

Mark A. Heckler, Ph.D., is in his ninth year of service as the 18th president of Valparaiso University, founded in 1859. A dedicated educator with more than 35 years of experience as a professor and administrator, President Heckler is overseeing the implementation of one of the most expansive and comprehensive strategic plans in Valparaiso University's more-than-150-year history.

Under President Heckler's leadership, the University continues to set records for growth and expansion. During his tenure, the University has launched new advanced degree programs in all five undergraduate colleges. He has also overseen the groundbreaking and dedications of more than six new campus facilities and has instituted the Center for Church Relations and the Institute for Leadership and Service at Valparaiso University. Also under his direction, Valparaiso University Chicago's Hyde Park Campus was launched in 2013.

During his first two years as president, President Heckler led a strategic visioning and planning process involving alumni, students, faculty, staff, and community leaders that charts the course for Valpo to achieve new levels of excellence during the next two decades. President Heckler concluded the "Our Valpo, Our Time" Campaign in 2009, building on the efforts of his predecessor, Dr. Alan F. Harre. The campaign raised \$238 million — the most ever raised by a Lutheran university.

President Heckler participates actively on numerous national and regional higher education boards and commissions, including previously serving as the chair of the board of Independent Colleges of Indiana and Indiana Campus Compact; former board chair of the New American Colleges and Universities; and member of the board of the Private College 529 Plan and the NCAA Pioneer League for non-scholarship football.

Previously, President Heckler served the University of Colorado Denver for more than a decade, most recently as provost and vice chancellor for academic and student affairs for the three-campus university, including its health sciences center. Prior to moving to Denver, he was professor of fine arts and director of theatre at Siena (N.Y.) College, where he directed, acted, designed, and/or produced more than 100 academic and professional productions in the United States, Europe, and the Middle East. He is also a past president of the Association for Theatre in Higher Education and founder and co-director of its Leadership Institute.

President Heckler earned his Ph.D. in educational leadership and innovation from the School of Education and Human Development at the University of Colorado. He completed his MFA in drama with an emphasis in directing at Catholic University in Washington, D.C., and earned his B.A. in communications summa cum laude at Elizabethtown (Pa.) College.

President Heckler and his wife, Veronica, grew up together in Windber, Pa. The Hecklers are parents of four children and the grandparents of four grandchildren. They are members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.