



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Kyle Ballarta joins IACS Board of Trustees**

***Entrepreneur, business professor and artist has served key roles at Catholic organizations.***

LOS ANGELES, December 8, 2022 — Kyle Ballarta, a noted philanthropist and accomplished entrepreneur, has joined the Board of Trustees of the Institute for Advanced Catholic Studies at USC.

By joining the 19-member board, Ballarta will provide governance and oversight while helping chart the Institute's future direction. IACS trustees also serve as ambassadors, helping communicate the Institute's initiatives, programs and goals within their networks and among the public.

"Kyle is a leading entrepreneur and dedicated educator who is committed to supporting scholarship that answers society's most pressing questions," said IACS Executive Director Becky King Cerling, Ph.D. "IACS will greatly benefit from his leadership experience and professional expertise. We are excited to welcome him to IACS and the USC family."

A Texas native, Ballarta, 35, is a first-generation Filipino American. He is the founder and CEO of Falkon Ventures, an investment fund focused on supporting new technology addressing global challenges. As a serial entrepreneur, he has founded and co-founded a number of corporations in the tech industry, including LifeProof, a California-based consumer electronics company acquired by Otterbox in 2013, and Citadel Drone Defense, which was acquired by BlueHalo in 2021.

As a trustee, Ballarta intends to extend his passion for innovation and working across disciplines to IACS.

"I'm excited to join the IACS Board of Trustees and grateful for the opportunity to help lead an institute that is dedicated to discovery, innovation and global engagement," he said. "IACS has an extensive record of finding solutions that tackle our world's most pressing challenges. I look forward to working with my colleagues on the board to ensure IACS remains a leader in furthering faith-based research and Catholic social thought."





Ballarta's philanthropy and volunteer service extends across the globe. Ballarta is a part of the board of directors of the Laudato si Challenge Foundation, a global initiative from Pope Francis supporting sustainable development through philanthropy.

A Knight of Magistral Grace of the Order of Malta, Ballarta is active in many Catholic organizations and Vatican-led initiatives. He is a member of the founding patron council for the [Humanity 2.0 Initiative](#), which works to promote human flourishing and collaborates with the Vatican. He is currently a member of the "Finance and Humanity Village" for Pope Francis' Economy of Francesco in Italy, coordinating the sustainable finance group.

He serves on the Board of Trustees at St. Edward's University, a private Catholic university in Austin, Texas where he earned his MBA in digital media management. He is currently an adjunct professor at the university's prestigious Munday School of Business. He has lectured at the University of East Anglia in the United Kingdom and Columbia Business School.

Ballarta earned a bachelor's degree in music and social sciences from the California Institute of the Arts. A trained professional musician and accomplished trumpeter, he has played the instrument in public performances across the U.S. and globe.

Ballarta lives in Austin with his wife, Veronica, and two young children, Sebastian and Gabriel.

### **About the Institute for Advanced Catholic Studies at USC:**

The Institute for Advanced Catholic Studies (IACS) is an independent global research center located at the USC Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences. Led by Executive Director Becky Cerling, Ph.D., IACS supports scholars and artists, produces books, hosts academic conferences and cultural events, and furthers the intellectual work of the Catholic Church.

Learn more at [iacs.usc.edu](https://iacs.usc.edu)