

This issue

As St. Mary's University wraps up the 2015 – 2016 school year, we take this opportunity to recognize the accomplishments of our students and faculty, to reflect on our growth and to set goals for the coming year.

In this Spring issue of the Marian Update, we celebrate student excellence at St. Mary's and the innovative teaching and research our faculty share with their students in the classroom and with the wider community.

This September, St. Mary's will celebrate its 30th Anniversary, and as one of the fastest growing post-secondary institutions in Alberta, we look forward to a range of new initiatives, including the strategic development of dynamic new programs that complement and enhance our core strengths.

We invite you to join us as we celebrate these accomplishments and the profound difference your support has made for our students, faculty and staff.

Inspiring students' growth through community

St. Mary's University's proud history and world-class education attracts exceptional students to our campus. The education that students receive encourages them to develop and create their own success. Cassandra Harkema, a second-year First Nations student, was drawn to St. Mary's University's Bachelor of Science program because of the small class sizes and the opportunity to work closely with her professors, in the classroom and in the field. "The professors want you to succeed and help you in ways that I think a larger university would not be able to," said Cassandra. She found a nurturing environment

harder and return next year," Cassandra explains. "The team is my second family and I could not imagine playing with anyone else. We all worked so hard this year to get to playoffs. We wanted a medal and we achieved that. For a team that has only been playing together for two years, I think it shows just how hard we worked and our determination towards achieving our goal."

Kassandra found a community in her teammates. All the girls on the team are striving to be the best on and off the court. "We all have a great connection and are constantly supporting each other and I think that is why we have done as well as we have."

Balancing her studies, basketball, work and raising a family can be challenging, but Kassandra found that being focused and organized on a goal makes it all worthwhile. "It has been tough to balance it all but I work hard and I want this. I'm thankful that I get the opportunity to go to school, be a mom and athlete, because some don't get these opportunities. I just try to make the best of it and do the best I can. Nothing is given to you so the work you put into it is what you will get out of it."

Recently, Kassandra was awarded an Indigenous Career Award. This award supports Indigenous Albertan learners in their pursuit of post-secondary studies. "I was very thankful to receive the award. It encouraged me to learn more about my heritage and strive to be a better student," said Kassandra. The monetary component of the award helps students alleviate some of the financial barriers associated with post-secondary studies and to build their professional careers upon completing their program.

Kassandra has her sights set on finishing her Bachelor of Science degree and becoming a nurse. At the moment, she says, "I am enjoying my experience at St. Mary's, playing basketball and continuing my studies."

Kassandra is one example of how St. Mary's University is a springboard to the future. We enable students to gain qualifications that create employment opportunities, as well as the chance to get involved in campus and community activities that transform them as individuals.



Kassandra Harkema celebrates with her team mates

on campus that allowed her to pursue her Bachelor of Science in Biology, work and raise her family, and at the same time, to excel on our dynamic women's basketball team in the Alberta Colleges Athletic Conference (ACAC) league.

A highlight of Kassandra's year was being part of the success of the women's basketball team which won the silver medal in the ACAC Championships in only their second season in the ACAC League, and that went on to compete at their first ever Canadian Collegiate Athletic Association National Championship in Windsor, Ontario.

"We are a very young team and to have the opportunity to go to Nationals and compete there was something I will never forget. We now know what it takes to play at that level. The experience made us closer as a team and inspired us to work

A message from the President

For the past 30 years, St. Mary's University has been a leader in providing a liberal arts and science education and plays a vital part in the community it serves.

Our vibrant and dynamic campus continues to attract the best and brightest students who come to us ready to make a difference. We attract faculty who are dedicated to enriching students' growth and learning in and beyond the classroom. Our faculty are instrumental in helping develop our students into citizens of the world. Faculty create opportunities for their students and through their classes and personal interactions, they open doors that students may never have thought possible. In St. Mary's supportive environment, our faculty help bright, motivated students to develop into thoughtful and responsible leaders in a variety of fields.



