



a new energy

2022 Report to Community



Vision

St. Mary's University will be a leader in post-secondary education, open to all, and focused on developing the whole person: mind, body and spirit. Founded on the Catholic Intellectual Tradition, St. Mary's will prepare its students to live with integrity, compassion and confidence.

Mission

St. Mary's is an innovative teaching and research university that provides affordable, accredited and highly valued degrees in the Liberal Arts, Sciences and Education. Through the pursuit of knowledge and service to the community, we prepare our students to become lifelong learners, engaged citizens and compassionate members of society.

Land Acknowledgment

St. Mary's University campus sits on land that has a deep relational history and ongoing presence with the Indigenous Peoples who have called this place home since time immemorial: the Siksikaisitapi (the Blackfoot Confederacy), the Siksika, the Kainai, the Piikani and the Umskappi Piikani. Mohkinstis is also home to the Tsuut'ina peoples, a Dene people who travelled from the North and were signatories to Treaty 7 alongside the Iyarhe Nakoda Peoples, the Chiniki, Wesley and Bearspaw First Nations. This place is also home to the Métis Nation of Alberta, Region 3, a proud post-contact Nation formed from the union of First Nations families and European Settlers.

As an academic institution, we have a responsibility to honour these long-standing, and ongoing relationships to land, and to learn how we can become good relatives here.

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Message From the **President**



It is my honour and privilege to contribute a message of greeting to my first Report to Community publication with St. Mary's University. My short time at St. Mary's thus far has been nothing short of remarkable as this community welcomed me with open arms and open hearts and an excitement and energy to move forward together into the next phase of St. Mary's University's history.

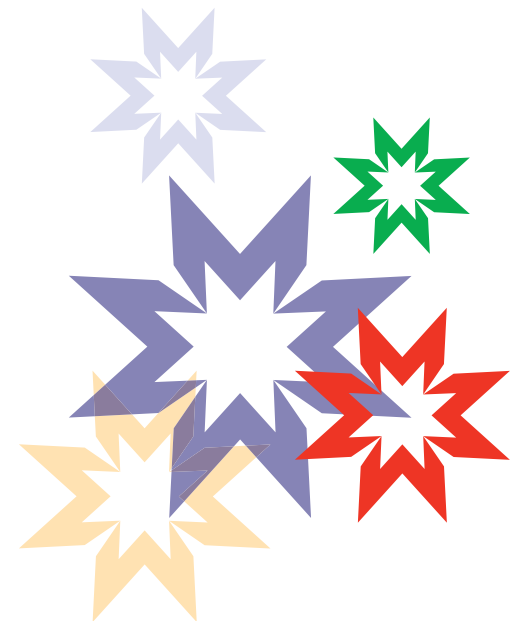
As President and Vice-Chancellor I look to stand on the shoulders of those who came before me and advance many of the initiatives that were established prior to my appointment. St. Mary's will continue to be a leading liberal arts, science and education institution that embraces and celebrates its Catholic identity while remaining inclusive and open to all and celebrating diversity of thought and belief.

I look forward to listening and learning from our First Nations, Inuit and Metis Elders who have been instrumental in teaching the St. Mary's community how to walk in a good way and who support and guide us on our journey toward reconciliation. This important work must continue as we further embrace the culture and history of these beautiful traditional lands that we share together.

In the coming years, we will look to grow both in scope of capacity and programming even as we ensure that our core principles will never change as we prepare our students to live with integrity, compassion, and confidence.

It is my hope you enjoy the stories contained in this publication and share in the celebration of the amazing people, programs, and initiatives that highlighted our past year. I invite you to see the expanded impact of St. Mary's because the world needs St. Mary's graduates educated and trained in ways of knowing and thinking commensurate with the challenges of our day.

Sinda Vanderpool
President and Vice-Chancellor





2022

President Installation



After taking the helm of St. Mary's University in July 2022, Dr. Sinda Vanderpool was officially installed as St. Mary's University's president and vice-chancellor on October 28, 2022. The installation ceremony and Mass took place at St. Albert the Great Parish, and was presided by Bishop William T. McGrattan, Chancellor of St. Mary's University.

This was a historic day, as we gathered as a community and celebrated our new president, the fourth in our history and first female appointment. This ceremony marked the official beginning of the next phase in St. Mary's University's evolution and growth.

We look forward to Dr. Vanderpool continuing to expand upon St. Mary's student-centred vision of growth and success, building upon our position as a leading liberal arts, sciences, and education institution rooted in the Catholic intellectual tradition that is open to all.

Congratulatory Message

**HONOURABLE DEMETRIOS NICOLAIDES,
MINISTER OF ADVANCED EDUCATION**

*ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY PRESIDENTIAL INSTALLATION
CEREMONY OF DR. SINDA VANDERPOOL
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 28TH, 2022*

St. Mary's is an important part of Alberta's post-secondary system and the Calgary community, growing from its foundation in 1986 to award degrees since 2004. And, just this week, Universities Canada recognized St. Mary's continuous work at expanding their robust education pathways by making St. Mary's the 97th member of the national association.

St. Mary's unique mission to provide students with a strong foundation built on ethics, social justice, and respect for diversity of opinions and personal beliefs makes it a critical part of Alberta's post-secondary system. As Alberta's Minister of Advanced Education, I'm incredibly proud of the fact that in line with our overall Alberta 2030 strategy, St. Mary's is equipping students with the skills and knowledge they need to access rewarding careers in our growing economy and to become engaged citizens in their communities.

And to continue that legacy of success I would like to welcome Dr. Sinda Vanderpool as the fourth President and Vice-Chancellor of St. Mary's University.

Dr. Vanderpool's career has taken her from the lecture halls of Davidson College and Princeton University to the administration of Baylor University, where she created a more inclusive, diverse, and engaged campus.

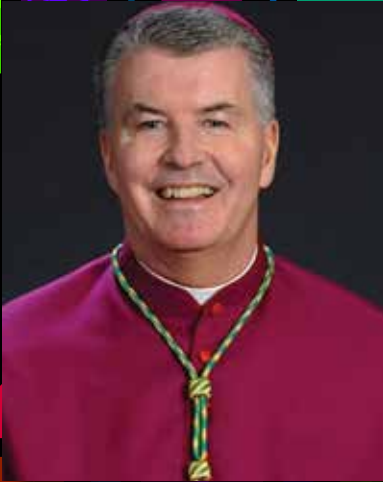
Her passion for education and helping students can only strengthen the local community and our province. And I have no doubt that under her gifted leadership, St. Mary's students will grow into tomorrow's leaders.

Once again, congratulations Dr. Vanderpool on your installation as President and Vice-Chancellor and congratulations St. Mary's on your continued growth and success.

I am confident that with renewed leadership, you will do the students, the region, and all of Alberta proud.



Message from the **Chancellor**



It was an honour for me as the Chancellor of St. Mary's University to install Dr. Sinda Vanderpool as the Fourth President and Vice-Chancellor of the University. I am confident that Dr. Vanderpool will continue to build on the legacy of past presidents in the spirit and purpose of the University and the pursuit of the entire community towards excellence in all things for the service of others. I look forward to her contributions and new insights that will be a catalyst to further growth and development in the University.

Catholic universities matter in society as they offer both education and formation integral to the human person according to the teachings of Christ our Lord. Grounded in the Catholic Intellectual Tradition, we may be mistakenly perceived as looking to the past, when in truth, having the capacity to behold the richness of our intellectual tradition, our solid foundation becomes one of the building blocks of authentic progress. St. Mary's University strives to be a center of knowledge and innovative ideas that reflect both the depth of knowledge and formation and the brilliant minds that are driven to respond to the ever-changing needs of society.

May we all continue to strive for excellence, applying ourselves to learn, grow, and fulfill the purpose for which we have been called and using all of our resources to glorify God in our service of others.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William T. McGratton". The signature is written in a cursive style.

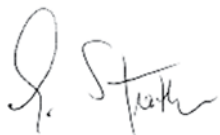
Most Reverend William T. McGratton
Bishop of Calgary
Chancellor

Message from the **Board Chair**

As Board Chair for St. Mary's University, I have witnessed the passion that lives within our people to provide a world-class liberal arts and sciences education rooted in the Catholic Intellectual Tradition for our students. An education that equips students with the hard and soft skills necessary to step out into the world after graduation and immediately make an impact for good on the world around them. St. Mary's dedicated faculty and staff are deeply committed to each and every student who pursues their education here, and each play such a valuable role in helping our students achieve their educational goals. To be a member of the St. Mary's University community is to share a common investment in the personal success of each student who studies at our institution. It is a shared goal within our internal community to provide a place where curiosity can thrive, critical thought can be developed and commitment to social justice and equity is emboldened.

As we enter into a new chapter in the rich history of St. Mary's under the leadership of our fourth President and Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Sinda Vanderpool, I am excited by a sense of reinvigoration that has been felt around campus. There is a palpable sense of excitement shared among our internal and external community for Dr. Vanderpool's vision for our future and as Board Chair I share this excitement and look forward to working closely with Dr. Vanderpool in the coming years.

It is both an honour and a privilege to serve as the Chair of the St. Mary's University Board of Governors, and to work closely with such a dynamic group of dedicated and committed volunteers who selflessly contribute their time, wisdom and skills as offerings of service and leadership to this amazing institution. Together we will continue to help St. Mary's prosper and be a place where we nurture our wonderful students and help them grow to reach their infinite potential.



Gary Strother
Chair and Treasurer
Board of Governors



Board of Governors

as of July 1, 2022

Most Reverend William T. McGrattan - Chancellor
Mr. Gary Strother - Chair and Treasurer
Mr. Paul Valentine - Vice-Chair
Dr. Bonnie Annicchiarico - Chancellor's Designate
Dr. Sinda Vanderpool - President and Vice-Chancellor
Dr. Norman Knowles - Faculty Representative
Ms. Laura Fraser - Student Representative
Mr. Devin Elkin - Community Advisory Council Representative
Mr. Nathan Ruff - Administrative Staff Representative
Ms. Kara Shaw - Alumni Representative
Most Reverend Gregory Kerr-Wilson - Ecumenical Representative

Members at Large

Ms. Annette Bruisedhead Ms. Mary Comeau Mr. Roberto Geremia
Dr. Linda Dudar Mr. Lee Funke Ms. Debra Mauro
Mr. Scott Morrison

Senior Officers

Ms. Kim Bourque, University Secretary
Vacant, Vice-President Academic and Student Services
Mr. John Deausy, Vice-President Finance and CFO
Ms. Thérèse Takacs, Vice-President Advancement and Campus Services



Message from the **Vice-Presidents**

As we emerged from the challenges and uncertainty presented by the global pandemic, the 2021-22 academic year was highlighted by St. Mary's University campus slowly coming back to life. With in-person classes resuming and our students, staff, and faculty returning to campus, it has brought about a new energy that has lifted the entire St. Mary's community. The resiliency, determination, commitment and dedication shown by our faculty, staff, and students has truly been inspiring.

This year we have experienced some major changes, we have said goodbye to some familiar faces and welcomed some new ones, all while continuing to provide the best liberal arts and sciences education that our students, and the community, have come to expect from St. Mary's.

