2026 Chancellors Dinner

Event Recap

April 30, 2026

The 2026 Chancellors Dinner brought together members of the Ave Maria University community to celebrate the university's enduring mission and the profound impact of an integrated Catholic education. The evening featured remarks from Alum Dr. Joseph Guernsey whose personal journey illuminated why an Ave Maria education remains one of the most valuable investments a student can make—not despite its rigorous academics, but because of the moral and spiritual formation that accompanies them.

When asked how to pursue medicine, Joe revealed a counterintuitive truth: while prerequisites and shadowing hours matter, the foundation that truly distinguishes successful physicians is an education rooted in philosophy, theology, and the liberal arts. An Ave Maria education equips students with something far more valuable than technical knowledge alone—it provides the moral stamina required to navigate an increasingly complex healthcare landscape. In a profession where physicians face relentless pressure to compromise their values, sometimes subtly and sometimes overtly, the formation gained through our curriculum serves as an unwavering shield against gradual moral erosion.

The liberal arts education that Ave Maria is known for proved transformative in ways Joe emphasized: philosophy taught the discernment to recognize flawed arguments; metaphysics grounded understanding in the reality of the human person as body and soul; theology clarified medicine's ultimate purpose in service to humanity made in God's image. These disciplines, woven together with rigorous science education in biology, chemistry, and physics created a graduate prepared not merely to practice medicine competently, but to practice it virtuously.

The evening was a powerful reminder that Ave Maria University continues to produce graduates who excel in medical schools across Florida and beyond. Our faculty's commitment to excellence in both liberal arts and sciences, combined with our distinctive Catholic identity, has earned us recognition among medical school admission committees nationwide. For students and families seeking an education that develops both the mind and the conscience, Ave Maria remains the answer.

Read online for photos and videos:

https://alumni.avemaria.edu/news/2026-chancellors-dinner-1776356438861