We provide students with a superior learning experience that is clearly visible on campus, and this is in large part due to our supportive community and donors. Through the community's generosity we are able to grow, and continue to emphasize both the enduring value of a liberal arts and science education and the importance of cultivating thoughtful, ethical and engaged students. It is inspiring to think of the

generous donors who ensure our students have access to awards and bursaries that allow them to focus on their studies. It is also humbling because of the great faith these investments show in our students, their future, and St. Mary's University.

As we mark our 30th Anniversary on September 18th, we also celebrate record enrolment growth in the past three years, and hope that with your support, we can continue to develop the programs and classes that respond to the challenges and opportunities of today.

Our school is a success story in our city and our province, and our remarkable community is a testament to that. Every year, our students, faculty, staff, alumni, friends and community demonstrate their commitment to St. Mary's. Your support allows us to attract talented students and world-class faculty, develop programs that are relevant to today's global market and to build state-of-the-art facilities – like our new Heritage Centre – to expand our impact.

As you read this Marian Update, I hope you will discover how your commitment and investment inspire so many to have a learning experience that will lead to career and life successes.



Gerry Turcotte, PhD
President

Donors give from the heart

Investing in education and giving back to the St. Mary's community are central to the Valentine family's beliefs and gifts in support of St. Mary's programs, initiatives, and growth. The Valentine family is not only a contributor to the Student Awards program at St. Mary's, but also a longtime friend to the University. They are well known in the Calgary community through Valentine Volvo, a third generation family-owned business, and are celebrating their 70th anniversary this year! The Valentines' success in the community can be attributed to their commitment to innovation and excellence in customer service.

For more than two decades the Valentines have applied these same values to their relationship with St. Mary's through their gifts of time, talent, and financial support. The Valentines have kept St. Mary's close to their hearts through participation on the St. Mary's Board of Governors, attendance at, and sponsorship of, various events over many years, and through several donations to programming and growth at the University. Most recently the Valentines established the St. Isidore Bursary in celebration of their long-term commitment to St. Mary's University. This bursary is awarded annually to a student in the Bachelor of Education Degree program who is from a rural area and demonstrates financial need.

The Valentine family's support of the Student Awards program helps to ensure St. Mary's University remains open to all, and that finances are less of a barrier for students seeking a post-secondary education. That most Student Awards come from community donations makes them that much more meaningful. This program forms an important connection between donors in our community, like the Valentine Family, with students at St. Mary's University who are pursuing their post-secondary dreams.



*Avid St. Mary's supporters
Ted and Shirley Valentine with
Aurelia Minutoli, the 2015
St. Isidore Award recipient*

The *Marian Update* is published by St. Mary's University and distributed to alumni, friends and supporters to celebrate University accomplishments and share news and information throughout the St. Mary's community.

Managing Editor:

Thérèse Takacs, Vice-President, Advancement Tel. (403) 254-3139 therese.takacs@stmu.ca

Unleashing student potential

At St. Mary's University we believe education is a right and not a privilege. St. Mary's philosophy of openness and inclusivity, that respects each individual person, includes the knowledge and awareness that the cost of a university education can be a barrier to many pursuing their dream of further education. We believe that motivation, intelligence, talent, and commitment should not be limited by financial circumstances. We want to ensure there are comprehensive opportunities through scholarships and bursaries for all deserving learners. Students pursuing post-secondary education are investing in their future, and St. Mary's University supports this investment through our Student Awards program. This Program makes a significant financial impact on award recipients by greatly reducing the cost of their post-secondary education.

Did you know...

24%

of new students were eligible for President's Circle Scholarships in 2014-2015?

Our Student Awards program would not be possible without the generosity of community donors. By investing in the creation of additional bursaries that will support students with financial need, and increasing the number of scholarships that recognize academic excellence, you can help St. Mary's to continue to be open to all – regardless of financial circumstances. By reducing financial barriers to learning you create the opportunity for bright and talented students to pursue higher education at St. Mary's University.

