



CRISTO REY
JESUIT HIGH SCHOOL
MILWAUKEE

For Immediate Release

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New Jesuit High School Will Serve Milwaukee Area Students Starting Fall 2015, Stith Named President

MILWAUKEE – April 23, 2014 – The Midwest Jesuits of the Wisconsin and Chicago-Detroit Provinces and the Cristo Rey Network today announced the opening of a new Catholic, Jesuit high school to serve students in Milwaukee. The new school will be located in the St. Florian’s school building at 1215 South 45th Street.

Cristo Rey Jesuit High School, following the highly successful Cristo Rey Network® model, is uniting with Milwaukee community and business leaders to provide underserved students with a faith-based, college-prep, leadership-focused education.

“This new school represents a few firsts while standing on a strong foundation of proven success,” said Jesuit Father Tom Lawler, provincial of the Wisconsin Province. “It is the first ministry of the new province of the Midwest Jesuits, it is the first Cristo Rey school to partner with a Jesuit university, and it is the first coeducational Jesuit secondary school in Milwaukee. At the same time, Cristo Rey builds upon the 450 years of Jesuit education worldwide and 150 years of Jesuit education in Milwaukee.”

A feasibility study was conducted to determine the need for a new high school based on the limited quality high school options for those who can’t afford private school. The feasibility study process began in August 2012 with sponsorship from Marquette University’s College of Education, as well as support from the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, St. Florian’s Parish, the Jesuits, and the Cristo Rey Network.

“As a Jesuit institution, our leadership of the feasibility study signifies our support for K-12 Catholic education in the Milwaukee area,” said Bill Henk, dean and professor of Marquette’s College of Education. “With the high demand for a diverse, educated work force to build the region’s future economy, Marquette’s involvement in this important initiative makes perfect institutional sense.”

“We have spent nearly two years conducting a feasibility study to ensure that Cristo Rey and its model are the right fit for students, their parents, and the community,” said Anne Zizzo, a trustee at Marquette University who co-chaired the feasibility study committee and has been a member of the volunteer transition board. “We are thrilled the Cristo Rey Network, Jesuits, the business community and donors

have responded to the educational need of the community by bringing the successful Cristo Rey model to Milwaukee,” said Zizzo. “After an extensive search, we have named Mr. Andrew Stith the first president of Cristo Rey Jesuit High School Milwaukee.”

Stith, who led the Milwaukee feasibility study, brings considerable experience as an educational leader, having previously served as the founding Vice President for Advancement of Cristo Rey Kansas City prior to his work in Milwaukee and is a Marquette University Graduate. Stith now will be focused on preparing the school to open with a class of freshman in the fall of 2015.

“I am excited about the tremendous potential of this new school for the young people who will attend. Our goal is to provide students from modest means with a high-quality, values-based education rooted in the Catholic Jesuit tradition of academic excellence and leadership development,” said Stith.

The feasibility study included surveys of 466 students, 92 parents, and interviews with 100 community/education leaders, all of which demonstrated overwhelming support for opening a Cristo Rey model school in Milwaukee. With the proven support, a school site was selected, the minimum start-up funding was secured, and letters of intent were acquired from local businesses to provide work-study jobs for the school’s first class of students. In April 2014, the school was approved by the Jesuits and the Cristo Rey Network.

The Cristo Rey model includes a longer school day and year, an expectation that every student should go to college, and a requirement that each student participate in a work-study program to gain professional work skills and a glimpse of potential future careers at Milwaukee area companies. To date, approximately 28 companies already have signed up to be partners in this endeavor such as Whyte Hirschboeck Dudek, Manpower Inc., and Robert W Baird & Company.

“There is much preparation work to do in the next year including building our enrollment, planning our academic and extra-curricular programs, raising additional funds, and working with local businesses to secure student jobs for the work-study program,” said Stith.

“Milwaukee needs a Cristo Rey school because the students in Milwaukee's communities deserve what I had,” said Cristina Garcia, a 2007 graduate of a Cristo Rey Jesuit High School (Chicago) and 2011 graduate of Marquette University currently studying law at Chicago Kent University. “They deserve teachers who push them and they deserve a job that challenges them. Students will feel at home and families will feel involved in their child's education. Milwaukee is a beautiful city with a lot to offer and I hope that Cristo Rey can show students in Milwaukee what it has taught me about my potential.”

Cristo Rey Jesuit High School Milwaukee will be the 29th Cristo Rey Network® school in the United States and will open its doors in the 2015-16 school year, with an anticipated enrollment of 100 freshmen. The school will add a new freshman class each of the following three years, enrolling 400 young men and women at capacity.

About the Cristo Rey Network

The Cristo Rey Network provides a quality, Catholic, college preparatory education to young people who live in urban communities with limited educational options. The organization's mission is clear – college success for Cristo Rey Network students. The first Cristo Rey Network® school in the country was Cristo Rey Jesuit High School in Chicago's Pilsen neighborhood, which is part of the Midwest Jesuits.

Member schools utilize a rigorous academic model, supported with effective instruction, to prepare students with a broad range of academic abilities for college. Cristo Rey Network schools employ an innovative Corporate Work Study Program that provides students with real world work experiences. Every student works five full days a month to gain job experience, grow in self-confidence, and realize the relevance of his or her education.

About the Midwest Jesuits

The Jesuits are the world's largest order of Catholic priests and brothers. As part of the global Society of Jesus, the Midwest Jesuits of the Chicago-Detroit and Wisconsin Provinces serve in more than 66 ministries throughout 12 states from the Great Lakes to the Great Plains (see attached map and listing of ministries). For more information, please visit www.jesuitsmidwest.org and www.jesuitpartners.org.

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