We are extremely excited for Dr. Sinda Vanderpool's vision of what St. Mary's can be. As the fourth President and Vice-Chancellor, and the first female to hold this position with St. Mary's, we look forward to her dynamic vision for a liberal arts, science, and education institution rooted in the Catholic Intellectual Tradition. We have been impressed by her openness for conversation, the spirit of collaboration she has already fostered in our internal community and the guidance she has shown already in her tenure as President and look with excitement to the future under her leadership.

It has been heartening for our community to return to life pre-pandemic and for our community to be able to host in-person events again. To see our students walk the stage at convocation this year highlighted how much we missed over the past two years and how significant these events are to our internal and external communities. Our Stampede Breakfast saw over 3,500 community members come to campus to celebrate Dr. Vanderpool's first St. Mary's event. The generosity and commitment to St. Mary's was ever present at both the President's Farewell Gala and our Annual Golf Tournament that saw money raised to support our students through scholarships and bursaries.

We have worked hard to be financially prudent over the past year to ensure that St. Mary's is positioned to thrive as we begin our next chapter, while ensuring that we have the resources available for our students and to meet ever changing needs.

We are excited for what is to come, lifted by the energy shared across our campus as we move forward together towards a vibrant future.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Deausy".

John Deausy
Vice-President Finance
and CFO

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thérèse Takacs".

Thérèse Takacs
Vice-President Advancement
and Campus Services

Message from the **Deans**

As Interim Deans at a liberal arts university based in the Catholic Intellectual Tradition it is a core principle that we engage our students in developing the knowledge, skills and competencies that shape a more inclusive and sustainable future. The Liberal Arts, Sciences and Bachelor of Education programs, provide students with academic programming that allows them to find their place in life and that supports them into confident, curious, engaged citizens within their communities.

It is the mission of St. Mary's University to support our students in developing the knowledge, skills and core-competencies required to be successful, confident, hardworking, and community-minded citizens. We are proud of the dedicated and passionate faculty members who prepare engaging course work, attentive and responsive staff, and external community members whose generosity have made many of the amazing things we do at St. Mary's University possible. It is this spirit of community, and this sense of service above self, that positions St. Mary's University to continue to thrive as we enter into a new chapter together.

Dr. Jocelyn Williams
Interim Dean of Arts
and Sciences

Dr. Paolina Seitz
Interim Dean of Education





Message from the **President, Student Legislative Council**

It is my honour and privilege to represent the St. Mary's University student body. These are exciting times at St. Mary's and I understand the importance of students having elected officials who will advocate on their behalf, champion new initiatives, and play a significant role in helping to shape both the student and campus experience.

To be together as a community on campus again is something that no one takes for granted. I look forward to continuing the great work that previous councils have implemented and am excited for the many new initiatives we have planned for the students over the course of this year.

There is plenty of work to be done, but together with my fellow SLC members and the support of the student body, I know we will do great things.

I look forward to the opportunity to serve the St. Mary's student body with compassion, dedication, dignity, and honour.

Laura Fraser
President
Student Legislative Council

Get to know St. Mary's

St. Mary's University is well positioned to thrive in this current climate of rapid global change and challenge. Unique and different, it brings together the very best of all aspects of learning — in mind, body and spirit — to enable students to develop their gifts, realize their potential and contribute to a better world.

St. Mary's is a liberal arts university

As a liberal arts university, St. Mary's focuses on cultivating the critical, creative and curious mind; it teaches students how to think rather than dictating what they ought to think. It seeks to provide a breadth of knowledge and depth of understanding across disciplines and methods, and is by its very nature collaborative and interdisciplinary. It cultivates clear thinking and effective communication while instilling a process of ongoing questioning and discernment that furthers the ability to solve problems. At its best, a liberal arts university produces graduates with a love of learning who are teachable and trainable, curious and creative, and from whom new ideas emerge. Graduates become active citizens ready and eager to participate in the life of their community and the wider world.

St. Mary's is a Catholic university

St. Mary's is rooted in the Catholic Intellectual Tradition, which holds that the search for truth is enriched by sensitivity to the ethical and spiritual dimensions of life, while also recognizing that faith itself must be informed by critical inquiry. The Catholic Intellectual Tradition resists the temptation to compartmentalize knowledge and experience, and is committed to the formation of the whole person. It seeks to create thoughtful and compassionate citizens committed to justice and able to respond sensitively and creatively to changing social needs and cultural realities.

St. Mary's balances Catholic identity while embracing diversity and welcoming all

St. Mary's is an open and welcoming community to all, which is an extension of its identity as a Catholic university. It is conscious of God working in each person's life, recognizing the dignity of the individual as a unique creation and revelation of the Divine. Because all persons are created in the likeness and image of God, all persons are to be treated with dignity and respect. Discrimination on any grounds has no place in a Catholic university. St. Mary's welcomes all to enter into conversation, learn from experience and, in the process, more fully understand themselves. Such conversations are essential in an increasingly diverse, multicultural society and interconnected world.

The liberal arts and sciences advantage

Emphasis on the liberal arts and sciences prepares graduates to be knowledgeable, nimble, adaptable and ready to make a difference in a rapidly changing world.

 <p>critical and strategic thinkers</p>	 <p>effective communicators</p>
 <p>collaborators</p>	 <p>compassionate citizens</p>
 <p>creative innovators</p>	 <p>consider moral and ethical implications</p>

Snapshot 2021–22

914

Full-time students

201

Part-time students



St. Mary's University

Our Brand



Icon

The icon is a star, based on the letter M for the Virgin Mary. Four qualities of Mary (simplicity, clarity, purity and confidence) are represented by the four Ms that comprise the image. The Ms frame a source of light, representing the enlightenment within each student.

Logo



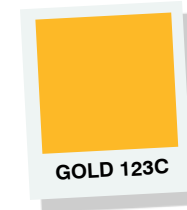
The emphasis of the logo is on the name Mary. The letter T is a pedestal raising the icon's profile. The light encircled by the Ms becomes a flame, with the T as the candle. The T forms a simple cross with Mary, with the star standing in witness above.

Mascot

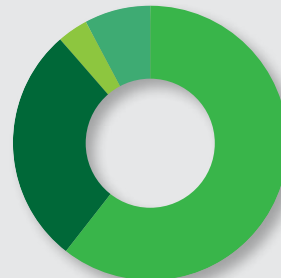
Zeus



Colours

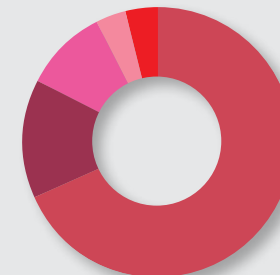


Operating Revenues



- Tuition & Fees: \$8,024,555
- Government Grants: \$4,023,492
- Fundraising & Donations: \$404,738
- Other: \$1,115,330

Operating Expenses



- Salaries & Benefits: \$9,305,831
- Supplies & Services: \$1,684,950
- Other: \$1,554,005
- Maintenance: \$573,897
- Student Awards: \$518,311

Highlights

Student success

243

Individual Student Awards



367

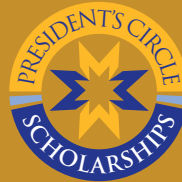
awards distributed totalling \$509,698 representing more than 25% of full-time student recipients

62

President's Circle Scholarships

were handed out in 2021-22, totalling \$79,325 awarded to new students entering from high

school who achieve an average of 80% or higher on averages calculated on the five best Grade 11 or Grade 12 admission subjects



Involved



Vibrant student life



50%

of students volunteer on campus or in the community

Rigorous academic programs

Start at St. Mary's and succeed anywhere! St. Mary's offers high-quality, accredited undergraduate degrees valued by employers and recognized nationally and internationally for graduate-level study.

Bachelor of Arts 3 or 4 years

Degrees in English, General Studies (3-year only), History, Liberal Studies (4-year only), Psychology, Social Justice & Catholic Studies

Minors in Canadian Studies, Catholic Studies, Drama, English, Family Studies, Management, Philosophy, Political Studies, Psychology, Science Studies, Sociology

Bachelor of Education (Elementary) 2 years

After-Degree

Bachelor of Education (Secondary) 2 years

After-Degree

Bachelor of Science 4 years

Major in Biology

University Transfer up to 2 years

Business, Catholic Studies, Classics, Drama, Economics, Family Studies, Philosophy, Political Science, Sociology and more

Pre-Professional

Prepare for professional programs including Law, Dentistry, Medicine, Pharmacy, Social Work, Veterinary

Certificate of Catholic Educational Leadership (CCEL) equips teachers and administrators in religious education

One Admission, Two Degrees

BA or BSc + BEd

A pathway for St. Mary's students into both a four-year BA or BSc AND the two-year BEd (Elementary) After-Degree

Entrepreneurship & Social Responsibility

This diploma program will prepare students with the entrepreneurial and management skills to help develop solutions to social, cultural, and environmental issues and effect positive change.

Year at a Glance



President's Farewell Gala

On Thursday, June 23, 2022 over 200 members of the St. Mary's University community gathered in celebration of the 11 year tenure of Dr. Gerry Turcotte at the 2022 President's Farewell Gala.



Unveiling

On Tuesday, June 21, 2022, St. Mary's unveiled a new painting of Mary for the campus Oratory by renowned Calgary painter Cecile Albi. It was commissioned by long-time St. Mary's supporters Marge and Stan Owerko.



Saint John's Bible

On Thursday, November 18, 2021, St. Mary's University virtually welcomed world-renowned artist and calligrapher of the Saint John's Bible, Donald Jackson, to share his insights on creating a handwritten Bible in the 21st century.





Stampede Breakfast

Over 3,800 community members visited campus for our annual St. Mary's University Stampede Breakfast on Thursday, July 14, 2022, which also marked the first official event for our new President, Dr. Sinda Vanderpool.

Meet the New President

On Thursday, May 30, 2022 members of the St. Mary's University community gathered on campus for a virtual introduction of newly elected President and Vice-Chancellor Dr. Sinda Vanderpool

Darwin Day

To celebrate Darwin Day, St. Mary's University hosted a virtual lecture on Tuesday, February 1, 2022 with Dutch biologist Menno Schilthuizen to discuss the effect that urban jungles have on evolution.

Weaving Words

On June 17th, 2022 Dr. Jocelyn Williams welcomed residents from United Active Living and students from Sibylla Kiddle School who contributed to the Resiliency Interviews – Intergenerational Life Writing book to campus for a book launch celebration.

Isaac Bignell

St. Mary's University alumnus, Isaac Bignell, may have studied Liberal Arts at St. Mary's University – but his career took him down a path that was 'feta' than he could have ever dreamed as a cheese shop owner! During his time at StMU, Isaac fully embraced the variety of courses offered in his degree program and particularly enjoyed studying art history, classical studies, Latin, and linguistics classes which sparked some new interests.

While at StMU, Isaac loved how connected everyone was on campus, whether it was the student body, professors, friends or administrators. "Someone was always down to grab a coffee before class and start a conversation," he says. "It's a great campus to be a part of; the relationships will be with me for life."

St. Mary's tight-knit campus community proved to be an excellent fit for Isaac because of the many available activities it offers. "It was completely community-driven; you were encouraged to be part of clubs, join in on student events. In my last year, I even joined the track team," says Isaac.

"I enjoyed all these extra activities; they made going to campus not a tedious chore but something that I looked forward to many days." One of Isaac's personal highlights from St. Mary's was the Dungeons and Dragons club. As a founding member, Isaac helped D&D become one of the most popular clubs on campus – an honour it still holds today!