St. Mary's commitment to the development of the whole person — mind, body and spirit — is also reflected in our Student Awards. These awards span every aspect of the student experience from academics-to-athletics-to-altruism and celebrate the core values of our university. They offer an opportunity for students to push boundaries to reach their highest potential and excel at St. Mary's in all areas, as well as to be recognized with financial assistance that will support their continued development, community in Calgary, and Alberta.

The first time I received a scholarship, I cried. It meant I didn't have to work five days a week and that I would have more time to research my papers and find out what I'm really interested in. I didn't have to choose between studying and working.

LAURA STEFAN Fourth-year Bachelor of Arts – Psychology student multiple awards recipient

A scholarship

is a financial award given to a student for academic excellence and achievement. Some scholarships also consider achievements in non-academic endeavors such as community and campus involvement, athletics, and other extra-curricular activities.

Bursaries

are financial grants given to students based on academic achievement and clearly demonstrated financial need. Bursaries often also consider community and campus involvement, volunteer commitments, and other non-academic activities.



St. Mary's staff proudly accepts the Calgary Learns "Life of Learning Award" (LOLA) for Learning Communities on behalf of the Humanities 101 program



Dr. Gerry Turcotte congratulates Gaylene Weasel Child, a graduating B.Ed. student, on her Indigenous Careers Award

Humanities 101 Wins LOLA Award

On April 21, 2016, St. Mary's University's Humanities 101 program was recognized as the recipient of Calgary Learns "Life of Learning Award" (LOLA), for Learning Communities. This award is presented annually to a learning program that stands out for innovation, effectiveness, and breadth of reach into the adult foundational learning community. The Humanities 101 program was chosen for its longstanding presence and impact in the community. Dr. Tara Hyland Russell, VP Academic and Dean at St. Mary's University, was integral to the foundation of this program. Dr. Hyland-Russell accepted the award on behalf of St. Mary's and spoke to the incredible and life changing impact this program has had on its participants since its inception. St. Mary's is incredibly honoured to have won this award, however the true honour is having the opportunity to work with marginalized adult learners in our community through the Humanities 101 program, as they succeed in reaching their goals of attaining post-secondary education. It is through programs like Humanities 101 that St. Mary's University has become a unique, and highly valued member of the post-secondary community in Calgary, and Alberta.

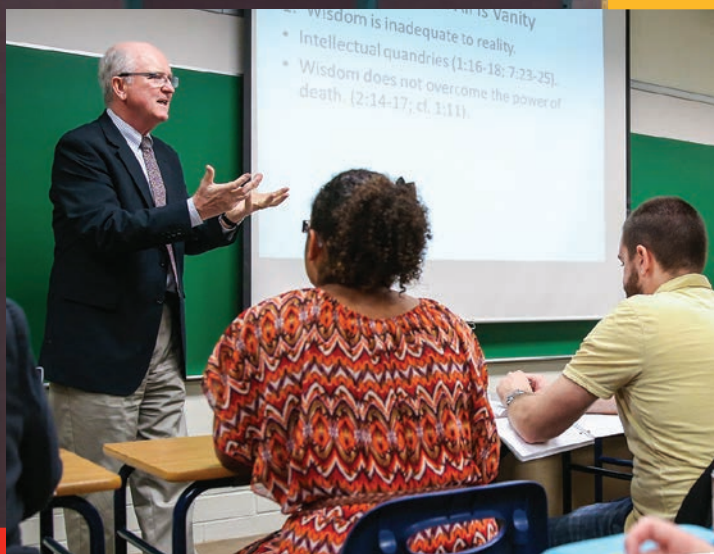
Shaping the next generation of leaders through Liberal Arts and Sciences

Benefits of a Liberal Arts and Science Education:

- Strengthens oral and written communication skills
- Teaches students how to think, not what to think
- Builds strong critical and integrative thinking skills
- Provides students with the skills to evaluate and use information effectively
- Develops ability to work with quantitative ideas and mathematical relations
- Fuels curiosity
- Creates well-rounded individuals
- Students build a foundation of knowledge that can translate into graduate study and various careers

St. Mary's University's excellence in Liberal Arts and Science education creates opportunities for students to think and learn more broadly and deeply. We place a strong focus on students' growth, their academic excellence and their commitment to building a meaningful community. Our degrees are dynamic and rooted in real-world values: students take interdisciplinary courses, cover topics across many disciplines, and graduate with skills and a greater knowledge in a wider range of subjects. With eight accredited Bachelor of Arts degrees, a Bachelor of Science degree, and a Bachelor of Education After-Degree program, as well as transferable university courses in 35 academic disciplines, St. Mary's is one of the fastest-growing post-secondary institutions in Alberta.

