

Believing.

In her inauguration address on Oct. 13, Dr. Richanne C. Mankey recognized Defiance College traditions of the past 166 years while noting that the institution is finding “innovative ways to embark on our future leading to our 175th birthday in 2025.”

Dr. Mankey was inaugurated as the 19th president of Defiance College during a ceremony that included representatives from the campus, the larger higher education community, the city of Defiance, the United Church of Christ, and her own family.

“We have much to celebrate how we at Defiance College have been and continue to be unique in spirit and embracing of the human condition. Our successes inspire our future,” she said.

“As we strategically live into our future, I am intent to focus on our success and our potential so that current and future students will benefit from this special place. I have faith that we will engage our beliefs as we live every day to facilitate deep learning for students.”

The theme of Dr. Mankey’s speech was “Believing. Living. Inspiring.” Addressing each component, she noted, “The beliefs that I see are guided by the four pillars of the Defiance College mission: to know, to understand, to lead, to serve.”

She continued: “When we live our beliefs, we live with integrity. We have been laying a foundation for robust actions and specific goals that will be engaged with accountability. Be assured that conversations will be widely engaged so that enthusiasm spreads for strategic initiatives. We will live into our vitality.”

She paid tribute to Defiance College as “an exemplar of service and learning through service. Much to our credit, it is a commonly held belief that Defiance College *stands* for service.”



The Inauguration of Dr. Richanne C. Mankey

Living. Inspiring.

The new president reiterated the African proverb that continues to be her inspiration: “If you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together.”

She said the College will focus on rigorous academic programs, resource development, and creating a vibrant campus environment. “We ask ‘how might we?’ before we decide whether or not a new idea is worth pursuing. Our planning is as much about how we make our decisions as about making our processes as efficacious as they can be.”

Since arriving on the Defiance College campus in January 2016, Dr. Mankey noted that she has met with many individuals who have shared their personal experiences as students and faculty members. “Part of the education that is inspired here isn’t tangible, yet, it is this ‘intangible’ about which I hear from graduates. It is this ‘intangible’ – our essence – that makes us resilient. Let us believe in and live our essence. Let us be inspired by our essence. If we continue to nurture this essence we will become increasingly more distinctive.”

“Then and now, I could feel the essence of our College and wanted as many students as possible to be educated and inspired by the essence that I found so palpable.”

Dr. Richanne C. Mankey, President

In her closing remarks, Dr. Mankey recalled her initial visit to campus last year, and how the visit impacted her. “It was at a moment near the end of that day I felt called to be here. Then and now, I could feel the essence of our College and wanted as many students as possible to be educated and inspired by the essence that I found so palpable. I could feel the commitment and deep love all constituents have for the College.”

Taking part in the inauguration ceremony were Defiance Mayor Mike McCann; Edward Buhl, chair, Board of Trustees; Dr. Marian Plant, Faculty chair; Tory Savage, executive chair, Student Senate; Ted Czartoski, DC maintenance technician; Dava Donaldson, DC alumna; Dr. DeBow Freed, President Emeritus, Ohio Northern University and University of Findlay; Rev. Daniel Busch, Northwest Ohio Association United Church of Christ; and Erica Mankey DeMuch, representing Dr. Mankey’s family.

In her remarks, Ms. DeMuch shared some personal reflections of her stepmother, Dr. Mankey. “I share this ... to give you a little insight into Richanne, who she is and where her





values and intentions lie,” she said. “I have no doubt that her commitment to Defiance College also includes her openness, big picture thinking and collaborative approach - all with the intention to breed growth and success for all -the students, the staff, the faculty, the college and the community. Richanne leads with her heart and her mind, creating a healthy balance of both intellect and intuition. Her actions follow suit.”

Also participating was an honor guard from VFW Post 3360. Dr. Adriane Thompson Bradshaw of Ohio Northern University was guest soloist, and the invocation and benediction were given by Rev. James Brehler, pastor, St. John United Church of Christ. Music was also provided by the DC Chamber Singers and Yellow Jacket Band.



An audio recording of an inaugural blessing by William Wharekaihua Coates of New Zealand was played during the ceremony. In his virtual participation, Mr. Coates recited a Maori proverb entitled “Whakautake.”

Dr. Mankey graduated cum laude in psychology from Ohio Northern University; received her master’s degree in social agency counseling from the University of Dayton; and earned her doctorate in adult education from Teachers College, Columbia University, New York. Her career as a leader in independent higher education spans nearly three decades Before taking the presidency at Defiance College on Jan. 1 of this year, she was vice president for institutional advancement at Daemen College in Amherst, N.Y.

She and her husband, Michael, reside in Defiance.

A service of inaugural blessing was held on the eve of the inauguration at St. John United Church of Christ.