Throughout his studies, Isaac faced ongoing challenges in learning how to read and write properly. "I always struggled (and still do) with these obstacles, so my first year was a wake-up call. I read 100+ pages a week, digested it and then took that information and started writing. It was a lot!" says Isaac.

But with great and helpful professors and class after class, he slowly progressed and now has a strong grasp on these literacy skills that eluded him for so long. "I'm still not perfect or a pro by any means, but it was great to get a shot at a smaller place like St. Mary's where I could sit down with my professors and chat about what I was struggling with. I never felt like a face in a crowd," adds Isaac.

Leveraging the variety of skills he gained over the course of his time at StMU, Isaac recently took a leap of faith and purchased his own small business. He is now the proud owner of a small specialty cheese shop called Say Cheese Fromagerie that is located in the Crossroads Farmers Market. He loves his unique career path and can't wait to see what the future will hold!

SAY CHEESE
FROMAGERIE inc

The Role of the Catholic University in the 21st Century



Last month, St. Mary's University was thrilled to have over eighty attendees at our CWL lecture series. This year, the topic was The Role of the Catholic University in the 21st Century, and we were proud to host renowned experts in this topic as they gathered to explore the Catholic Intellectual Tradition with a riveting discussion.

Before this lecture series (dedicated in their name) commenced, The Catholic Women's League (CWL) presented a donation of \$3,000. St. Mary's is grateful for the ongoing and generous support of the CWL that ensures the vision and mission of St. Mary's continues to thrive.

This lecture series focused on answering how the Catholic Intellectual Tradition, with its rigorous intellectual inquiry and rich roots in the past, can serve as a creative guide for transforming Catholic higher education in the 21st century.

Our three panel experts each explored this topic with a distinct focus in mind. In addition, each focus narrowed further into the St. Mary's University context and experience with each speaker.

Fr. Dennis Holtschneider, CM (President, Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities), was the first to speak and framed his lecture around Catholic education in the international context. Further, he elaborated on how the generosity and dedication of the Catholic Church have made its impact across the world – through both charitable branches and private universities that offer unparalleled education which focuses on the mind, body, and spirit.

Dr. Michael W. Higgins, an experienced academic leader, celebrated author, and lecturer was the second to speak and focused on the role of Catholic higher education in the 21st century in the Canadian context. Dr. Higgins emphasized the importance of dialogue and nothing to fear for our futures as private institutions. He further explained that we should frame how we act and treat others as an institution within the frame of how our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, would respond.

Lastly, St. Mary's own Dr. Norman Knowles took to the stage to speak to the Alberta and StMU-specific context. Dr. Knowles—widely recognized as one of the leading scholars of Canada's culture and religious history—spoke to the three most significant challenges facing Catholic universities in Alberta today.

He identified the challenges as Fundamentalism, Utilitarianism, and Fetishism of Technology. Dr. Knowles explained that he believes our core purpose is not just to teach our students how to make a living, but how to build a life worth living.

The evening ended with an engaging Q&A period, where audience members had the opportunity to bring their most pressing questions to our panelists for discussion.



Cordell Minnifee is a celebrated alumnus, ambassador and retired Lightning athlete from St. Mary's University. Graduating in 2019 with a liberal arts degree, Cordell was also the first male basketball player to complete his 5-year eligibility at StMU—a milestone moment for the Lightning basketball program.

Since graduation, Cordell has had time to reflect on the challenges and opportunities that came with being a student athlete at StMU.

Cordell shares, "Life as a retired student athlete has been great for me, I mean of course there have been times where I miss certain aspects of it, but when you play out your full eligibility and move on to the next chapter in life, it does feel natural. The first thing I noticed was how much extra time I had on my hands for other things without worrying about lifting weights, putting shots up, class and study time, as well as, of course, having practice every night. What has been great since I stopped playing is that I finally was able to put on and keep on some weight, which is a lot harder when you're burning thousands of calories every single day. Whether it's working out, putting shots up, or practice, that's been a nice little bonus to retirement."

Being able to change his focus has allowed Cordell the time to move forward in his career.

"Since I graduated from StMU and finished my playing career there I continue to work for the same company that I was working for while I was in school. However, they had an opportunity where I was able to actually move down to the US on an executive visa and work abroad for six months. That was a great experience for me being in a different country far away from friends and family during a pretty crazy time with COVID-19 and the injustices with George Floyd. That was definitely an experience I'll carry with me forever because it exposed me to new perspectives and ideologies. I ended up deciding against going back to the US, as I wanted to be closer to family and friends here in Calgary. Fortunately, I was able to find work with a consulting firm here in Calgary."

Outside of work, Cordell has had time to focus on important relationships. "I met an amazing woman who is also an StMU alumni which has been incredible. I'm extremely grateful to have her in my life. I've also been able to reconnect with close friends and family members and really invest time into those relationships."



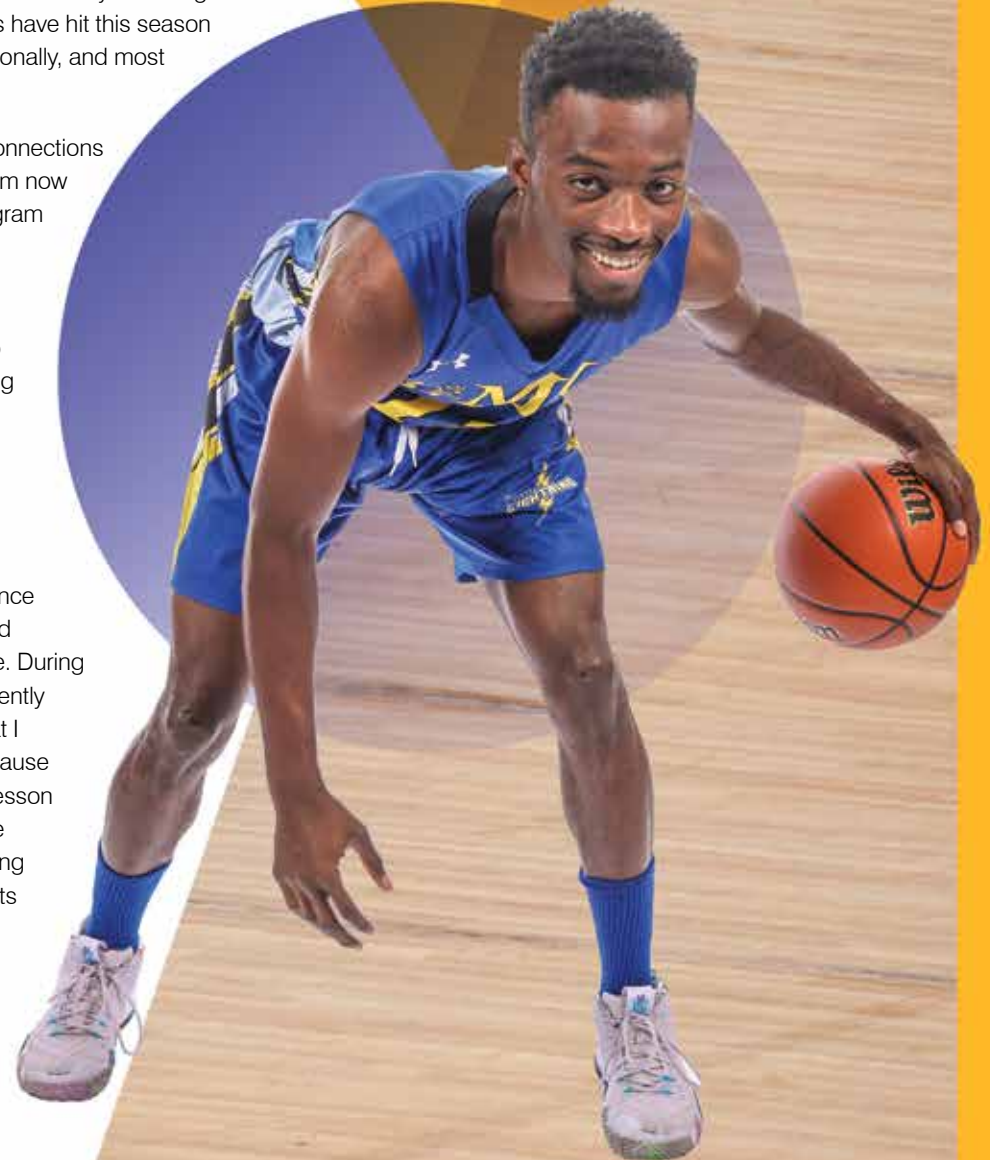
Cordell Minnifoe

Cordell has attended a handful of our home games this season and has been keeping watch on what's happening. "I love watching the guys play, it gets me so excited to see how far the program has come. I still talk to a lot of guys on the team and the coaching staff. I love seeing all the success they're having. They deserve it. It's been super exciting to see some of the milestones those guys have hit this season going undefeated in the first half of the season, being recognized and ranked nationally, and most importantly securing a playoff spot three weeks before the end of the season."

Cordell was team captain during his time with the Lightning and created strong connections with the team and coaches while maintaining his leadership role. "I look at the team now and I think back to the first time Coach Ruff and I discussed his vision for the program and the role he wanted me to play. His predictions were kind of scary accurate, the timelines that he set for what he wanted to accomplish with the program have basically been spot on. I have the utmost amount of respect for Coach Ruff and the whole coaching staff because in that conversation the most important thing to Coach Ruff wasn't about winning basketball games it was about developing young men into model students and members of the community."

Being a respected leader to the team, Cordell demonstrated what it took to be a team captain. He learned many skills and lessons from this experience that have helped him in his career and personal relationships.

"I would say that one aspect that sticks out the most for me would be the importance of communicating and understanding various perspectives. In order to understand others and how they view things we need to know how to effectively communicate. During my time as a Lightning I had to learn very quickly that I had to communicate differently depending on who I was talking to. I couldn't talk to Coach Ruff the same way that I could talk to Coach Farag or the same way that I could talk to my teammates because all three of them saw things from a different lens. That was probably the biggest lesson that stuck with me in my experience there and what being a team captain help me see was that communication is everything and the better I can be at communicating the more effective and successful I'll be in life. I've taken that lesson into all aspects of my life whether I'm dealing with personal relationships or work relationships. Communication has been my saving grace. I attribute a good chunk of building that skill set to my time as a Lightning at StMU."



2022
St. Mary's University
GOLF
TOURNAMENT

On Thursday, August 25, 2022, members of the St. Mary's community gathered at the beautiful Silvertip Resort for the 11th Annual St. Mary's University Golf Tournament. Golfers enjoyed beautiful weather for a day of community and celebration while raising proceeds that impact the student experience at St. Mary's.



Erin McQuitty

As an esteemed alumna of St. Mary's University, retired Lightning athlete and a former employee, Erin McQuitty, is what we call a triple threat!

Erin started as a Development Assistant at St. Mary's University, and was soon promoted to the role of Development Specialist. In her time spent working on campus, Erin realized her passion for higher education and decided to pursue her Bachelor of Education – Elementary degree and enrolled in the two-year post-graduate program at StMU.

"Already being a part of the campus experience made it easy for me to make the decision to apply for the Education program. I got to know the community well and knew that we had one of the top education programs. I wouldn't have gone anywhere else," explains Erin.