Small class sizes give students an opportunity to have a greater student-professor interaction with a high level of mentorship and collaboration. The University also provides exciting opportunities to extend learning well beyond the classroom. In the Bachelor of Science with a Major in Biology



Dr. Michael Duggan, Professor, Religious Studies & Theology CWL Chair, lectures in his Theology 201 class



St. Mary's student in the newly renovated biology lab thanks to a \$100,000 donation by Al and Gisele Schreiner

"Under the guidance of Dr. Mary Ann McLean, Associate Professor of Biology, St. Mary's University students are encouraged not just to master the facts but to develop a complex appreciation of their own relationship to the environment."

degree, study trips to the Bamfield Marine Sciences Centre on Vancouver Island and Belize offer unique, hands-on experiences that develop students' critical thinking while providing the necessary transferable skills to adapt to a changing workplace. For art history and literature students, courses in Rome and Florence have provided a similar opportunity.

As Dr. Tara Hyland-Russell, Vice President Academic explains, "Our St. Mary's students are encouraged to excel academically. But the great opportunity of the liberal arts education is reminding them that they have a deep connection and responsibility to the world around them. We want our students to be citizens of the world—not as participants, but as leaders."

"What can you do with that major?" is a question often asked by undergraduate students. University is an opportunity to shape students' future through their studies. At St. Mary's University, in south Calgary, a liberal arts and science education enables students to master critical thinking and communication skills, transfer knowledge across disciplines and graduate with a greater understanding of a wide range of subjects that equips them with career flexibility in a rapidly changing economy.

The Bachelor of Arts with a Major in Liberal Studies is the first degree of its kind in Alberta and is specifically designed for the 21st century learner facing a rapidly changing world. Deliberately

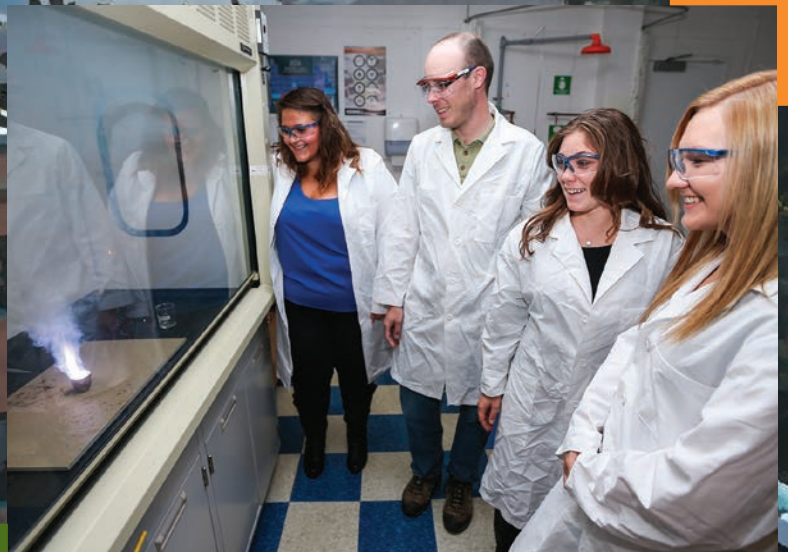
interdisciplinary, this innovative four-year degree gives students maximum flexibility to discover and pursue their interests while teaching them to think outside-the-box about real world issues. It provides a marketable advantage in a changing economy where employers in all industries are increasingly looking for people ready to tackle the challenges of contemporary work and life head on – people who can think on their feet and communicate their ideas clearly and powerfully. In a report released earlier this month, the Business Council of Canada reported that when it comes to hiring decisions, Canadian employers value skills like teamwork, good communication, problem-solving, and collaboration over technical expertise.

