

First-Ever National Event Recognizing the Lives and Contributions of Catholic Sisters Set to Take Place at St. Catherine University

Soledad O'Brien headlines National Catholic Sisters Week March 8-14

in conjunction with National Women's History Month

ST. PAUL, Minn. (March 4, 2014) – As part of National Women's History Month, the inaugural National Catholic Sisters Week will kick off Saturday, March 8 at St. Catherine University in St. Paul, Minn., with a *SisterStories* storytelling event hosted by award-winning journalist and CEO Soledad O'Brien. Celebrating the lives and legacies of Catholic sisters, National Catholic Sisters Week will run March 8-14 and is designed to shine a national spotlight on Catholic sisters, raising awareness of their immense influence on young women.

"National Catholic Sisters Week will showcase the many facets of religious life for women today," said Sister Mary Soher, OP, co-executive director of the Hilton Sisters Project National Catholic Sisters Week. "Sisterhood offers a 'third way' – an alternative option to single or married life – for those interested in becoming part of a nurturing community with other like-minded women dedicated to a life of service and prayer. We want to celebrate and honor that third option and shed light on what it means to be a sister today."

National Catholic Sisters Week is part of a larger *SisterStory* program initiative, supported by a three-year, \$3.3 million grant the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation awarded to St. Catherine University in late 2013. Led by Soher and co-executive director Molly Hazelton, *SisterStory* focuses on building personal relationships between sisters and young women. Through the course of the program, more than 100 college women across the nation will be paired with sisters for one-on-one interviews to capture their oral histories via video, photos and blog posts.

"There are more than 51,000 sisters in the United States today," said Hazelton. "They're doctors and artists, and leaders in everything from social justice to education. We want to bring their stories to the forefront, encourage young women to take the time to get to know them and be inspired by them, and share their experiences."

A centerpiece of the *SisterStory* program will be a robust social and digital media hub, which will house the oral histories, along with web-based curriculum modules for middle school, high school and college women. Everyone is invited to participate in National Catholic Sisters Week through local community events and outreach, volunteer opportunities and social media. National Catholic Sisters Week will also feature community-submitted content on its Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest channels.

The inaugural 2014 National Catholic Sisters Week kick-off weekend at St. Kate's will bring together 40 sister/student pairings from across the United States for a weekend of learning, prayer and fellowship.

Public events include an afternoon of storytelling featuring *SisterStories*: "How Did I Know" with Soledad O'Brien on March 8 in the O'Shaughnessy Auditorium, followed by a Eucharistic celebration of National Catholic Sisters Week in the Our Lady of Victory Chapel. Later in the week, a screening of the documentary "Radical Grace" and Q&A with the filmmaker will take place (March 13), also on the St.

Catherine's St. Paul campus. For a full listing of National Catholic Sisters Week events, visit: <https://www2.stkate.edu/ncsw/events>.

About *SisterStory* and National Catholic Sisters Week

SisterStory is a three-year national program, supported by a \$3.3 million grant from the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, intended to bring awareness to the lives and contributions of Catholic sisters among young women. A cornerstone of the *SisterStory* program is National Catholic Sisters Week, an annual event celebrating the legacies of Catholic sisters. In its inaugural year, National Catholic Sisters Week will be held March 8-14, 2014, at St. Catherine University in conjunction with National Women's History Month. For more information on how to get involved, visit www.sisterstory.org and www.stkate.edu/ncsw and find National Catholic Sisters Week on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Pinterest](#).

About the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation

The [Conrad N. Hilton Foundation](#) was created in 1944 by international business pioneer Conrad N. Hilton, who founded Hilton Hotels and left his fortune to help the world's disadvantaged and vulnerable people. The Foundation currently conducts strategic initiatives in six priority areas: providing safe water, ending chronic homelessness, preventing substance abuse, helping children affected by HIV and AIDS, supporting transition-age youth in foster care, and extending Conrad Hilton's support for the work of Catholic Sisters. Following selection by an independent international jury, the Foundation annually awards the \$1.5 million Conrad N. Hilton Humanitarian Prize to a nonprofit organization doing extraordinary work to reduce human suffering. From its inception, the Foundation has awarded more than \$1 billion in grants, distributing \$83 million in the U.S. and around the world in 2012. The Foundation's current assets exceed \$2.2 billion.

About St. Catherine University

St. Catherine University is the nation's largest undergraduate college for women. A comprehensive University, St. Kate's offers baccalaureate, associate, master's and clinical doctorate degrees in a variety of liberal arts, health care and professional programs. Committed to meeting the educational needs of women of all ages, as well as men in its associate and graduate programs, the University offers many of its degree programs in traditional, weekend and evening as well as online formats. With beautiful campuses in St. Paul and Minneapolis, St. Catherine University has a total enrollment of 5,075.

About Soledad O'Brien

An award-winning broadcast journalist, Soledad O'Brien is founder and CEO of Starfish Media Group, which produces content for various media outlets, including HBO Real Sports, CNN, National Geographic and Al Jazeera America. Before opening her company, O'Brien was an anchor and correspondent for CNN and started her career at NBC. Following Hurricane Katrina, she and her husband started the Soledad O'Brien and Brad Raymond Starfish Foundation, with the mission to "provide young women with a bridge between obstacles and opportunity, by giving them the resources to overcome barriers and reach their highest potential."

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