While pursuing her Bachelor of Education, Erin thrived as a student and became actively involved in the Lightning athletics program by joining both the cross country and indoor track team. Her time as a Lightning athlete proved that Erin isn't just a quick learner – she's also an incredibly fast runner! Since 2017, Erin and her team held the record in the 4x400m relay, until this year's Championship in Edmonton when the current Lightning team broke it.

In recognition of her commitment to athletics and education, Erin received the Lightning Award in 2018 for embodying what it means to be a Lightning athlete not only for her achievements and commitment to cross country and track, but all other aspects of being a student athlete, such as her dedication and high performance in academics.

"Being a part of the team was a fun and exciting way to meet people. I felt that I was in a very supportive athletic environment. StMU is very welcoming and although competitive, it is quite collaborative," says Erin.

Post-graduation, Erin taught for two years full-time with the Calgary Board of Education, and then became a substitute teacher in order to help her partner open a local craft brewery here in Calgary called Born Brewing Co. With the success of the brewery, Erin eventually left teaching to follow her new passion as an entrepreneur and self-employed business partner.



Indigenous Field Study Course



A week-long field study course at St. Mary's University invited students into an experiential and transformational space to learn more about themselves and their own relationships to Land through Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing. Taught by StMU Director of Indigenous Initiatives, Michelle Scott, this block week course gave students the necessary skills to articulate their relationship to place and to understand the responsibilities and implications that come with this relationship.

Students took part in meaning-making activities which centered their own stories in relation to Land within the context of the Land of the Siksikaitsitapi (Blackfoot Confederacy), the Eyarhe Nakoda, Tsuut'ina, and Métis peoples of Treaty 7. The field course included day trips to the Siksika Nation: Old Sun College and the Blackfoot Historical Museum, Fort Calgary and the Fish Creek Interpretive Centre. Additionally, an Elder supported the course to share stories, provide guidance, and integrate learning throughout the course.

The course was offered in person as well as having an online component, and included several activities, both off and on campus. The class visited the Blackfoot Crossing where Treaty 7 was signed and spent time learning on campus in StMU's new teaching tipi.

As part of the Indigenous Studies Field Course, Michelle Scott and students went to the confluence of the Bow and Elbow – also known as Mohkinstsis, which is the Blackfoot name for Calgary. The word translates to “elbow,” in reference to the Bow River.

Time spent on campus outside of the teaching tipi involved getting to work in our beautiful medicine garden, tending to local plants, and making sweetgrass braids for smudging ceremonies.

Throughout this course, students were encouraged to identify the significance of this Land and explain Indigenous and western perspectives of Land. Maria Fox, a student from the course, reflected on her learnings and memories from her studies in the following way:

“It was 9:30 am, and I could still see the moon. Sitting cross-legged like a child, I felt wonder at the sight of it,” says Maria. Later in the afternoon, she learned the word for her favourite constellation: BIG DIPPER, or IG KI TSI KAAM. It was a moment of simple connection for Maria. “Learning even a word or two of another language makes me feel a closeness to others I once did not know.”



Justin Quinton

Have you ever felt nervous or anxious in a social setting? Are you someone who overthinks to the point that it can impact your daily life? Not only can St. Mary's University alumnus Justin Quinton relate, but he wants to help!

After discovering a passion for teaching during his time as a student at StMU, Justin built a business from the ground up that focuses on confidence and personal development. Justin graduated from his Bachelor of Arts Degree in Psychology at St. Mary's in 2017. Here, he gained the tools and inspiration needed to launch his company.

"The most impactful takeaways for me were the inspiration and support I got from professors. Getting to learn and model from Dr. Doherty really confirmed my passion for psychology, and is a huge reason I enjoy teaching in my own business. Dr. Hopkins's guidance and feedback on my philosophical growth was also very important in my ongoing success as an instructor. Additionally, getting to work with Joe Norman Shaw in the Drama program really helped me grow as a person and presenter," explains Justin.

Not only was Justin a psychology student, but he was also actively involved in the campus community. He was a part of the Student Legislative Council (SLC) and made many positive impacts at the university. One of his lasting impacts on Council was reducing spending while simultaneously creating more student experiences than in previous years.

Justin also hosted more events for the student body to make authentic social and intellectual connections, renovated the Student Association building to create a fresh and welcoming space for students, and created more opportunities and access to build clubs. Looking toward the future, Justin also wanted to implement a successful system for future SLC's by purchasing essential and necessary equipment.

"My experience at StMU was essential to my growth as both a lifelong learner and leader. I'm grateful to have been granted the opportunity to be both VP Finance and President of the Student Legislative Council. The SLC and the StMU community provided me with an environment that I could make a difference in. There were always chances to participate or volunteer which really allowed me to see what I could achieve in a supportive and engaging environment. That to me was something you typically can't experience from a larger university," Justin shares.



Weaving Words of Wisdom



“

**three different generations
forming meaningful
connections with one another**

”





Jocelyn Williams and Kim Coulter have brought neighbours and generations together again for another round of entrancing storytelling in the anticipated sequel to the popular 2019 book, *Weaving Words of Wisdom*. After witnessing the profound impact this book had on the previous group of contributors, Jocelyn and Kim were determined to expand this unique circle of impact even further by including a third generation in this memoir series.

The last edition of *Weaving Words of Wisdom* involved senior residents of United Active Living sharing their life stories with students at St. Mary's University. The follow-up includes the input and ideas of third-graders. Students from Calgary's Sibylla Kiddle School and their teacher, Richard Russell, brought a fresh and new perspective to these pages – encouraging big ideas to grow and flourish throughout the storytelling process.

Along with Jocelyn and Kim, two St. Mary's students played a key role in the development of this sequel to the book. Grace Boyko and Sloane Walker, both in the fourth and final year of Bachelor of Arts – English degrees at StMU, put their researching, editing and writing skills to use to help bring these stories to life.

An exceptional team of participants and storytellers was assembled for this book, but in the face of the ongoing pandemic, everyone faced unprecedented obstacles. With the ability to connect in person being lost, creativity became a necessity.

"As we were banned from visiting each other and we navigated varying access to electronic communication, as we battled distance, illness and loss – we rediscovered pen palling, holiday card exchanges, journaling, and photography. Together, we built and sustained safe companionship," says Jocelyn.

As a result, the three generations who participated in this series were able to keep in touch in a way that was new for many of the students but a trip down memory lane for the senior residents. They all wrote each other letters.

"The ways we could connect changed. We communicated as pen pals which is an experience I do not think I would have had if not for the pandemic. It was an interesting and fun way to get to know each other," says Grace.



As participants learned to share their stories and listen to each other, this new sequel captured a beautiful process of three different generations forming meaningful connections with one another. For Jocelyn, this represents hope.

"It's easy to be discouraged by a pandemic and sadness and bad news. When I see three generations of people sharing stories of resiliency and encouragement, I'm inspired. This diverse truth telling of theirs is inclusive, accessible, welcoming, and so incredibly reassuring," she explains.

Despite the varying ages of the contributors to this sequel, there were undeniable similarities that tied these different generations together and helped to build strong bonds and form lifelong connections. For StMU student Grace, being involved in this experience helped her to realize the many opportunities and different paths that lie before all of us in our lives. Hearing the stories of the joy that United Active Living residents have found as they look back on their lives, and the unbridled excitement that the third-grade students have as they look toward their futures, encouraged her to be excited for what lies ahead in her own story.

This book is the result of a year of life-cherishing, intergenerational communication that reinforces how much we all can learn from connecting with each other. We hope you enjoy this curated collection of interviews and images, and find comfort in these pages and stories of lessening loneliness, building resiliency, and finding everlasting connection.

Order your copy of the *Weaving Words of Wisdom* sequel from the StMU library today!



MJ Ritchie and Candice Parish

For StMU alumnae Mary-Jean (MJ) Ritchie and Candice Parish, St. Mary's University holds a special place in their hearts as the entity that brought them together, sparking a life-long friendship and blossoming into a business partnership. These two friends clicked from the start, and what started as a passion for teaching, turned into an entrepreneurial dream that became a reality in March 2022.

Starting her post-secondary athletics career playing for two years at Medicine Hat College, MJ spent three years as a St. Mary's' Lightning athlete. To this day she remains the fourth all-time scorer in StMU history, leading rebounder in StMU history, and third all-time in the ACAC. She is also the second all-time steals leader, fourth all-time assist leader and third all-time block leader at StMU.

For Candice, her favourite memories surrounded her passion of event planning and family. "One of my most memorable moments is when my sister and I worked with a team to plan and execute a Wine and Scotch Tasting and Silent Auction to raise money for the Humanities 101 Program. The event was such a success and so much fun to plan. Another memorable moment was getting into the BEd program. It was such an amazing moment that I will always remember."

MJ and Candice met in the Bachelor of Education (Bed) program and graduated in 2018 and knew early on that they wanted to start a business together.

"We were inspired by the idea of being our own bosses and helping others dreams of their perfect day come true. We also wanted to have something that would allow us to spend time with our families. We knew we had the organizational skills and passion for it, we just needed the push to do it and strangely enough COVID was our push."

So what exactly is Peonies & Lace? This StMU alumni business specializes in weddings, charity events and galas and works closely with clients to plan the day of their dreams and turn the vision in their heads into reality.

"We talked about starting this business together for so long and being able to not only bring it to life, but watch it take off so quickly, has been such a blessing. We poured our hearts and souls into this business and have put in countless hours of work to make it happen. We already feel so successful and are booked well into next year. It's an amazing feeling to watch our dreams grow and see our hard work pay off; however, working with my best friend doesn't feel like 'work', it is so much fun!" says Candice.



Peonies & Lace

Events and Decor

www.peoniesandlace.ca



Honourable Jean Augustine

After a unanimous vote by the House of Commons in December 1995, the month of February was officially designated as Black History Month in Canada. This historic motion was spearheaded by the Honourable Jean Augustine —the first Black woman to be elected a Member of Parliament. Thanks to Augustine’s efforts, Black History Month is officially observed across the nation and Canadians are called to take part in celebrations and activities that honour Black Canadians.

This year for Black History Month at St. Mary’s through the Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, we celebrate and elevate the voices of a few Black members of our community – as we hear in their words what Black History Month signifies to them. This has brought inspiring words and lessons which allows us the time to honour, learn about, and celebrate the voices of many during Black History Month (today and always).



“To me, Black History Month is a time for reflection on the struggles, impact and history that Black men and women have had around the world and right here in Alberta. Alberta has such a rich history of early Black settlers that unfortunately doesn’t get talked about enough. Black History Month is a way to amplify these stories and these communities to ensure we continue to remember and acknowledge the significant contributions they have made to our lives and our communities.”

Adam Bowen,
*Team Lead, Communications,
Marketing & Media*



Celebrating the Voices of Our Own



To me, Black History Month means taking the time to recognize the key roles Black people played in our history and also taking the time to learn, share and celebrate Black changemakers who made, and continue to make, a difference in our lives, communities, and world. We must recognize and celebrate the diversity of these contributions, from ground-breaking innovations to policy change and cultural trends. It is so important to acknowledge and shed a light on these stories, especially the stories that are often buried, forgotten and/or displaced. Black history continues to – and will always – shape the future. And that is worth celebrating, every day.”

