

## PRESS RELEASE

The Association of Colleges of Sisters of St. Joseph Announces Nine Member Campuses receive Mini-Grants to Participate in National Catholic Sisters Week.

National Catholic Sisters Week has awarded \$8000 to the Association of Colleges of Sisters of St. Joseph. This grant will be distributed to nine member campus to participate in National Catholic Sisters Week from March 8-14, 2017. The mini-grants will allow the campuses to honor the Sisters of St. Joseph by hosting programs and events that honor the sisters. These programs will focus on loving the dear neighbor without distinction and focus on addressing human trafficking, environmental issues and sustainability, and creating an inclusive community for those who are or who were formally incarcerated. At many of the campuses, the National Catholic Sisters Week events will be part of week-long celebrations of Mission and Heritage Weeks. Events will be promoted with #dearneighbor.

Campus highlights include:

**Avila University** will host a program featuring *Journey to New Life*, a CSJ serving men and women recently released from prison. This event will give the college community the opportunity to learn more about life after prison and inspiration from the good works of CSJ community.

**Chestnut Hill College** will host a human trafficking awareness event. Residents and employees from Dawn's Place, a rescue and restore facility for women, speak about their experience from a personal perspective to provide awareness to different groups on campus.

**Elms College** will host the Sisters of St. Joseph of Springfield's Justice and Peace Committee to speak to scholars and students clubs about climate change and human trafficking.

**Fontbonne University** will host a week-long celebration, including events such as Watering the Family Tree Mass celebrating the gift of creation and "Rockin' with Sisters" where the Sisters of St. Joseph will be in rocking chairs and will invite students to come and "rock" with them while visiting. The campus will be promoting "I ♥ the CSJs" during the week. Additionally, a "Heritage Wall" displaying photos for students to appreciate the work of CSJs around the United States.

**Mount Saint Mary's University, Los Angeles** will have their local sisters highlight "loving the dear neighbor" in their many ministries to serve the poor in Los Angeles, particularly those persons who are homeless. This week will provide opportunities for student involvement and education about the ongoing housing shortage in the local community. The university will also host a campus wide food and toiletry drive and the opportunity to sign the "dear neighbor" pledge for the community.

**Regis College** will highlight and celebrate the work of the CSJs Boston and their work with multicultural and underserved people. The Sisters will sponsor literacy programs, transition programs, and programs that forge a pathway to a better life, including US citizenship.

**St. Catherine University** will host an event addressing environmental issues in the Twin Cities area, and a panel of eight CSJ sisters who will speak about how they practice sustainability in their professional and personal lives. The event will also highlight environmental justice work being done from responsible community farming and addressing air quality in low income communities.

**St. Joseph's College** will host their main event "Earth there is no place like home," to address and support sustainability. Other events include a "Speed Dating with Sisters" ice cream social, "The Dear Neighbor" Lunch and learn, as well as a Sisters of St. Joseph's Day Mass.

**The College of Saint Rose** will highlight the four values of Saint Rose: inclusive community, service to the dear neighbor, education of the whole person and striving for excellence in all things. The college will also highlight service to the dear neighbor by hosting a program called "Nuns in Jail". Additionally, the college will show two films *Get on the Bus* and *Dead Man Walking*.

For more information please contact ACSSJ or visit our website at <http://www.acssj.org/>.

## About National Catholic Sisters Week

National Catholic Sisters Week is an annual celebration that takes place from March 8–14. Created to honor women religious, it is a series of events that instruct, enlighten, and bring greater focus to the lives of these incredible women. National Catholic Sisters Week is supported by a \$3.3 million grant from the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, is headquartered at St. Catherine University in St. Paul, Minn., and is held in conjunction with National Women's History Month. To find out more, visit <http://www.nationalcatholicsistersweek.org/>

## About the Association of Colleges of Sisters of St. Joseph

The Association of Colleges of Sisters of St. Joseph (ACSSJ) draws together nine colleges and universities founded by the Sisters of St. Joseph to articulate and further the contemporary expression of the educational mission and legacy of the Sisters of St. Joseph. The Association fosters collaboration among all the member institutions, provides resources for the faculty, staff and students and encourages mission integration on each campus. The Association brings together campuses that were founded by the Sisters of St. Joseph and have over 115 years of experience in educating students. The institutions educate nearly 20,000 students annually.

The Association of Colleges of Sisters of St. Joseph includes the following campuses:

**Avila University** (Kansas City, MO)

**Chestnut Hill College** (Philadelphia, PA)

**Fontbonne University** (St. Louis, MO)

**Mount Saint Mary's University** (Los Angeles, CA)

**Our Lady of the Elms College** (Chicopee, MA)

**Regis College** (Weston, MA)

**St. Catherine University** (St. Paul, MN)

**St. Joseph's College** (Brooklyn and Long Island, NY)

**The College of Saint Rose** (Albany, NY)

For more information, contact Martha Malinski, Executive Director, Association of Colleges of Sisters of St. Joseph at [acssj1@gmail.com](mailto:acssj1@gmail.com) or (317) 721-1153.