

# Richard J. Bolte Sr.'s Lasting Imprint

By **Donna Klinger**



BDP Inc.'s multinational status and considerable size did not insulate the global logistics and transportation company when recession bulldozed the United States' economy in 2008.

The Bolte and Connors brothers, all seven of whom received their undergraduate degrees at Mount St. Mary's University, faced a difficult decision to cut 400 employees to ensure the company's continued viability. They instead chose the ethical path, instituting executive-level pay cuts in order to save hundreds of jobs. The brothers reached a humane and compassionate business management decision that their father, Richard "Dick" J. Bolte Sr., and their Mount professors would have advised.

## **AN ETHICAL LEADER**

Richard J. Bolte Sr., a brilliant logistics pioneer who started his Philadelphia-based company with a \$1,200 home improvement loan and a Royal typewriter while raising four of his sons as a single father, strongly believed in three principles forged from his Catholic faith: education, respect for humanity and ethical leadership. In his company's early days, he befriended a homeless man whom he had encountered on the street, giving him a job and renting an

apartment for him. The man worked for BDP for seven years without anyone in the company being aware of how he landed the job and achieved upward mobility. Bolte Sr.'s sons have unearthed numerous examples of their father's unpublicized generosity to people who needed a helping hand.

From the moment his oldest son, Richard Jr., decided that he felt at home at the Mount and wanted to pursue his education in Emmitsburg in 1975, and as each ensuing son decided that he liked the idea of having at least one brother on campus and wanted to be a Mountaineer, Bolte Sr. dedicated his time and treasure to the university that he came to love as he served on the board of trustees and made significant donations to scholarship and other programs. Bolte and Connors men were enrolled at the Mount for 17 years with Richard Jr. graduating in 1979, John in 1982, Tim in 1984, Frank in 1987, Bill in 1989, Mike in 1991 and Rob in 1992.

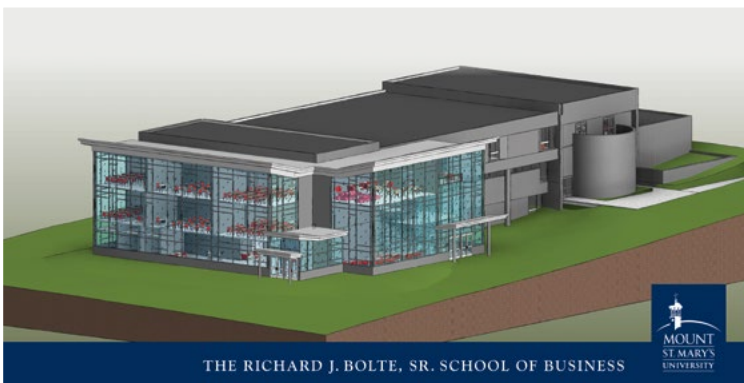
As the last son graduated, the Mount honored the elder Bolte with an honorary doctorate of humane letters in recognition of his selfless service to the university. The family has continued to lend their talents to the Mount, with Richard Jr. as an emeritus member of the board of trustees, Tim as a current board member and Frank as a member of the Bolte School's board of advisors. Sheila A. (Breschi) Bolte, C'85, wife of Tim, and two members of the next generation, Richard J. Bolte III, C'08, and Erin R. "Rosie" Bolte, C'17, are also Mount alumni.

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Frank Bolte



Back row (left to right)  
Mike Connors, Robert Bolte, Richard Bolte, Bill Connors  
Seated (left to right) Tim Bolte, Frank Bolte



THE RICHARD J. BOLTE, SR. SCHOOL OF BUSINESS



## DICK BOLTE'S LEGACY

Bolte Sr., who passed away in 2006, continues to leave his imprint on campus with the naming of the school of business in his memory in 2011. The gift resulted in enhancement and support of the Mount's focus on ethical leadership in business and creation of a graduate certificate in logistics.

Through the years, BDP has hired several dozen Mounties who have proven not only to be skilled, but also ethical decision makers. Now the Bolte family, through the Bolte Family Foundation, is recommitting to the Bolte School in their father's honor. President Timothy E. Trainor, Ph.D., recently announced that the Bolte Family Foundation is donating \$3 million to help expand and renovate Knott Academic Center, home to the Richard J. Bolte, Sr. School of Business.

“Our father inspired us in our business to be committed to our people and to higher education,” said Frank Bolte. “Our company's culture emphasized community service and had a family feel, just like being at the Mount.”

“Mount St. Mary's deeply appreciates the Bolte family's devotion to their father's legacy and investment in the Mount,” Trainor said. “The Mount is experiencing student enrollment growth and academic program expansion, and this gift will assist us in creating additional classrooms, conference rooms and faculty offices as well as a laboratory space. The addition and renovation will also allow the Mount to develop more partnerships in areas such as logistics and forensic accounting to further our mission of creating ethical leaders who lead lives of significance.”

The \$7.5 million Knott Academic Center expansion and renovation project, designed by Marotta/Main Architects, is also supported by a more than \$2.9 million capital grant from the state of Maryland. The project includes construction of an approximately 12,140 square foot addition and renovation of the 49,074 square foot existing building. Work will commence this summer and is anticipated to be completed by fall 2021. The upgrade will include enhancing the learning environment and building new classrooms, a Bloomberg Classroom Laboratory and faculty offices.