

MEDIA ADVISORY

TO: Assignment Editors/News Directors

WHAT: St. Mary's is setting the stage to launch its First Nations Métis and Inuit (FNMI) Partnership on March 4, 2015. During the ceremony and lunch, the four foundational pillars of the FNMI Partnership: the FNMI Advisory Council, Elders on Campus, Scholars on Campus, and the FNMI Liaison, will be introduced and celebrated. At the conclusion of the ceremony, St. Mary's University is being honoured with a Buffalo Robe Transfer from Casey Eagle Speaker.

WHERE: **Fr. Michael J. McGivney Hall** | St. Mary's University campus | 14500 Bannister Way SE, just off Macleod Trail South. Plenty of free parking

WHEN: **Wednesday, March 4, 2015 | Ceremony 11:30am, Lunch: 12:30pm**

Photo Opp: Buffalo Robe transfer, Grand Entry (St. Mary's representatives, FNMI representatives, City representatives), remarks.

WHY: St. Mary's University recognizes and honours that the land upon which it sits is traditional Blackfoot territory. The partnership with First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities has been established to help St. Mary's University better understand how to support FNMI learners in university study. As Michelle Scott, FNMI Liaison at St. Mary's, states, "by integrating FNMI ways of knowing and being we will make St. Mary's a better university for all learners. The partnership we are celebrating was built on respect, trust and a strong desire to move forward together." With the growing number of FNMI learners at St. Mary's, and encouragement from the wider St. Mary's community to support the partnership, the launch of the four foundational pillars paves the way in creating a learning environment that encourages opportunity and success for FNMI students.

The ceremony will include the introduction of the FNMI Advisory Council, introduction of the Elders on Campus, introduction of the Scholars on Campus program, unveiling the University's new FNMI Logo, remarks by Deputy Mayor, Shane Keating and conclude with a Buffalo Robe transfer from Casey Eagle Speaker. It is a great honour and responsibility for St. Mary's University to be transferred a ceremonial Buffalo Robe from an elder. For the Blackfoot people, the buffalo was their way of life for thousands of years and their hides were used for many purposes, the most sacred of those was in ceremony.

First Nations Elders and community partners from the FNMI nations of the Stoney, Siksika, Piikani, Blood and Tsuu T'ina as well as the Métis will be in attendance at the launch. Members of the Calgary Foundation, a major funder of the program, members of the City of Calgary Urban Affairs Committee and Calgary Urban Aboriginal Initiative will also be in attendance. As well as many community partners and St. Mary's students, staff, faculty.

ABOUT ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY

St. Mary's University is a Catholic post-secondary, student-focused liberal arts and sciences teaching and research institution. St. Mary's offers Bachelor of Arts degrees, a Bachelor of Science degree, a Bachelor of Education (Elementary) degree, and courses in 35 academic disciplines. For more information, visit stmu.ca

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