The many Liberal Arts and Science degrees at St. Mary's allow students to pursue graduate studies as well as careers in numerous fields including: communications, human resources, journalism, law, teaching, science writing, social justice, and more. As Dr. Gerry Turcotte, President of St. Mary's University, adds, "Here, you will broaden your perspectives, challenge your ideas, deepen your passions and acquire the knowledge and skills that will enable you to confidently be your own person, stand out from the crowd and make a difference."

Students who graduate from our Liberal Arts and Science programs are independent, well-rounded, thoughtful individuals who actively contribute to their communities.



Dr. Jocelyn Williams, Associate Professor, English, explains course material to her class



St. Mary's students and Dr. Matthew Clay, Assistant Professor, Chemistry, oversee an experiment

"The Open Classes at St. Mary's welcome broader student and community participation, showcasing teaching and coursework and intellectually engaging participants in these presentations."

Building community, inspiring change

Over the past three years St. Mary's University has worked closely with First Nations and Métis communities and leaders to develop a unique FNMI (First Nations, Métis, and Inuit) Partnership on campus. The Partnership aims to increase awareness and understanding of Indigenous ways of knowing and culture for all St. Mary's students, staff, faculty, and the surrounding community. Through its commitment to developing relationships founded in trust and reciprocity, the Partnership's significance continues to grow and to respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada – the Federal Government's mandate that FNMI culture and ways of knowing be integrated into post-secondary curricula. The recent release of the recommendations from the TRC highlights a specific role and responsibility for educational institutions in helping to close the educational attainment gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners.

At St. Mary's University, every aspect of the FNMI Partnership is developed in order to nourish FNMI students in mind, body and spirit, to increase knowledge within the FNMI community of St. Mary's as a post-secondary education option, and to increase completion rates and student engagement for FNMI students studying here. Since the launch of the Partnership, St. Mary's has seen an enrolment increase of over 50% for FNMI Students. Currently, the Partnership is developing a five-year plan toward program sustainability and stability in funding to support this exceptional growth. This includes the growth of current programs such as the expansion of the Scholars on Campus program and St. Mary's speakers events to include more Indigenous content. It is also a goal to expand the Elders on Campus program to include an Elder from the Stoney Nakoda Nation and the Tsuut'ina Nation to reach our targeted goal of including all Treaty 7 members. The

FNMI Partnership was originally made possible with a grant from The Calgary Foundation and the generous gifts of donors to St. Mary's University. To reach the goals of the FNMI Partnership's five-year plan, we depend on all forms of generous support to ensure this initiative continues to thrive. Our yearly fundraising goal is \$125,000, and overall we aim to raise \$625,000 over five years.

Recently, St. Mary's hosted an Indigenous Knowledge Symposium. This workshop, Ookaskaspaatassin, opened the dialogue across the university about ways in which knowledge is defined and shared, as well as worked to build student and faculty capacity for intercultural understanding, and mutual respect. This was one of many steps towards Indigenizing the curriculum at St. Mary's, and viewing Indigenous knowledge systems as equal. We recognize it is crucial for post-secondary institutions in Canada to respond to one of the most urgent issues facing our country, and in order to do so all members of our community must be active participants in creating change.

St. Mary's strives to support all FNMI students through community partnerships, celebrations of rich heritage and cultural practices, and through the provision of

an inclusive learning environment. Funding will not only continue to support initiatives on campus, it will also enable St. Mary's to become a leader in the implementation of Indigenous curricula. Our goal is to foster relationships with FNMI communities that are built on trust and mutual respect as we move forward together towards reconciliation. By integrating FNMI learning styles and knowledge and fostering intercultural understanding and respect, we benefit all students as they become lifelong learners, engaged citizens and compassionate members of society.



