

## NEWS RELEASE

March 29, 2007

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# University of Saint Mary to Host High School Conference on Global Human Rights

*9 a.m. – 2 p.m. Friday, April 20, 2007*

(Leavenworth, Kan.)— The University of Saint Mary Lawrence D. Starr Global Studies Institute is hosting its first High School Conference on Global Human Rights from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Friday, April 20 at the main campus in Leavenworth, Kan. The purpose of the conference is to bring together diverse high school students from the surrounding area to expand their knowledge and perspectives on global issues and to apply their critical thinking skills as they negotiate and solve current complex problems that affect the lives of people globally and nationally.



Saint Mary students are taking the lead in facilitating the day, which includes a simulation of bringing Guatemala from truce to peace, addressing powerful social justice issues and workable peace role play. High School groups will be assigned roles like Minister of the Interior, Major General for Internal Security, Director of Mayan Federation, Comandante X, U.S. Ambassador to Guatemala, and UN Mediator. Each role group will be charged with resolving conflicts and making agreements on three major issues: protection of human rights, Mayan cultural and political rights, and land and environment conflicts.

“The USM honors students who will take the lead in facilitating the simulations are great role models and will create a dynamic interaction among our high school participants,” said Dr. Gretchen Wilbur, conference coordinator. “The conference will engage students intellectually, creatively, and socially. They will work together with their peers who have different perspectives and experiences.”

At the conclusion of the conference, participants and facilitators will discuss and reflect upon the resolutions they developed during the simulation and how they might apply what they learned to other conflicts in the world, as well as to their own lives. "Role playing simulations of real life situations are very effective alternative methods of learning. They stimulate thinking, creativity, reflection and self-reflection," said simulation leader Natalya Riegg, professor of political science and global studies.

The Lawrence D. Starr Global Studies Institute is a professional, academic organization dedicated to the examination of global integration and to the promotion of attitudes, policies, and practices that foster peace, justice, generosity, and the equitable enrichment of life for all members of the global community.

Call Dr. Gretchen Wilbur at 913-758-4336 or email [wilburg@stmary.edu](mailto:wilburg@stmary.edu) for more information about the global human rights conference. To learn more about the Lawrence D. Starr Global Studies Institute visit <http://gsi.stmary.edu/>.

*The University of Saint Mary is a private, co-educational applied liberal arts university founded by the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth. The University of Saint Mary is located at 4100 South 4th Street, Leavenworth, Kan., with additional locations at 11413 Pflumm in Overland Park and inside Providence Medical Center at 8929 Parallel Parkway in Kansas City, Kan.*

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