



## St. Mary's College of Maryland at Historic St. Mary's City

### **Pulitzer Prize-Winner and Writer of "Flags of Our Fathers" Ron Powers Talks About *Mark Twain: A Life* On Fri. March 2 at 8 p.m.**

*Photo available via email*

(St. Mary's City, MD) Jan. 19, 2006 – Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Ron Powers will talk about "Mark Twain: Making Him Fresh Again," on Friday, March 2, at 8 p.m., at Auerbach Auditorium in St. Mary's Hall on the St. Mary's College of Maryland (SMCM) campus. Powers is also the co-writer of the bestselling *Flags of our Fathers*. The talk is free and open to the public. For more information, contact Ben Click at 240-895-4253.

"Considering that at least 40 biographies of the man already exist, what more can be written?" said Ben Click, SMCM professor of English. "Powers found a way to add freshness by putting Mark Twain himself on the page and letting us see and hear him through hundreds of his letters and journals, rather than taking the usual route of theorizing about him. The book was widely praised for capturing the man, the author, and the America that existed during Twain's life."

Click added that many critics claim that Powers' book should now contend as the standard Twain biography, superseding even Twain's authorized biographer Alfred Bigelow Paine (*Mark Twain: A Biography*), and Twain scholar Justin Kaplan (*Mr. Clemens and Mark Twain*).

*Mark Twain: A Life*, was described by the *New York Times* as "a lively account of the personality and career of the man who 'found a voice for his country'." The review added, "A couple of passages early in this biography are virtuoso performances of descriptive recreation, worthy of Twain." The book, published by Simon & Schuster, was a finalist for a National Book Critics Circle Award.

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Founded in 1840 as Maryland's "monument school" commemorating the state's first capital, St. Mary's College of Maryland provides a high-caliber liberal arts education typically associated with prestigious private colleges while maintaining the affordability and accessibility of a public college.

- 1,934 men and women
- Designated the Maryland state honors college in 1992.
- Consistently ranked among the top liberal arts colleges by *U.S. News & World Report*, *The Princeton Review*, and the *Fiske Guide*.
- Selective admissions – SAT average of 1252
- Highest 6-year graduation rate for all Maryland public colleges and universities
- Opportunities for independent student research through the senior thesis, the St. Mary's Project
- Waterfront campus along the St. Mary's River in Southern Maryland
- National 2004 Inter-Collegiate Sailing Association Co-ed Champions

Powers won the Pulitzer Prize for Criticism in 1973 for his writing as TV-radio columnist for the Chicago Sun-Times. He was the first television critic to win the Pulitzer Prize. In 1985, Powers won an Emmy for his commentaries on “CBS News Sunday Morning” with Charles Kuralt.

Powers’ other works include *White Town Drowning: Journeys to Hannibal* and *Dangerous Water: A Biography of the Boy Who Became Mark Twain*. With James Bradley, he co-wrote the 2000 #1 New York Times Bestseller *Flags of Our Fathers*. In 2006, *Flags of Our Fathers* was adapted into a film directed by Clint Eastwood and produced by Steven Spielberg.

In addition to writing, Powers has taught for the Bread Loaf Writers’ Conference, the Salzburg Seminar in Salzburg, and at Middlebury College in Middlebury, Vermont.

St. Mary’s College of Maryland is ranked one of the best liberal arts colleges in the nation by U.S. News & World Report, The Princeton Review and Kiplinger’s. With roots going back to 1840, SMCM is the state’s only public honors college, offering the academic excellence of a top private college with the openness and affordability of public education.