Casey Eagle Speaker leads a Blackfoot ceremony in McGivney Hall



Casey Eagle Speaker, an Elder on Campus at St. Mary's University



Steven Showwalter, a first year B.Ed. student, during a Métis ceremony on campus

Wins tally up for student athletes

Our Lightning student-athletes are leaders in the classroom, on the playing field and in the community, developing essential skills like teamwork, leadership, communication, time management and discipline.



During the 2015 – 2016 season, St. Mary's women's basketball team made history. They had an 18 – 3 record for a second place overall finish in the ACAC South Division and won against the top team in the North Division, facing off with the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT) in the gold medal final game to bring home the university's first ACAC medal. They carried this success streak all year long, finishing seventh in the country out of almost 100 teams at their first ever Canadian Collegiate Athletic Association National Championship in Windsor, Ontario. Third year guard Montana Romeril had an outstanding performance all season rewriting the St. Mary's women's basketball record book and earning CCAA and ACAC accolades. Montana started and finished the season as the leading scorer in the league and the country, broke two ACAC records and earned herself a CCAA

All-Canadian award for her outstanding performance this year. It was an experience the team will never forget, and the excitement of being able to represent St. Mary's as one of the top eight post-secondary schools in Canada was something they hope to build on in their upcoming season. Not bad for a team that doesn't have a home gym!

Doubling their wins and finishing one spot ahead of last year's finish in the ACAC South Division, the men's basketball program also turned heads this season. This year's team was brimming with talent and kept their opponents on their toes. Ali Raza, a first year player, was the ACAC Rookie of the Year while several other players enjoyed some personal success this season. Matt Guinto and Ali Raza were consistent in appearing in the CCAA individual stats categories, as well as in the ACAC top five statistical categories, while Charn Gill broke an ACAC record for most three-point conversions in a single game on February 20th. Despite not achieving a playoff spot, this program was successful in many other ways this year, including building a future post-season contending team next season. Students and coaches put in a lot of work, and demonstrated that with such commitment come big improvements.



The 2015 Cross-Country Running season was the first year at St. Mary's for both head coach Donna Dixon and assistant coach Joe Mills and it was one for the records. The past season was only the second year that St. Mary's Varsity team competed in the ACAC in Cross Country Running. St. Mary's had a small team for the 2015 season, with two men and two women competing at the municipal, provincial, and national levels. Coach Donna Dixon is looking to build on the solid foundation of runners that have been training over the past year, and has a goal to field a full team for the 2016 season. Team try-outs are open to any St. Mary's student who shows willingness to train and an interest in running. There are several benefits to participating in Varsity Athletics including: athletic scholarships, increased fitness, and creating life-long connections with fellow athletes.

When asked about the highlights of the 2015 season Coach Dixon said "seeing all of the team members train hard, and improve immensely from the beginning of the season to the end. Another highlight would include Chris White Gloria's qualification for Nationals [...] where he ran well among the best college competitors in Canada." These accomplishments marked St. Mary's first appearance at the National level for Cross Country. Much like the campus and other programs at St. Mary's the Athletics Department and the Cross Country Team are continually growing. With this growth comes a need for support from our community to ensure that our athletes have access to all that they need to succeed, including training facilities, scholarships and bursaries to support their studies, as well as competition funding.

The Cross Country team is a fast growing member of the Varsity Athletics Department at St. Mary's and is vital to supporting our commitment to nurture our students. Coach Dixon noted that "training and competing on a varsity team is a highlight of the university experience for many students." It helps athletes to develop into well-rounded members of our community. Donors have a positive impact in the life of a student athlete when they support St. Mary's many initiatives, programs, scholarships, and bursaries. These contributions help St. Mary's students as they work to achieve their academic and personal goals.