Patience Mbwizhu,
Senior Development Officer

“To me, Black History Month means looking back at the history of Black people in Canada and around the world. It is a month to honour the sacrifices of our ancestors and celebrate the leaders and pioneers, who have paved the way and made it a little straighter for other Black people to survive and thrive. It is also a month to focus on changing hearts and minds, increasing understanding and dialogue about our experience as Black people not just historically but today. It is a month to remember that we never stop advocating for greater equity, diversity, and inclusion. It’s a month to show Black people some extra love. We want to see a Canada, Alberta, and Calgary where diversity, equity and inclusion is not seen as a threat or an add-on to organizations but as an integral component in the building of stronger, more effective, and happier teams and profitable and impactful organizations”.

Dr. Nketti Johnston-Taylor,
Adjunct Assistant Professor of Economics





Resiliency & Reconciliation: Reflections on the Papal Visit

In late July 2022, St. Mary's was honoured to be one of the only universities invited to send a delegation of participants to attend the much-anticipated papal visit. In a response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, Pope Francis journeyed to Alberta to offer an apology on behalf of the Catholic Church for their role in the Canadian residential school system. This followed an apology at the Vatican earlier this year, which led to our Holy Father being invited by First Nations, Métis and Inuit leaders to journey to Canada to offer an apology on sacred land.

With a special invitation by the Diocese of Calgary extended to Michelle Scott, our Director of Indigenous Initiatives, StMU was able to form a delegation comprised mainly of Indigenous students, alumni and local Elders and Knowledge Keepers – many members of our delegation being residential school survivors or the family member of a survivor. Also joining our delegation was President-elect Dr. Sinda Vanderpool, and Director of Campus Ministry, Jolene Smith.

"The formation of this delegation offered a clear opportunity to invite urban Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers who everyday share their wisdom and support with institutions from Calgary – but aren't from this territory and might not have someone from their home community inviting them," explains Michelle Scott.



In his apology on July 25, 2022, at this historic event on the site of a former residential school in Maskwacis, Pope Francis acknowledged the extent of the pain caused by the long-term practice of breaking families apart and attempting to assimilate Indigenous children into Western ways of thinking via Canada's residential school system. He affirmed the sobering reality that many wounds are still wide open.

Through his translator, Pope Francis addressed the crowd with an unequivocal and contrite apology on behalf of the Catholic Church – an apology that many believed would never come. He asked for forgiveness for the sins committed and stated that on behalf of the Church, he is "sorry for the ways in which, regrettably, many Christians supported the colonizing mentality of the powers that oppressed the Indigenous Peoples."

For residential school survivors and their families, this was a long-awaited moment to hear such an undeniable apology on sacred land.

"The apology felt genuine in that moment and in that space, it felt authentic. It was a remarkable moment for the Elders in our delegation, who



commented that they couldn't believe in their lifetime they were hearing this apology," says Michelle.

"They could remember being a child and being taken from their home and told they couldn't speak their language or practice their culture. And now they are receiving an apology. An apology can only do so much, but at least now we can move forward in a way that isn't denying the truth."

Michelle, who is a part of the Mi'kmaq Nation and has roots from the Paul family in Newfoundland, found the formal apology at Maskwacis to be both "surreal" and "moving" and a testimony of the resiliency and strength of Indigenous communities.

"It was Indigenous people showing that this is our home territory, and this is what it means to be a good host and a good relative. It was really beautiful to experience, it showed such resilience and pride," explains Michelle. "It showed that we are still here and that we are strong. The whole reason for this apology was the cultural genocide of our people, but we were able to show that we are still here and that our beautiful culture and knowledge is still alive and being passed down."

In addition to the formal apology at Maskwacis, our delegation attended two other events on the Pope's penitential pilgrimage: an open-air Mass with Pope Francis, and a pilgrimage to the site of Lac Ste. Anne with the Liturgy of the Word. These events were selected to fit the theme of walking together on a pilgrimage of healing, reconciliation and hope.

"At every event we attended, I was consistently reminded of the generous and strong spirit of Indigenous peoples. The focus was always on the tremendous generosity and kindness as they welcomed others and shared their culture," says Jolene Smith, our Director of Campus Ministry. "Often, I was aware of how difficult this was for many people – the hurt that was present, how it was affecting people and yet within all of it,

healing and forgiveness was also taking place. I am honoured to have been a part of our delegation, to hear these unique perspectives and learn from them."

The experience of being at these events as Pope Francis connected with Indigenous peoples on Canadian soil and addressed the ongoing impact of colonization was truly humbling and touching for our delegation members.

"As a new guest to this land, I personally felt humbled to have been invited. What was remarkable to me on this journey was the response by the Indigenous leaders involved in planning the pilgrimage. In spite of years of intergenerational trauma and harm—both personal and political, a number of leaders demonstrated forgiveness," says Dr. Vanderpool when reflecting on her time in the StMU delegation.

"The most moving part of the entire journey for me was hearing a couple of Indigenous people disclose that this was the first time they had been able to face the pain and anger that they felt and experienced as a result of being educated in a residential school," continues Dr. Vanderpool. "I knew I was standing on Holy ground as I heard these words. I will never understand the courage that it takes to face such a hurtful past. I pray that I will show up and hold space for continued healing moving forward with my Indigenous sisters and brothers."



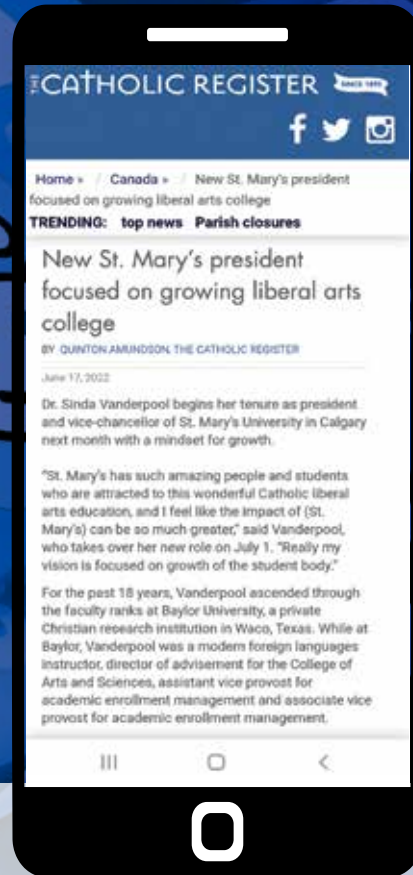
Media Highlights



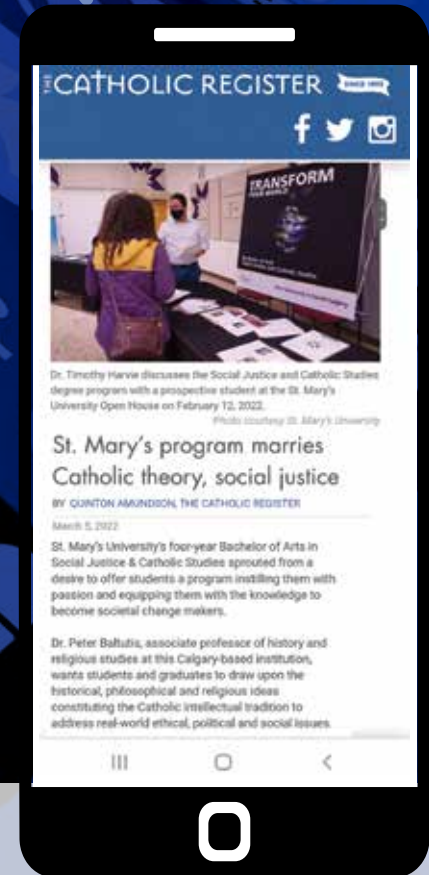
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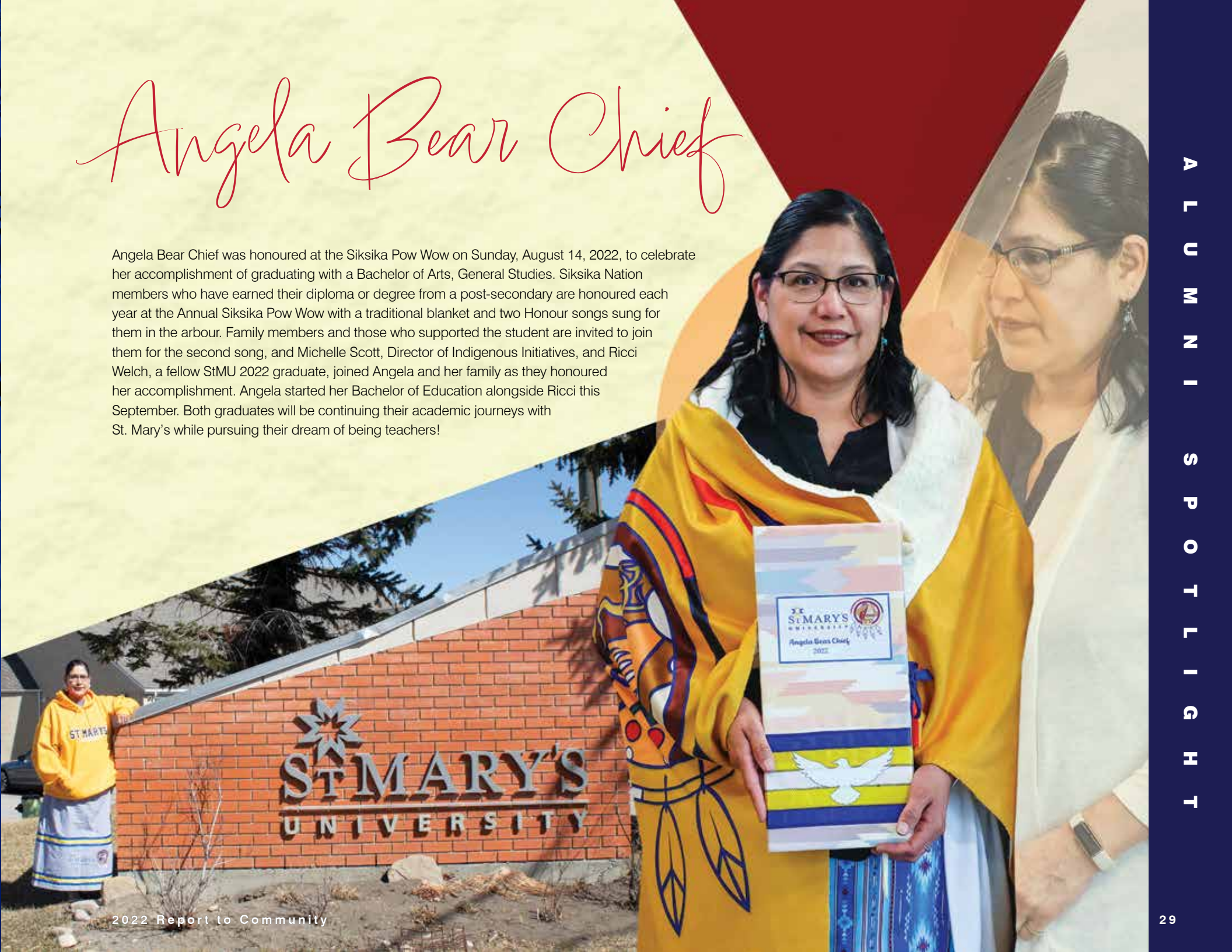
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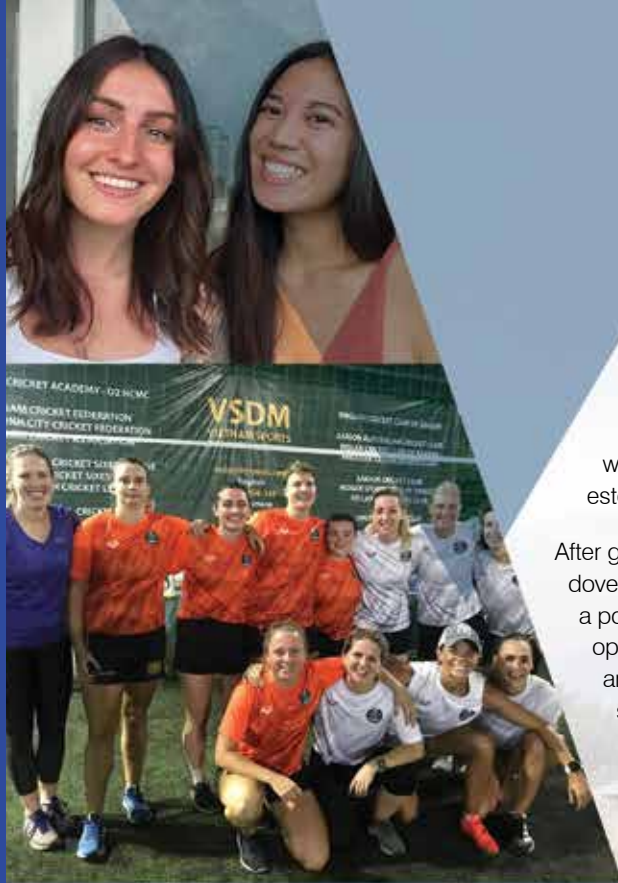


