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Walsh University Announces
The James B. Renacci Forum & Center for Civic Engagement

North Canton, Ohio: Walsh University is proud to announce the establishment of the James B. Renacci Forum & Center for Civic Engagement, which will serve as an epicenter for collaboration, research and civic engagement on Walsh’s campus. The announcement was made during the Sunday, December 18, Winter Commencement Ceremony in which the Honorable James B. Renacci served as keynote speaker and was awarded a Walsh Honorary Doctorate in Humane Letters.

“I want to inspire the next generation of young Americans to be politically aware and to serve their neighbors,” said U.S. Congressman Jim Renacci, Ohio’s 16th district, upon the creation of Walsh’s Renacci Government Scholars Program in 2013. Now, nearly four years later, he is taking that commitment one step further by establishing the James B. Renacci Forum & Center for Civic Engagement in Walsh University’s newest building, the Global Learning Center, which is currently under construction. The establishment of the Renacci Forum & Center for Civic Engagement has been made possible through a personal gift from Jim Renacci.

Located on the main floor of the Global Learning Center, the Forum will serve as a central gathering space for the building, offering students a place to come together for significant, action-oriented dialogue on issues facing our global community.

“Within our newest and most technologically advanced building on campus, Walsh University will have a visible demonstration of its commitment to higher learning and servant leadership,” said President Richard Jusseaume. “We look forward to the lectures, academic offerings, public programs, research and action that will come out of the Renacci Forum, which will offer teams of faculty, staff, students, and community members the chance to work across disciplines to solve real-world problems.”

The newly established Renacci Center for Civic Engagement will be a place for the Renacci Government scholars, faculty, students and community to work together to tackle local or regional issues. The Center for Civic Engagement will join the University’s establishment of
two new research institutes in Applied Humanities and Community Health, where faculty will work collaboratively with students in research initiatives that will include a focus on service to the community. All three will provide channels for discussion, opportunities for collaboration, and platforms for debate on issues that impact all Americans as well as those that have global implications.

Supporting these initiatives will be The Renacci Senior Fellows Program where the participants will include senior civic and political leaders from around the world who will share insights and real-world experience with the greater Walsh community.

In addition, The Renacci Lecture Series will challenge and provide a platform for thought leaders to share their knowledge and understanding of complex issues facing our local, regional and global communities.

“The Forum is both a physical space in the building, as well as a conceptual idea of having discussions about public issues. In ancient Rome, the ‘forum’ was the geographical center for public life and also a center for civic activity and discussion,” said Douglas Palmer, Ph.D., Vice President for Academic Affairs. “We are creating a 21st Century model of that forum here at Walsh.”

The Forum will also serve as the central hub for existing Walsh programs such as the Br. Francis Blouin Global Scholars Program, the Blouin Leaders in Social Justice Program, and the Renacci Government Scholars Program.

“Building on the foundation of the Renacci Government Scholars Program, the Forum will create a place where all students, not just Government & Foreign Affairs majors, can connect and tackle real-world problems such as poverty, education, healthcare, hunger, and more,” Renacci said. “Taking an active role in government doesn’t have to mean running for office. It’s about being involved and making sure your voice is heard.”

In addition, the Forum will also include the official James B. Renacci Archives, featuring personal papers, photographs and mementoes documenting Congressman Renacci’s years in public life, with special emphasis placed on policy issues faced while serving in Congress.

Like many Walsh students, Renacci was the first in his family to go to college. He graduated in 1980 with a bachelor’s degree in Business Administration from Indiana University of Pennsylvania and began his professional career as a Certified Public Accountant at Grant Thornton in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. After three years, he relocated to Wadsworth, Ohio, where he founded LTC Management Services, a company that owned, operated and managed nursing facilities throughout the region. He also founded a CPA firm in 1989, along with several other business ventures.

In addition to his 30 years of business experience, Renacci has dedicated much of his life to public service. He spent five years as a volunteer firefighter in Wadsworth, served on the
In November 2010, Renacci was elected to the United States House of Representatives representing the 16th District of Ohio. Currently, he is serving his third term and is a member of the House Ways and Means Committee and the House Budget Committee.

Renacci has said that he identifies deeply with the mission of Walsh University to educate students through a values-based education with an international perspective in Judeo-Christian tradition.

“I appreciate how the mission of Walsh and my own Catholic faith intersect,” said Renacci. “At a time when our country is facing many challenges, it is critical that young people are engaged and active in politics. I continue to be impressed by the students at Walsh University who display true passion and concern for the issues that we must tackle as a nation.”

Congressman Renacci and his wife Tina reside in Wadsworth and have three adult children.

*Walsh University is an independent, co-educational Catholic liberal arts and sciences institution that promotes academic excellence and diversity and provides close faculty-student interaction. It is dedicated to teaching its nearly 3,000 students from 40 states and 35 countries to become leaders in service to others through a values-based education with an international perspective in the Judeo-Christian tradition.* [www.walsh.edu](http://www.walsh.edu).