

TRUSTEE PROFILE OF DEDICATION:

MARK A. BENNINGHOFF '82

AS AN ALUMNUS OF THE COLLEGE, WHY IS SERVICE TO YOUR ALMA MATER AS A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES IMPORTANT TO YOU?

It is an opportunity to give back to Thiel and to contribute to its continued success so that current and future students can have the same or better experiences than me. Second only to my family, the education, mentorship of faculty and staff, and social experiences gained during my undergraduate studies at Thiel played such an important role in who I am today.

WHAT LESSONS DID YOU LEARN OR EXPERIENCES DID YOU HAVE AT THIEL THAT INFLUENCED THE DIRECTION OF YOUR LIFE AND CAREER?

- *From religion faculty member William Good:* Do Good! And give back.
- *From business and accounting faculty members John Logan, David Miller and M.J. Yusko-Howsare:* The recipe for great teaching goes beyond classroom lectures. Mentorship and encouragement are important ingredients too!
- *From my work study job as a dishwasher in the cafeteria:* Do a good job no matter what it is. Also, all staff—whether dishwasher or president—contribute to the success of the organization.
- *From theatre faculty member Bill Robinson:* The importance of thinking outside the box.
- *And from Sigma Phi Epsilon fraternity:* The importance of virtue, diligence and brotherly love. It was also my first experience in leading a turnaround.



WHAT IS YOUR BUSINESS OR LIFE PHILOSOPHY?

Family first; do good; have fun; and give back.

WHY WOULD YOU RECOMMEND THAT ALUMNI CONNECT AND BECOME ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS IN THE LIFE OF THIEL COLLEGE?

It feels good to give back. Regardless of our individual experiences at Thiel, it was likely a major influence on who we are as individuals and professionals. Thiel has come through some major challenges recently, and we need the involvement of as many alumni as possible. Alumni involvement will be critical to the success of our “Imagining Thiel” initiative as we plan Thiel’s future. The good news is that alumni involvement can take many forms:

- *Time*—Volunteer time to become involved on one or more of many committees or initiatives. We now hold many meetings electronically so travel requirements are minimal.
- *Talent*—Provide internships for students or provide advice and counsel in almost any area.
- *Treasure*—Donate to Thiel at any level to make a difference in our ability to execute our plans for the future. Any form of alumni involvement will help us reshape Thiel into the best Lutheran-related liberal arts college!

IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT MAKES THIEL UNIQUE AMONG LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGES?

Thiel is unique because of its amazing faculty-to-student ratio, especially compared to other institutions; the ability for a student to be a “big fish in a small pond”; the great opportunities for students to be involved in many extracurricular activities; and the incredibly talented and dedicated faculty, staff, cabinet, president and Board of Trustees, and most importantly, students!

Mark Benninghoff is the chief operations officer/chief administrative officer of Valley Physician Enterprise in Winchester, Va. Previously, he worked at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center for 24 years, culminating as the executive vice president for the Physician Services Division in 2008. He earned a bachelor’s degree in accounting and business administration from Thiel in 1982 and an M.B.A. from the Joseph M. Katz Graduate School of Business at the University of Pittsburgh in 2009. He is vice chair of Thiel’s Board of Trustees, as well as chair of the Audit Committee. Benninghoff and his partner, David E. Kauffman, M.D., have two children, Carter and Charlotte.