Chris White Gloria

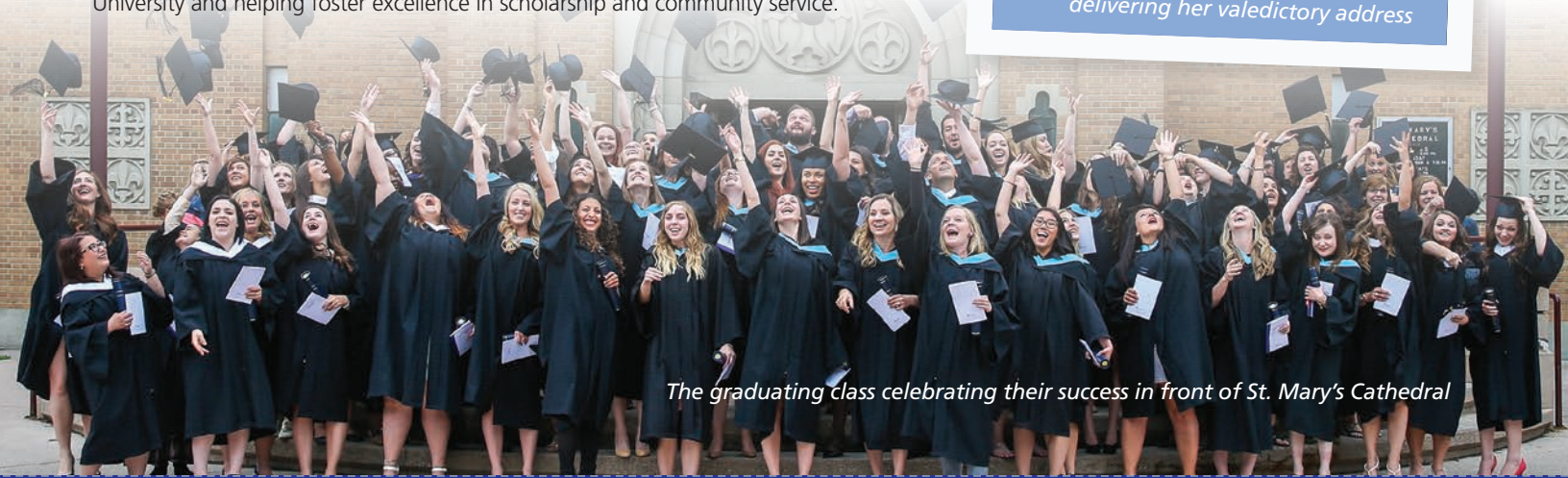
Your generous gift today inspires a lifetime of success

When you contribute to St. Mary's University, you are creating opportunity. Your support provides the resources vital to reaching unprecedented excellence and helps us continue to attract talented students and world-class faculty. The success we have celebrated this year is due, in large part, to St. Mary's supportive community partners and donors, and this support allows us to continue to develop interdisciplinary programs and build state-of-the-art facilities to expand our reach.

The new Heritage Centre will allow us to expand on our phenomenal growth in student numbers, and it will add to the dynamic intellectual and cultural heart of the university. Through reading this issue of the Marian Update, we hope you have discovered how your investment has inspired so many to achieve a learning experience that will lead to career and life successes. We thank you for positively contributing to St. Mary's University and helping foster excellence in scholarship and community service.



Sepidar Yeganeh Farid, graduating St. Mary's University student, delivering her valedictory address



The graduating class celebrating their success in front of St. Mary's Cathedral

Here is my gift to support St. Mary's University.

I would like to direct my gift to: Where most needed Other: _____

This is a one-time donation of \$ _____

OR My chosen monthly amount of \$20 \$50 \$100 Other \$ _____

Enclosed is my cheque (payable to St. Mary's University) **OR** Charge my donation to my: VISA MasterCard AMEX

Name: _____

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Prov: _____ Postal Code: _____

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Phone: (_____) _____

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Please contact me about leaving a gift in my will to St. Mary's University. Check here if you want to be removed from our mailing list.

Yes, I would like to receive email updates from St. Mary's University on upcoming news and events.

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14500 Bannister Road SE, Calgary, AB T2X 1Z4 Tel: 403-531-9130 Fax: 403-531-9136 Charitable registration #11918 8944 RR0001