

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

St. Mary's University College Students Mentor at Risk Youth through Calgary Police Service Program

Calgary, AB (January 25, 2011) – Members of the Calgary Police Service and students in the St. Mary's University College Bachelor of Education program met today to celebrate and evaluate their involvement in the Youth at Risk Development (YARD) program over the past several months. St. Mary's University College is proud to be the first post-secondary institution in Calgary to partner with the early intervention program to keep kids out of gangs.

In September, the Calgary Police Service approached St. Mary's University College to gauge interest among students in the Bachelor of Education program in mentoring youths at risk of gang involvement. As a result, three students, Karen Fischer, Kevin Legare and Teri-Lynn Ryan volunteered their time outside of the classroom twice a week to tutor youths, assist them with homework and serve as positive role models.

"We are very proud of our student teachers who have given their time and energy to work with the YARD program over the last several months," said Linda Dudar, director of the Education program at St. Mary's. "These students recognize the need for assisting young people and the tremendous contribution they are making to the community. We look forward to continuing our relationship with the Calgary Police Service."

Launched in 2009, YARD is a community based early intervention initiative that supports youth, ages 10 to 17, who are at risk of gang involvement. YARD teams, consisting of a police officer and a registered social worker, work closely with youth, their families, schools and community agencies to help youth at risk avoid or escape the gang lifestyle. The pilot program is delivered in partnership with the Calgary Police Service and the City of Calgary's Community and Neighbourhood Services.

About the Bachelor of Education Program at St. Mary's University College

The two-year after degree Bachelor of Education (Elementary) program was introduced at St. Mary's University College in 2008. Combining classroom teaching with hands-on practicums, it is the only degree of its kind in Canada that specifically prepares teachers for Catholic schools.

About St. Mary's University College

St. Mary's University College is a Catholic post-secondary, liberal arts and sciences teaching and research institution open to all faiths and traditions. St. Mary's offers Bachelor of Arts degrees, a Bachelor of Education (Elementary) degree and university courses in 33 academic subjects. For more information, visit www.stmu.ca

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