



Students Participate in Project 351

January 3, 2011 – Braintree. Governor Patrick's inaugural festivities are kicking off with help from a unique population — a group of Catholic school students in the Archdiocese of Boston. In a gesture meant to distance their administration from the traditional inaugural gala, Governor Deval Patrick and Lieutenant Governor Tim Murray launched a campaign to promote the spirit of volunteerism in Massachusetts. As the overall goal of Project 351 is to encourage citizens of all 351 cities and towns of the commonwealth to give back, its initiation events will prominently feature the participation of the youth community. On January 8th, selected participants will impact over 10,000 children facing economic challenges in the areas of nutrition, early childhood health and development, educational excellence, and in providing life's essentials of food, clothing, and compassion. Of those select participants, fourteen will be Catholic school students.

It should come as no surprise that Governor Patrick has turned to Catholic students to spearhead the event. No strangers to the charity, good deeds, and service-oriented tenets of the Church, Catholic school students make exemplary community ambassadors. Their overwhelming response to the Governor's call to action reflects the longstanding success of an educational system committed to shaping conscientious and virtuous citizens. Each student was selected for their unique experience and growth into the leadership roles they hold today. For example, a student at St. Agatha School in Milton was nominated unanimously by his teachers. His experiences as a peer leader are varied and include student government, "Haiti Links of Love," A Walk for Haiti, the BC Buddy program, and the National Junior Leadership Conference in Washington DC.

Another student, Shannon Keith of Sacred Heart School, Roslindale, was invited to speak about her service experiences at the major press conference in which Project 351 was first announced. NECN covered the press conference and her speech is on the main page of the Project 351 website. Please visit:

www.project351.com

Archdiocesan schools were initially offered only ten spots for participation in the January 8th kickoff event. However, after the impressive response of our schools and students, the selection committee expanded our ranks to fourteen. The students selected to participate represent the following schools:

St. Mary of the Hills, Milton
Immaculate Conception School, Newburyport
St. Anthony School, Everett
St. Paul School, Wellesley
St. Agatha School, Milton
Boston College High School
Quincy Catholic Academy, Quincy

St. John the Evangelist, Canton
Sacred Heart, Roslindale
St. Michael School, Hudson
St. Jerome School, Weymouth
Pope John Paul II Academy, Dorchester
Cathedral High School, Boston
St. John the Evangelist, Beverly

Project 351 calls upon a legacy of citizen service that extends from the roots of American democracy to today's vibrant non-profit community, private sector civic leadership, and the charitable efforts of the Church in Boston. The goal of Project 351's unique gathering is to highlight the promise and potential of the Commonwealth's youth by uniting students from every city and town. Projects addressing critical needs have been developed in partnership with community-based service and non-profit organizations. These young leaders will join the Governor and special guests for a day of dialogue, enrichment, and service that will close with the Governor's call-to-action.

For more information on Project 351, please visit www.project351.com.