



# parent

ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE PARENT NEWS

September 2015

## Welcome to St. Mike's College: Parents of the Class of 2019!

### Greetings from a fellow parent

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7T9 | *Parent and Alumni*

Starting off at a new school is always an exciting moment in all our lives, regardless of the level. There are feelings of looking forward to all the new friends and teachers, of hope for the best mixed with natural apprehensions that come with stepping into the unknown. I vividly remember saying goodbye to my daughter as she embarked on the biggest adventure of her life up to that point, her first year of university at St. Michael's College.

I remember that bitter-sweet mixture of emotions spanned everything that goes with "letting go", and wondering if everything was really going to be OK with her.

Through it all, there were three thoughts, based on my own first-hand experience, that gave me an irrefutable assurance that at St. Mike's, she was in the best of hands.

First, if you speak with St. Mike's alumni, they will tell you that St. Michael's provides a much smaller and more intimate atmosphere for students than the larger University of Toronto. It has often been referred to as an "oasis in the city" that makes one feel what can be best described as "not being in Toronto".

This feeling is backed up by the fact that St. Michael's has its own structure and



President David Mulroney enjoys brunch with the class of 2019.

its own staff to help students. It provides a thriving environment in the Catholic tradition in the midst of a secular university and city.

The second reassuring thought is that St. Mike's has a long heritage of standing for the nurturing and development of the whole person. Regardless of the academic stream your son or daughter has chosen, their exposure to that rich "soup" of great academic minds, study partners, clubs, teams, organizations, and social activities will all work to help them bloom into the well-rounded, integrated person they were meant to be. Before your very eyes, you will see them stand on their own, take responsibility for their decisions and find

their place in the world.

Finally, you can be assured that there is also an abundance of caring support among the staff at St. Michael's and a genuine eagerness to offer it freely and immediately. Whether the challenges are academic or social, you should encourage your student to go and talk to their don, registrar, chaplain or professor about their problem. They will not only get a compassionate, nurturing ear, but good counsel as well.

So as you "let go" please know this: St. Michael's College will be an unforgettable experience for your son or daughter...and things will be OK. God bless all of you, and best wishes for four outstanding years.

**WHAT'S INSIDE: STUDENT SUPPORT • STUDENT LIFE • ACADEMIC RESOURCES  
• WHAT YOU CAN DO AS A PARENT • ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE AND LORETTO  
COLLEGE RESIDENCES • CAMPUS SAFETY**



## Student Support

**SMC DIVISION OF STUDENT SERVICES** As an institution of higher learning, St. Mike's is committed to supporting your students' university experience through our Student Service Divisions:

**Academic Support:** The Kelly Library is home to countless resources including our 'personal librarian program', which connects each first year student with one of our helpful librarians. The Kelly also provides academic orientations and workshops to support your students' transition to university level courses.

**Advising & Registrarial Support:** The Registrar's office provides academic advising, financial aid assistance, scholarship and award information, and guidance on all issues related to your child's academic journey.

**Campus Life Support:** The Dean of Student's office is the central hub for student life activities on campus and is responsible for overseeing the SMC Residence, providing guidance and support to clubs and associations, and educating students on issues of

importance to the university community.

**Commuter Dons:** Students who live in residence have access to a Residence Don to help support their transition to university life; students who live off campus, have access to a Commuter Don who provides similar types of support. Commuter Dons hold regular office hours in the student lounge and organize activities and events designed to connect day-students with their peers both on and off campus.

**Mentors and Academic Peers (MAPs):** Each summer, all incoming first years are connected via email, to an upper year student in a similar area of study. Your child's 'MAP' serves as an e-mentor throughout the year and provides guidance and advice on issues related to their university experience. The MAPs also host weekly study sessions, academic skills workshops to help support students with their academic transition.

**Campus Ministry:** The goal of Campus Ministry is to foster a community that allows us to explore and develop our Catholic faith.

In doing so, we also welcome members of other religious traditions into the life of the college. Students are encouraged to experience the beauty and solemnity of the liturgical year, and to join in a rich program of activities at St. Basil's, our historic collegiate church. A wide range of other programs and resources like pastoral counselling, spiritual direction and community building activities are also offered. [SMC](#)



## Student Life

Although the ultimate goal of every student is to obtain a degree, university provides countless opportunities for personal growth and development that take place *outside* of the classroom, or what is commonly referred to as 'student life'. Some of these opportunities are facilitated by student groups while others are organized by our dedicated student life staff. Students who participate in campus life activities not only enjoy their university experience more, but tend to do better academically, have a larger support network, and get the added bonus of seeing their activities reflected on their co-curricular record.

