

TOMMIES

IN OUR COMMUNITIES



**DR. MARIA HOLM '03,
'12 MBA, '23 EDD**

Living in: St. Charles, IL

From Childhood Inspiration to Leadership and Legacy

Maria Farmer Holm's connection with the University of St. Thomas stretches back to her childhood, when her father, John Farmer, a 1975 alumnus, first brought her to campus. "We walked in the tunnels and sat in the leather chairs in the library," she said. "I was dazzled - I wanted to go to St. Thomas."

This early spark led her to apply for early decision in the fall of 1994 and start in the fall of 1995. Maria cherishes the memory of being accepted. "I STILL have my acceptance card. It's placed with the grad hat confetti that my son just got in his acceptance card!"

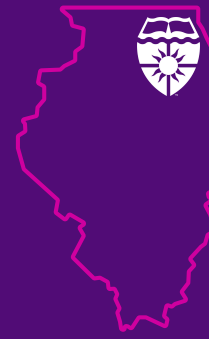
St. Thomas has been a family tradition for Maria, with multiple relatives attending the university before her, making it feel like home. Over the years, she continued to deepen her relationship with the institution, earning three degrees: a BA in Communication Studies in 2003, an MBA in 2011, and a Doctorate in Leadership in 2023. With a career spanning over two decades in roles at Target, ShopHQ, and Synchrony Financial, Maria's passion for leadership and talent development ultimately led her to join Merevie as the Senior Vice President of Business Transformation.

Reflecting on her time at St. Thomas, Maria credits the university with shaping her personal and professional growth, not only through the critical thinking and collaboration skills she gained but also through the kindness and support of faculty and staff.

Maria said, "I had professors who personally worked with me when I needed help, advocated for me and mentored me. The St. Thomas community is what has kept me engaged and wanting to continue the mission of common good forward."

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DR. MARIA HOLM '03, '12 MBA, '23 EDD, CONTINUED

Maria lives out this mission daily by prioritizing helping others and fostering a spirit of giving back. Her advice for current Tommies? "College goes by FAST! Enjoy every moment, take advantage of all the experiences offered, do your best work (that practice will always serve you well) and have FUN!"

For prospective students, Maria highlights the sense of belonging and the supportive community that St. Thomas offers, with small class sizes and accessible professors who genuinely invest in students' success.

Now based in St. Charles, Illinois, with her husband of 23 years, three sons and two dogs, Maria enjoys hiking, gravel cycling and exploring the Chicagoland food scene. Her journey exemplifies the lifelong impact of a St. Thomas education, rooted in community, leadership, and a commitment to the common good.

SOUND BITES

On St. Thomas Shaping Life

"In addition to the rich critical thinking and collaboration skills I developed and used through each of my degrees, it was the kindness shown to me by nearly every faculty and staff member I came in to contact with over the past 20 years. I had professors that personally worked with me when I needed help, advocated for me and mentored me. The St. Thomas community is what has kept me engaged and wanting to continue the mission of common good forward."

On Living the Mission

"I live St. Thomas' mission in my daily life. I believe helping others and paying it forward are critical and I saw that at St. Thomas as student every day."

Advice for Current Tommies

"College goes by FAST! Enjoy every moment, take advantage of all the experiences offered, do your best work (that practice will always serve you well) and have FUN!"

Words for Prospective Students

"St. Thomas offers a community feel that is second to none. The smaller class sizes, access to professors and staff, and beautiful campus make you feel like you truly belong. The education you receive is next level because your professors know you and invest in you and are there to support you and ensure your success."