Read the full story here

Angela Bear Chief

Angela Bear Chief was honoured at the Siksika Pow Wow on Sunday, August 14, 2022, to celebrate her accomplishment of graduating with a Bachelor of Arts, General Studies. Siksika Nation members who have earned their diploma or degree from a post-secondary are honoured each year at the Annual Siksika Pow Wow with a traditional blanket and two Honour songs sung for them in the arbour. Family members and those who supported the student are invited to join them for the second song, and Michelle Scott, Director of Indigenous Initiatives, and Ricci Welch, a fellow StMU 2022 graduate, joined Angela and her family as they honoured her accomplishment. Angela started her Bachelor of Education alongside Ricci this September. Both graduates will be continuing their academic journeys with St. Mary's while pursuing their dream of being teachers!





Sydney Deighton

Travelling the world and teaching combined the best of both worlds for St. Mary's University alumna, Sydney Deighton. Graduating in 2018 with a Bachelor of Arts in History, Sydney then went on to receive her Bachelor of Education in our esteemed BEd program.

After graduating from our education program, Sydney dove straight into teaching internationally after accepting a position at a school in Vietnam. This incredible opportunity gave Sydney the opportunity to appreciate and emerge herself in a different culture – something she already had plenty of experience with!

When Sydney was twelve, her parents decided to do a teaching exchange, because a passion for teaching runs in the family. Sydney's father is also a teacher, and as part of this exchange, her family essentially swapped lives with another family in a different country, including jobs, houses and cars.

Her family lived in a small town called Renmark in South Australia. During their swap, she travelled to Hong Kong, Japan, Singapore, Thailand and New Zealand.

"It was such an amazing and eye-opening experience. I was able to go to school, make lifelong friends and see parts of the world at such

a young age," explains Sydney. "That experience helped me realize I wanted to be a teacher. I loved that I could see and live in different parts of the world while I got to teach!"

History repeated itself after a friend of Sydney's told her about a hiring fair at Queen's University called Teachers Overseas Recruiting Fair (TORF) in January, 2020. Sydney signed up for four interviews in different places around the world: Vietnam, China, Cambodia and Taiwan. The next day she was offered three contracts! "This definitely gave me more confidence in my interviewing abilities that I learned in the BEd program at StMU," says Sydney.

Sydney originally accepted a job in Shanghai, China, – however, due to the ongoing impact of the pandemic, she was not able to enter China. Luckily, the principal who offered me her contract at the Canadian International School (CIS) in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam remembered Sydney from her interview at TORF. She was re-offered a contact to CIS.

"Being able to teach, meet new people, travel the world and experience new cultures inspired me to teach internationally. I wanted to go out and see the world at an older age and I truly have fallen in love with it." adds Sydney. She knows that Calgary would not have been able to offer her this excitement and fulfillment she has now living in Vietnam.

Sydney recently accepted a job in Bangkok, Thailand. She is ecstatic to start at a new school and in a new city. As hard as the decision was to leave CIS and Vietnam, she is happy to create new experiences and the opportunity to meet new people in an equally exciting country.

"I think that StMU prepared me well for being a classroom teacher. I am very grateful for my time at St. Mary's University," adds Sydney.



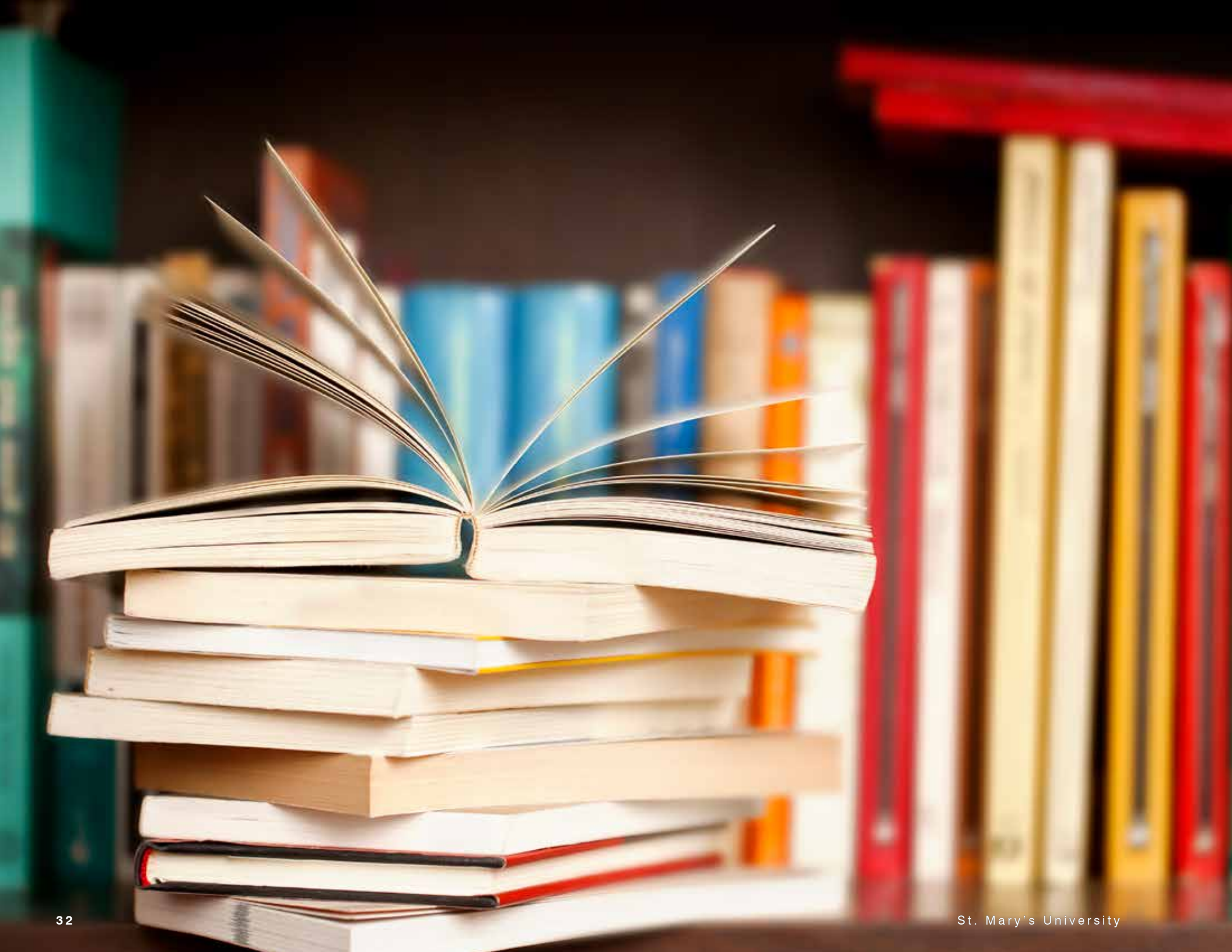
St. Mary's is honoured once again to be part of the Night of Lights on November 10, 2021, at the Field of Crosses on Memorial Drive. More than 150 students and members of the Presidents Volunteer Team came out to place lit candles by the 3,500 crosses that recognize soldiers from Southern Alberta who died in service.

Students pay their respects annually at this poignant memorial, reflecting on what it truly means to serve when the community has great need.



Field of Crosses





Scholarly Activity

Danyluk, P., Burns, A., **Hill, S. L.**, & Crawford, K. (2022). Conclusion: What have we learned: adaptations, recommendations, and silver linings. In P. Danyluk, A. Burns, S. L. Hill, & K. Crawford (Eds.), *Crisis and opportunity: How Canadian Bachelor of Education programs responded to the pandemic* (pp. 334–340). Canadian Association for Teacher Education. <https://doi.org/10.11575/PRISM/39534>

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Hill, S. L. (in press). Authoring professional identity: Pre-service teachers and ways of knowing. *McGill Journal of Education*.

Hill, S. L., Johnson, S., **Seitz, P.**, **Vergis, E.**, & **Twomey, S.** (2022). "Teacher leaders in the making": A response to COVID 19 in practicum. In P. Danyluk, A. Burns, S. L. Hill, & K. Crawford (Eds.), *Crisis and opportunity: How Canadian Bachelor of Education programs responded to the pandemic* (pp. 245–255). Canadian Association for Teacher Education. <https://doi.org/10.11575/PRISM/39534>

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Garrison, J.(2021). Reforming Community: Women's Rape Narratives and Gower's Confessio Amantis. *Medieval Feminist Forum: A Journal of Gender and Sexuality*, 57.

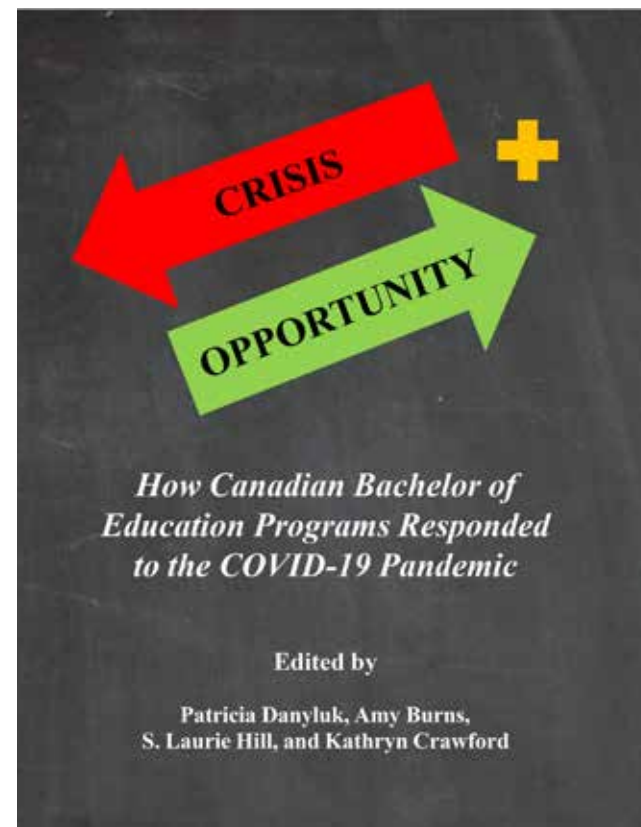
Garrison, J.(2022). Speaking of Failure: Modern Masculinity and Medieval Confession. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*.