**St. Michael's College Student Union (SMCSU):** All SMC undergraduate students belong to the SMC Student Union, which organizes a number of social, cultural and athletic events throughout the year. Some of SMCSU's traditional programming includes:

**Intramural Sports:** SMC has a strong sports tradition and interested students are encouraged to participate in one of our many intramural teams. Intramural

sports are a great way to stay fit, enjoy the camaraderie of a team, and meet students from other colleges and professional faculties.

**The Grammateion:** This annual publication is where SMC students can showcase their literary and artistic talents. Students are invited to submit their original artwork, photography, short stories, poetry, etc. or to volunteer their time assisting in the publishing process.

**Performing Arts:** An SMC tradition for almost 50 years, Kelly's Korner is an open-mic talent show that's held in the Student Lounge on the last Wednesday of every month. For those who've been bitten by the acting bug, each year SMCSU collaborates with the SMC Troubadours to produce musicals and plays that are performed in theatres in and around the University of Toronto.

**SMCSU Formal & Social Nights:** At the end of each year, our student union hosts the 'Double Blue Formal' at a swanky Toronto venue – by all accounts, one of the

highlights of the school year! SMCSU also organizes monthly social nights at a variety of Toronto clubs where students can take a break from their studies, relax with their peers and dance the night away.

**Student Clubs & Associations:** In addition to the Student Union, St. Mike's has over 30 different clubs and associations that students can join – with many more throughout the broader U of T community. Student clubs are a great way to meet people with similar interests and be part of an organization that is committed to enhancing the student experience.

**The Mike Newspaper:** The Mike is SMC's student newspaper which is published every two weeks during the academic year. Students with a flair for writing or photography are encouraged to join the Mike staff or contribute to the publication by submitting articles or images. [SMC](#)





## Academic Resources

**John M. Kelly Library:** The Library, one of the highest-circulating at U of T, is the social and academic hub of the College. With access to more than 250,000 books, as well as scholarly journals and a vast range of electronic resources, students at the Kelly Library can read quietly on the third floor, collaborate with classmates on the second floor, and make use of more than 75 computer workstations and 9 laptops to work on assignments and carry out online research. The three floors of the Kelly Library include a wide variety of study spaces including group study rooms and the popular Kelly Café.

Visit <http://stmikes.utoronto.ca/kelly>

### Kelly Services for Students - Research Help:

Students can book individual research appointments with librarians online, in person, or by email. Appointments are 45-minutes. Librarians help with information literacy concepts and skills such as narrowing a topic, evaluating information, the research process, citing sources, and the navigation of complex databases.

**Personal Librarians:** All first-year St. Mike's students are assigned a personal librarian to serve as their key point person for all their library and research needs.

Visit <http://stmikes.utoronto.ca/kelly/students/>

St. Michael's College Writing Centre please visit <http://stmikes.utoronto.ca/students/writing/>

**The Registrar's Office** is a good source of general information about many facets of life at university.

Staff help bridge the gap between high school and university so that students may benefit as much as possible from the considerable services and opportunities available at university.

Advisors are available to assist students in navigating the university and are deeply committed to providing personal attention and efficient service to our community.

Students are invited to contact the Office of the Registrar by email, by phone, or in person. Advice is available daily by appointment or on a drop-in basis.

Our student support services include personalized service to promote a culture of success that includes everything from supporting academics to ensuring students participate in meaningful activities outside of the classroom. We offer drop-in advising daily, which allows students to pop by when they need assistance, they can spend 5 – 10 minutes with the first available advisor on a first come, first served basis, every morning and afternoon throughout the week, we have advisors on-hand to meet students' academic needs. Some of our services include:

- Advising on course and program selection.

- Assisting students with the use of the degree audit tool – Degree Explorer and the Planner function.
- Explaining university policies and practices.
- Advising on fee payment, fee deferral or fee problems including arrears.
- Financial counseling/grant applications.
- Completing forms for education savings plans or for outside organizations.
- Advising students who are on probation or suspended.
- Advising students charged with an academic offence.
- Assist with extraordinary or atypical situations/letters of considerations/petitions or appeals.
- Updating student records such as change of name or change of status in Canada.
- Referral to specialized services at U of T.

Advisors can also assist students if they experience difficulties, such as illness, family emergency or financial problems, which have an impact on their academic work. It is important that students contact the Registrar's Office immediately once they know there is a problem. The ability to manage problems with a measure of success diminishes as time passes. [SMC](#)

## What You Can Do as a Parent ...

SOMETIMES IT MAY seem that the role you are destined to play for your son or daughter throughout their academic career is that of "The Banker." However, we would like to offer the following suggestions that will help you play a broader role.

