



UNIVERSITY OF SAINT JOSEPH

CONNECTICUT

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UNIVERSITY OF SAINT JOSEPH RECEIVES INTERNATIONAL GRANT

Funds will be used to address urgent health care needs in Guyana

WEST HARTFORD, Conn. (June 24, 2016) – The University of Saint Joseph (USJ) has been awarded an international grant from the prestigious Raskob Foundation for Catholic Activities that will enable three USJ Nursing faculty and an assistant dean (Sister of Mercy) to travel to Guyana in October to train health care workers and address two of Guyana’s most distressing health care issues: suicide and inadequate palliative/end of life care. The grant allows USJ to expand upon its Guyana Immersion Project (GIP) as part of the University’s commitment to promote compassionate service as an integral component of its educational experience and to encourage students to develop as global citizens.

The Guyana Immersion Project, established in 2002, is USJ’s primary vehicle for international service, enabling faculty and students to share their knowledge in health care — and their compassion — with those suffering from illness in the third poorest nation in the Western Hemisphere. Each March, USJ students, faculty, and staff travel to Guyana and Saint Joseph Mercy Hospital for a two-fold purpose: to enhance student learning and conduct research on the health and educational needs of this developing nation.

As part of the grant, the USJ GIP team will prepare curriculum and visit Guyana to teach suicide risk screening and prevention methods and palliative care practices to Mercy health care workers. The team will also implement a training program with enhancements to ensure continued care that will impact long-term health outcomes. In March, the GIP team, along with USJ students, will return to Guyana. The students, while studying health disparities, will help faculty evaluate the program and reinforce instruction.

“We are so pleased to receive this grant and look forward to working with our partners in Guyana. Also, funds were awarded to support student travel and will enable students, who would otherwise not be afforded this opportunity, to work side-by-side with USJ faculty and the nurses and students of Guyana,” said Janet G. Knecht, RN, Ph.D.

USJ faculty and students also visit some of the other ministries of the Sisters of Mercy in Guyana, including an orphanage and a program called Mercy Wings that teaches trade skills to individuals who drop out of school. Today, students from various academic departments

participate in the Guyana Immersion Project.

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The University of Saint Joseph (USJ) offers a wide range of graduate, undergraduate, and certificate programs that combine a professional and liberal arts education with a focus on service. Coeducational graduate master's and doctoral degree programs are taught on the University's two campuses in West Hartford and Hartford, Connecticut; at off-campus locations throughout the state; and online. Undergraduate programs for women and for coeducational adult students take place on our beautiful suburban campus and include more than 25 majors and seven pre-professional programs, each of which provides personal attention in a caring environment. Founded in 1932 by the Sisters of Mercy, the University of Saint Joseph welcomes students from diverse backgrounds and religious traditions. To learn more, view our website at www.usj.edu.

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