Loppnow, G., Kamau, P., & **Vergis, E.** (2020). Pan-Canadian Learning Outcomes in Chemistry: A National Snapshot. *Canadian Journal of Chemistry*, 24, 2020, 1-8,

Seitz, P., & **Hill, S. L.** (2021). Cognition in 21st century skills: A mixed methods study. *International Journal of Curriculum and Instruction*, 13(3), 2232–2252.



International Journal of
Curriculum and Instruction



Prairie Restoration at StMU



An exciting prairie restoration project occurred this past summer on the St. Mary's campus. But what is prairie restoration exactly, and why are we doing it?

Prairie restoration, a discipline that has existed formally in North America since 1936, is the practice of working with land which, though agriculture, oil and gas development, or residential and transportation infrastructure, has been downgraded from a native prairie ecosystem to an area high in non-native and invasive plant species.

The loss of native plant species has consequences for the entire ecosystem, affecting the soil quality as well as the diversity of native species of birds and insects that inhabit the area. Prairie restoration is important at St. Mary's University because the campus is surrounded by Fish Creek Provincial Park, home to almost 200 sandgrass prairie fragments. Creating a more continuous, natural prairie ecosystem at St. Mary's University can protect these remnant patches from invasive species, so that they too do not become downgraded. Restoration work can also help to counteract droughts brought on by climate change, by increasing soil water retention.



Digging Deep at Mahone Bay

Taking academic lessons out of the classroom and into the field with experiential learning is a cornerstone of the St. Mary's University's Biology Program. This year students in the BIO-317 Introduction to Marine Biology spent a week getting invaluable real-world experience at the Deep Bay Marine Field Station, part of Vancouver Island University (VIU) located between Comox and Nanaimo on the east coast of Vancouver Island.

A central purpose of the field-study trip was to allow students a chance to collect a large dataset of the biodiversity of the beach. From this dataset each student can develop a hypothesis, test it, and write a paper about their findings.

Jenna LeBlanc

Native prairie grasslands once covered vast amounts of Western Canada though today roughly 1.25 per cent of Alberta's native grasslands are protected with the rest having been altered by agriculture, ranching and urban development.

Growing up in Alberta, Jenna LeBlanc developed a love for exploring the natural foothills and exploring Alberta's various provincial parks. This passion for Alberta's plants and flowers led her to St. Mary's University where she received her undergraduate degree in Biology and then to the University of Toronto where she earned a Masters of Environmental Science.

"From 2017 to 2018, I worked with Alberta Parks and the Glenbow Ranch Park Foundation managing the vegetation. I learned a lot about Alberta's native plants. I also learned about native prairie habitats, and how to manage and restore them," said LeBlanc.

While pursuing her PhD, Jenna's research focused on Rough Fescue grasses, prairie species that strongly influence how the ecosystem functions. These slow-growing grasses can live for hundreds of years and are very difficult to restore once they are lost from the landscape.

"My PhD research investigates the ecology of Rough Fescue grasslands to find ways of improving seed germination and seedling survival. My research [also] explores the role that microscopic fungi living entirely within these grasses may be playing in helping to restore Rough Fescue grasslands."

With the rise of the pandemic LeBlanc was forced to adapt her research and create innovative ways to continue her scientific exploration.

"I cancelled my 2020 field season due to the pandemic lockdown. Instead, I grew hundreds of Rough Fescue plants, studied them up-close, and developed new research questions to ask in the field, all from the comfort of my own kitchen."

"Glenbow Ranch Park has patches of surviving Rough Fescue grass that I am studying to discover if they contain microscopic organisms called fungal endophytes. Studying these fungi will improve our understanding of when and how Rough Fescue thrives. My research will help to protect and restore fescue grasslands for years to come."



Heartfelt Christmas Designs

For the third year in a row, St. Mary's University's annual Christmas cards celebrated local artwork created by children in the University's community. Following up on amazing contests over the past two years, students from Monsignor J.S. Smith School submitted designs to help spread some Christmas cheer in 2021.

2021-22 National Scholar Award Recipients



- Brianne Dangerfield, Cross-Country Running**
- Sarah Foscarini, Cross-Country Running**
- Casey Field, Cross-Country Running**
- Maria Fox, Cross-Country Running**
- Sydney Lockhart, Cross-Country Running**
- Laura Fraser, Cross-Country Running**
- Kevin Robinson, Cross-Country Running**
- Justin Cancio, Cross-Country Running**
- Timothy Evans, Cross-Country Running**
- Tanner Nordstrom-Young, Cross-Country Running**
- Riley Follensbee, Basketball**
- Ryan Morck, Basketball**
- Danya Osterling, Basketball**

Lightning Women Capture Bronze

The 2021-22 Bronze medal match saw the Lightning up against the SAIT Trojans, the number two qualifier in the South. With something to prove after a disappointing loss the night before, the Lightning came out firing winning the first quarter 24-10. The women left it all on the floor in their final game of the 21-22 campaign, leading in every statistical category in the game, winning the Bronze medal game 95-66 and capturing the Bronze medal.

The Bronze medal is the fifth medal in program history in the past seven years of play. The women's team has consecutively been in playoffs for the previous seven seasons with a medal total of one gold, two silver and now two bronze medals. The Lightning were also awarded three all conference awards this year. Macyn Morning Bull – 1st team all-conference, Hannah Helton – 1st team all-conference and Andria Stitt – 1st team all-conference.

"I couldn't be more proud of this team," said Athletic Director Nathan Ruff. "Though the result may not be the one we had envisioned heading into the tournament, the way this team was able to overcome adversity and come together to capture the Bronze was really something special."





Lightning Break School Records

On February 19, 2022, the Lightning Indoor Track team competed in their second meet of the season in Red Deer and three new school records were made in three different races!

The women's 4x200m relay runners Cherise Carter, Brianne Dangerfield, Casey Field and Sydney Lockhart broke a new Lightning record with a time of 2:05.24. Our men's 4x200m relay team runners Justin Cancio, Kevin Robinson, Tanner Nordstrom-Young and Tim Evans beat the previous record holders with a time of 1:47.51!

Women's 600m runner Cherise Carter beat the previous record holders time by 2.82 seconds! A big shout out to women's runner Maria Fox who placed third in the 1500m with a time of 5:36.38.



CCAA Cross-Country Nationals a Huge Success

On Saturday, November 13, 2021, St. Mary's had the pleasure of hosting the CCAA Cross-Country National Championships. Thirty-five schools across Canada were represented and welcomed to our beautiful campus to make many wonderful memories.

Lightning athletes showed great determination and progress. For the first time in the history of StMU both men's and women's Lightning athletes competed at Nationals. Kevin Robinson (84th), Tanner Nordstrom Young (86th) and Justin Cancio (87th) ran the men's 8km with strong performances. With great teamwork in an individual sport, the women's team accomplished ninth place out of fourteen teams. Our female athletes were led by Maria Fox (9th) followed by Sydney Zissos (29th), Elizabeth Krueger (72nd), Sarah Foscarini (90th), Casey Field (93rd), and Laura Fraser (97th) rounded out the St. Mary's women's team.

Randi Palyga

They say that all roads lead home, and for esteemed St. Mary's University alumnus Randi Palyga, home might just be the St. Mary's campus! Having completed two degrees at StMU, and now working in both Athletics and Alumni Relations on campus, Randi exemplifies the spirit of St. Mary's.

Initially enrolled in the Bachelor of Arts – General Studies program at StMU, Randi gained a diverse skillset throughout the course of this unique degree program that is geared toward students who wish to explore a number of subjects to determine their future professional and education goals.

After graduating with her Bachelor of Arts degree, Randi looked toward her future and found herself reflecting on how her favorite summer jobs were always ones where she was able to work hands-on with children as a camp counsellor. With this realization, Randi enrolled in the esteemed Bachelor of Education – Elementary program at StMU.

“The BEd program was amazing and I truly loved every minute of it. The practicum experience was so extensive and hands-on that I immediately felt confident in a classroom. Outside of the practicums, I really credit the small class sizes at St. Mary's and the caring nature of my professors for helping me to thrive throughout both of my degrees at StMU,” says Randi.

In her time as a student at St. Mary's, Randi made her mark outside of academics by being a driving force behind the establishment of our Lightning Athletics cross-country and indoor track program – a program in which she set multiple records!

“When I started as a student at St. Mary's, I actually helped to launch a recreational soccer league on campus because I love to run so much,” explains Randi. “But then the recreational league was such a hit that I figured, why not approach the university about starting a cross-country program?”

Randi did just that, and was told that if she could identify enough students who would be interested in signing up, the program would get the green light to start on campus. The number of students who were interested in joining was immediately clear, and what started as a small running group in Fish Creek Park quickly blossomed into the vibrant cross-country and indoor track programs we know today.





In Memoriam

Over the past year, St. Mary's University lost members of the community who were committed to a liberal arts and sciences education rooted in the Catholic Intellectual Tradition, and who helped establish St. Mary's as a leader in post-secondary education:

Dennis Castellino

1936-2022

Dennis Castellino was one of the early supporters of St. Mary's College (later St. Mary's University College and now St. Mary's University), and steadfastly maintained his involvement for almost thirty years. He was a Fourth Degree Knight, the highest and most prestigious degree within the Knights of Columbus, and also served as State Historian. He was a regular attendee at St. Mary's events, including weekly Mass in McGivney Hall after he and his wife Peggy moved to United Active Living. He was a kind, caring and generous person who was always willing to help others.

Willis O'Leary

1931-2021

At St. Mary's, we are honoured and grateful to have known Mr. Willis O'Leary as a friend and long-time supporter. He and his wife Betty attended many St. Mary's events and could often be seen interacting with the students at their table. Together, they established the Willis and Betty O'Leary Undergraduate Degree Program Scholarships which have been awarded since 2008, and the O'Leary Family Scholarships which have been awarded since 2011. Their support of the Awards Program ensures that many students will receive these annual awards, helping them to realize their education goals at St. Mary's..

Gayle McCoy

1948-2022

Gayle was a long time supporter of St. Mary's University. She attended many St. Mary's dinners and events with her husband Terry. Gayle will be remembered for her warm smile and thoughtful conversation.



The Stage is Set!



After two long years the St. Mary's University Drama program is back with two dramatic plays, *Off a Broken Road* and the first-year collective play *Community Affair*. Presented by the senior drama students, *Off a Broken Road* is a moving, compelling, fast-paced episodic play that takes place in the aftermath of a war where the victors and the losers must work through their resentments to find unity. *Community Affair*, written and performed by first-year St. Mary's drama students is a funny and moving story set in a community centre highlighting how the denizens of the centre deal with both personal and professional relationship issues. For St. Mary's University Drama Director Joe Norman Shaw, seeing the hard work of everyone come together for these productions is truly rewarding.