BE SUPPORTIVE and trusting; encourage independence but always be there when they need you.

ACCEPT THAT THEY will not tell you every detail of their life, this may be nothing new, but it will now take on a new dimension. If they have previously shared everything with you, you may see a slight change as they start to become more independent.

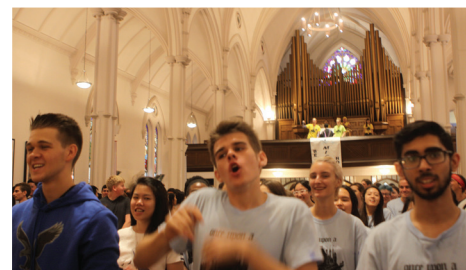
SHOW CONCERN and interest about their life on campus but try not to invade their privacy. They will let you know what is happening sooner or later, but on their own terms. This is part of asserting their independence.

SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGE good study habits- but don't nag. This will not only tire and frustrate you, but it will also create tension between you and your son or daughter - this is not conducive to providing a good study environment.

GIVE THEM THE freedom to fail or make mistakes as they take responsibility for the choices they will make during their academic career.

ADJUST HOUSEHOLD CHORES, if they are living at home, to accommodate the additional time required for course work. Keep in mind that university courses require enormous amounts of time.

ENCOURAGE THEM to view their academic career as a time of discovery and encourage them to become involved in the extracurricular life of the college. [SMC](#)





## Residences: St. Michael's College and Loretto College

For students living away from home for the first time, the residences of St. Michael's College are the ideal way to make the transition to a new city, new-found independence and an exciting new chapter in their lives. Situated in the heart of one of the most vibrant cities in North America, the residences at St. Michael's and Loretto Colleges provide a welcoming, engaging, close-knit community dedicated to enhancing each resident's academic success, personal growth and well-being. Our residences provide spacious rooms and all the modern amenities students expect in a college setting, including high speed Internet, music practice space and workout facilities. We also offer an innovative meal plan, a wide selection of healthy meals and a space where students can cook (or learn to cook) for themselves.

Living in residence makes it easy to meet new people, make new friends and explore everything that the university and the city have to offer. In our experience, students who live in residence are more engaged in

the exciting life of the University, better connected with its many resources and supports, and have a lot more fun. Explore new ideas, new experiences and develop new skills and abilities with Canada's most dynamic intellectual community at your doorstep! Please consult the College's website for more details on fees, services and important dates. [SMC](#)



## CAMPUS SAFETY

**ST. MICHAEL'S AND LORETTO COLLEGES** are committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all our students. Both SMC and Loretto College have a 24-hour centralized Porter's Desk where students can raise security concerns and seek emergency assistance at any time of the day or night. We also work closely with the University of Toronto's Campus Police Services to provide a safe environment across the USMC Campus. SMC Security regularly patrols the campus grounds, and emergency call stations are located throughout. The College has also found that our own staff and students are our most important partners when it comes to campus safety and security, and stresses

the importance of personal responsibility and prevention, especially when it comes to locking doors, not allowing strangers into buildings and never leaving personal belongings unattended. The University of Toronto's "WALKsafer Service" provides all SMC students with a safe alternative to walking alone at night. Patrollers are friendly individuals who are carefully screened before being hired. They work in a pair, at least one of whom is female, and can be identified by their photo badges and distinctive jackets. SMC students also have access to the U of T Community Safety Office that provides assistance, support and referrals to students who have safety concerns or who have had their personal

safety compromised. The Safety Office also develops and delivers educational initiatives throughout the academic year to address personal safety issues on campus.

[www.safety.utoronto.ca](http://www.safety.utoronto.ca) [SMC](#)

*This newsletter is provided as a courtesy to parents of St. Michael's College Students. Comments are welcome at [smc.alumni@affairs@utoronto.ca](mailto:smc.alumni@affairs@utoronto.ca).*

*For more parent and family information please visit <http://stmikes.utoronto.ca/parents/>*

*Important information for students can be found at: <http://stmikes.utoronto.ca/students>*

*Follow us on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/USMCUofT>*



“Teach us goodness, discipline and knowledge”

*AT ST. MIKE'S, the Catholic College within the University of Toronto, we strive to provide a place for study where students can not only explore their academic potential but also develop the social and ethical standards that will help them become effective and responsible members of society. In doing this we adhere to the motto of the founders of St. Michael's College, the Basilian Fathers. [SMC](#)*