit between Le Moyne's Madden School and the Arrupe Program is ideal," said Jesuit Fr. David McCallum, interim dean of the Madden School of Business and its director of mission and identity. "Our approach to business education is to empower students who are rooted in Catholic social teaching and the latest papal documents.

"Business needs to be about value creation and sustainability, not just about making money," he said.

In July 2014, McCallum will be succeeded as dean by Le Moyne alumnus Jim Joseph (1983), who is currently the business school's executive-in-residence.

A former Le Moyne trustee, Joseph spent 25 years at Oneida, one of the world's largest marketers of stainless steel flatware and tabletop products, retiring as president and CEO after selling the company to a private equity group.

Joseph realized that he wanted to give back to Le Moyne, saying, "I fell in love with Le Moyne again."

His duties as executive in residence are to mentor, teach and write. For the past year and a half, Joseph has secured about 50 internships and more than 100 mentors for the students. He leveraged his global contacts, including meeting with Jesuit business schools all over the world, while making the most of the upstate New York educational resources at Syracuse University and Cornell University.

"It's a calling," said the energetic Joseph.

The transfer of the Arrupe Program to Le Moyne doesn't appear to have been an accident. Those interviewed credit God's providence to shepherding the program to Le Moyne.

In October 2012, the Arrupe Program hosted the first-ever global conference of the Woodstock Business Conference chapters. Le Moyne was invited to attend. "It was a gathering of big brains and big hearts," Joseph said. "I was in awe of the people living Ignatian values every day in the real world."

The Arrupe Program director, Fontana, played a pivotal role in organizing the global conference. The Chicago-based Fontana brings to this role the combination of a professional career as a business leadership consultant, a master's degree in religious education and pastoral ministry from Loyola University Chicago and an executive Master of Business Administration from Northwestern University.

After the fall 2012 conference, Fontana met with Joseph while attending a monthly meeting of the Woodstock Business Conference chapter based in Scranton, Pa. Both men wanted to grow the chapters. Then in the spring 2013, Woodstock Theological Center announced it was closing.

It was clear that Le Moyne had the infrastructure to operate the Arrupe Program and a talented group of professors, plus the college was developing the Jesuit Case Studies Series. With the establishment of the new business school and the availability of Joseph to help lead these initiatives, the arrival of the Arrupe Program seemed like a homecoming event.

One believer in the value of the Woodstock Business Conference chapters is Pat McMahon, owner of an office supply company in Wilkes Barre, Pa.

Each morning McMahon reads the Bible and offers up morning prayer. "But when I hit the end of my driveway on the way to work, the other switch turns on. To stay focused on ethical business decision-making takes vigilance, and the Woodstock Business chapter meetings are like a booster shot," McMahon said.

"The Scranton University-affiliated Woodstock Business chapter is like having a group of kindred spirits to reinforce our own beliefs and not have the market influence our morals," he said. "As business owners, we want to compete on an ethical and fair basis and I believe most of our companies operate well."

McMahon's company has given away 10 percent of the company's net profits to charity for the past 15 years.

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Links:

[1] <http://www8.georgetown.edu/centers/woodstock/programs/Arrupe-Program.html>

[2] <http://www.lemoyne.edu/tabid/560/default.aspx>

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