"These productions are the culmination of our year's work and I'm always proud of the passion, dedication and execution of our drama students. Mounting any

production takes a lot of hard work, but the hard work pays off when we are able to move an audience or make them laugh, it's a feeling of shared accomplishment and a job well done."

In class Shaw works with his first-year students on acting technique and delivering an authentic performance while fostering a creative and collaborative environment to encourage creativity.

"With the collaborative production, it gives [the students] a chance to voice their thoughts and feelings about the world around them. To touch on issues important to them," says Shaw. "I want them to learn to work together as creative collaborators and give voice to their deeper thoughts and feelings."



A New Voice

St. Mary's University is pleased to welcome Sarah McLean as our new Choir Director. Currently, McLean sings with the Spiritus Chamber Choir in Calgary, and previously has sung with astounding choirs all over the world! She has also taught music to all grades in the Foothills School Division, CBE, and Rundle College. Currently, she teaches music at the Calgary Girls Charter School.

Sarah has an extensive background in music having earned her Bachelor of Music from the University of Alberta in vocal performance, a Bachelor of Education from the University of Calgary, and a Master of Music from the University of Cambridge specializing in Choral Conducting.



STMU DRAMA PRESENTS

OFF A BROKEN ROAD

by Stephen Spotswood
 Directions: Joe-Norman Shaw/Helen Young
 Design: Brad Leavitt

A COMMUNITY SEARCHES FOR THEIR COURAGE IN THE AFTERMATH OF WAR

April 1: 7pm
 April 2: 2pm & 7pm

<https://stmu.ca/event/offabrokenroad/>

TICKET INFO:
 Adult ticket: \$20 • Student/Senior: \$15
 Matinee pricing for 2pm shows:
 \$10 for Adults, Students, Seniors

STMU DRAMA PRESENTS

COMMUNITY AFFAIR

Written and performed by
 STMU's first year drama collective.
 Direction: Joe-Norman Shaw/Helen Young
 Design: Brad Leavitt

April 8: 7pm
 April 9: 2pm & 7pm

<https://stmu.ca/event/acomunityaffair/>

Turbulent times for the eclectic denizens of a local community centre facing the challenges of personal and professional relationships and a severe weather warning...

TICKET INFO:
 Adult ticket: \$20 • Student/Senior: \$15
 Matinee pricing for 2pm shows:
 \$10 for Adults, Students, Seniors



Class of 2022



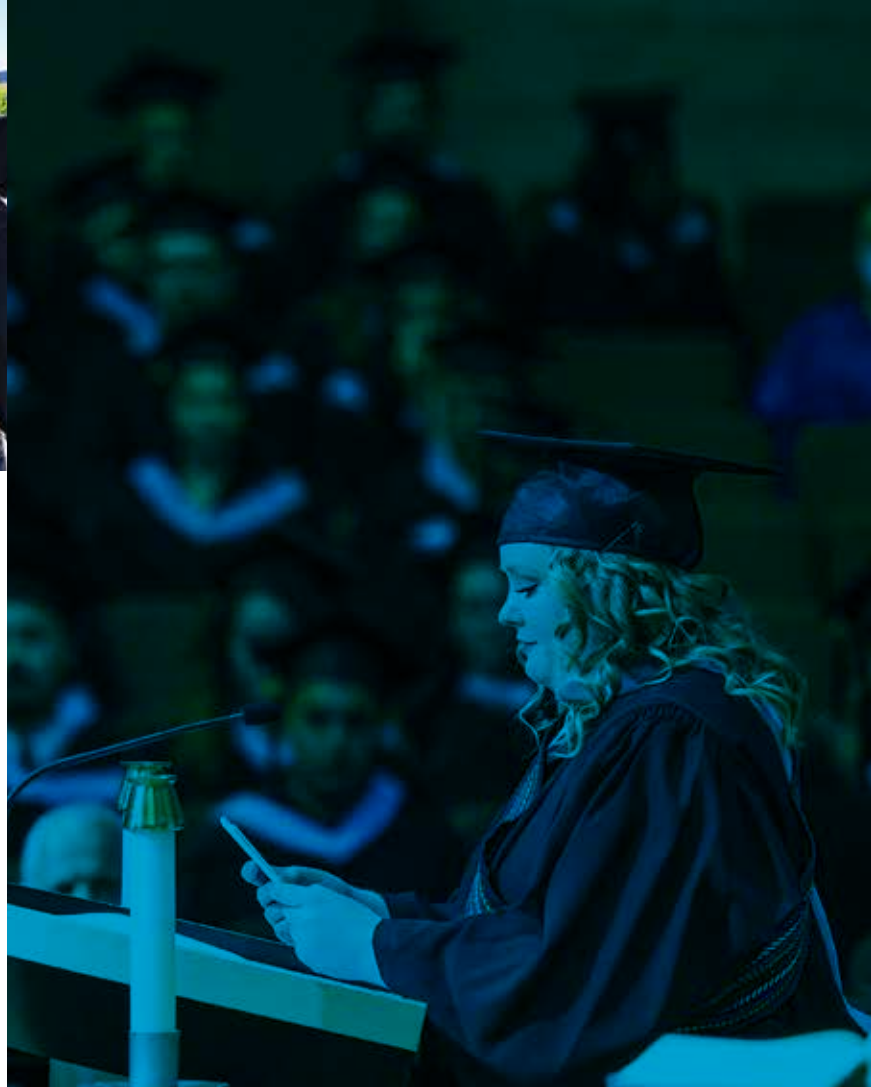
St. Mary's University held its first in-person Convocation ceremonies in two years at St. Michael Catholic Community on July 9-10, 2022. There was a strong sense of celebration and pride throughout these ceremonies, as faculty, staff, family and loved ones celebrated the incredible achievements and significant milestones of St. Mary's University's newest graduates. Over the course of two ceremonies that celebrated our graduating Bachelor of Arts and Sciences and Bachelor of Education and DRE/CCEL classes, 224 students crossed the stage to receive their parchments out of a total graduating class of 273.

President and Vice-Chancellor Dr. Gerry Turcotte welcomed our graduates with an address that congratulated them for continuing to pursue their goals, despite the significant challenges and uncertainty that the past few years have held. Although the university experience of our 2022 graduates may not have been exactly as they had planned, through hard work and resiliency, they collectively achieved the extraordinary accomplishment of graduating and showcasing the strength of the spirit of St. Mary's.

Although our Convocation ceremonies represented the beginning of a bright new chapter for our graduates, it is our hope they will continue to think of St. Mary's as home as they carry on living their lives with the integrity, compassion and confidence that sets our graduates apart.

It is not only our esteemed graduates who are turning the page to an exciting new chapter. The 2022 Convocation ceremonies also mark the last year that Dr. Turcotte will serve as President and Vice-Chancellor.

"As many of you know, this Convocation is bittersweet for me, as this will be my last as President of St. Mary's University after eleven years in office. It has been one of the great honours of my life to represent St. Mary's and serve as your President," said Dr. Turcotte.





Looking forward, we cannot wait to see the lasting impact that our newest graduates will have as they head off into the world, armed with the knowledge and values that are at the heart of a St. Mary's University education.

While these ceremonies represented many new chapters, it was also a year of firsts! Besides being the first in-person ceremonies in two years, this was also the first time St. Mary's has hosted two separate Convocation ceremonies. This is a reflection of the remarkable growth our valuable degree programs have experienced.



2022 Awards:

Honouring Excellence

Honorary Fellow

Recipient: Don Verdonck

St. Mary's University Order of Excellence

Recipient: Guy Turcotte

St. Mary's University Star Award

2020 Recipient: Tiffany Biensch

2021 Recipient: Julianna Driscoll

Gold Medal Awards

Recipients:

Stephanie Wright, 2021

Shealynn Cooper, 2022

Valedictorian:

Elizabeth Krueger

Honorary Fellow

2020 Recipient: Linda Olsen

2022 Recipient: Evelyn Good Striker

Dr. David Lawless Award for Scholarly Achievement

2022 Recipient: Dr. Laurie Hill

St. Mary's University Star Award

2020 Recipient: Ashley Grieve

2022 Recipient: Artemis Baker

2022 Honourable Lois E. Mitchell Graduating Social Studies Teacher Award

2022 Recipients: Ross Abraham, Christopher Carduff, Cullen Cousins and Taylor Dunphy.



Celebrating our Indigenous Graduates by honouring culture and tradition

On Monday, June 6, 2022, St. Mary's' Indigenous graduands were honoured in the presence of their loved ones, staff, faculty, community members and StMU Elders Casey Eagle Speaker and Dr. (Grandmother) Doreen Spence, along with Dr. Yvonne Poitras Pratt, a proud member of the Métis Nation and scholar. Gathered together in ceremony, they celebrated and recognized these graduates for reaching their academic goals. The celebrations started with smudging and a welcome to the ceremony by Michelle Scott, Director of Indigenous Initiatives at St. Mary's University and included prayers and a blessing from Kainai Elder, Casey Eagle Speaker.

During the ceremony, First Nations students were gifted with an eagle feather from Elder Casey Eagle Speaker, and Métis students were gifted a sash by Dr. Yvonne Poitras Pratt. The eagle and its feathers



are a symbol of strength and bravery, and are given with respect and worn with pride. The Métis sash represents the storied history of people who fought not to be invisible, and the presentation of this sash is considered a great honor and it is worn with distinct esteem.

After the graduands received their ceremonial feather or sash, each was draped in a ceremonial blanket which recognizes their accomplishment and shows respect for those who have made an important contribution to their community.



TAILGATE



On October 22, 2022, St. Mary's held its' first ever tailgate event to help kick off the start of the Lightning basketball season. This tailgate offered the ultimate Lightning Athletics fan experience and marked the Lightning basketball teams home opener, for both our women's and men's teams.

Alumni, current students, staff members and donors were in attendance as members of our community came together on our historic campus for fresh pizza and drinks from the alumni-owned and operated Born Colorado Brewing, before boarding shuttle transportation to and from the games at Glenmore Christian Academy.

The games were action packed as the Lightning Men's and Women's teams stormed the court and won both of their opening games. Their performance was so impressive that both teams wrapped the week up at the top of the Alberta Colleges Athletics Conference (ACAC) standings.

"It was a fantastic evening and both teams truly did not disappoint as we packed the bleachers to cheer on the Lightning," said Dr. Sinda Vanderpool, StMU President and Vice-Chancellor. "I wish our student-athletes the warmest congratulations for their success in the classroom and on the courts. It is always fun to come out and support these wonderful ambassadors of our institution."



McGIVNEY HALL

Welcome Education Students

Welcome to new student ORIENTATION!

ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY
14550 Bannister Road SE
McGivney Hall

VANS



New Student Orientation

St. Mary's University campus welcomed new and returning students for the fall semester at New Student Orientation days on Thursday, September 1 and Friday, September 2, 2022.

With hundreds of new students now on campus it was a busy week with New Student Orientations, for both the Arts and Sciences and Education programs. New students were given campus tours, orientation sessions, and critical program information.

For Arts and Sciences orientation, food trucks and a mobile escape room helped to break up the day and encouraged students to get to know each other better. Education students had their time dedicated to learning more about the specialized elements of their program – including information to improve their practicum experience and details about the Education Students' Association.

The vibrancy and energy on campus was a welcome change after two years of limited campus activity. Seeing students interacting with our faculty and being back in the classroom with their teachers, discussing important topics, joining clubs and building friendships highlight is what the St. Mary's experience is all about.





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