A brief HISTORY of the Ryan Leadership Institute

In 1965 one of the foremost thinkers in the business world, LARRY WILSON, founded the Wilson Learning Corporation, which would become the second largest training company in the United States. In 1985 he launched the Pecos River Learning Center in New Mexico as a site for training business leaders. From these efforts came his visionary program:

In 1990 a successful Catholic businessman, TIMOTHY C. FLANAGAN, discovered his mission in life during an executive leadership retreat at Pecos River. Tim felt a profound sense of being called to bring to the Catholic Church the best in leadership and personal development programs to help people understand their purpose in life and reach their God-given potential as leaders in our world. Thus was born the

Catholic Leadership Institute
...Building Catholic Leaders for Today and Tomorrow

In 1999, a successful marketing executive, MATT MANION (who is married to DSU alumna Kerrianne Dougherty ’96), volunteered for a year to serve CLI ... and four years later he became its President/CEO. Under Matt’s leadership, the programs adopted from Pecos River – L.E.A.P. and B.E.I.T. – were revised to reflect thoroughly Catholic teaching, and their use expanded to include college and university groups.

Then, in 2004, the director of the Salesian Center for Faith & Culture at DeSales University, FR. THOMAS DAILEY, approached CLI with a proposal to transform the leadership programs for a third time. Together with Oblate faculty at DeSales University – FR. PETER LEONARD & FR. DOUG BURNS – the program was compressed into an academic calendar and the materials were revised to reflect the distinctive teaching of St. Francis de Sales and the Salesian tradition.

In this way a new Salesian institute for leaders came into being. The first cohort began the two-year pilot program, in collaboration with CLI, during the 2005-2006 academic year. To-date, 103 students and 6 faculty/staff have completed the programs in the Institute. Since 2010 the administration of the institute has been wholly assumed by the Salesian Center for Faith & Culture.

In the Fall of 2012 members of the Ryan Family Foundation established an endowment to honor the founding role in this Institute played by their parents and to provide a stable financial foundation for the future of the ...

Ryan Leadership Institute
founded by Frank & Jane Ryan