NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 1, 2013

CONTACT:

Olivia Grigg
Communication Specialist
402-399-2454 • ogrigg@csm.edu

OMAHA, Neb. - A 34-year-old woman will graduate college the same day her 18-year-old daughter graduates high school on May 19. EuStacia Moss will get her degree in applied psychology and human services proudly from College of Saint Mary.

A long, hard road has led her to where she is now.

Moss's first recollection of life takes her back to when she was just three years old, lying on the kitchen floor and picking up her own teeth in hopes of putting them back into her swollen gums. A rough and abusive home life proved to be unfit for a child, and Moss was put into foster care.

Growing up, Moss didn’t get a chance to enjoy her childhood. She often wondered if child labor laws had ever been enforced when she worked in her foster parents’ market. Or why an eight-year-old didn’t receive a meal if chores were not done in a timely manner. She tended to a boy in foster care who had a condition that didn’t allow him to take care of himself, and she walked two miles to work every day after school. Moss said she was “rich” making three dollars a day.

As she got a bit older, Moss became close to one of her cousins. They would dare each other to rob someone – or beat someone up. It was a game to them. Moss was his right-hand man, so to speak, but because she became pregnant with her first child, she was unable to partake in those activities for long. Her cousin is now serving two life sentences.

Six different facilities housed Moss during her time as a state-ward, varying between foster homes, group homes and emergency shelter until placement was available.

At the age of 30, three years after her divorce was finalized, Moss went back to school. She knew she needed to continue her education in order to fulfill the dream she had at 15 years old, pregnant and in foster care. Moss plans to open a group home for adolescent girls who are state-wards and have a child or are expecting. Her goal is to teach them the skills needed to effectively raise a child and accomplish their goals. This is in hopes of decreasing the rate of those depending upon government assistance.
When Moss came across College of Saint Mary’s (CSM) website, she saw that CSM was a place that empowers women. The Mothers Living and Learning residence hall was something she appreciated, and even though she didn’t fit the criteria (the program allows a single mother to have up to two children over the age of six weeks and under the age of 10) for living on campus, she wanted to be part of a community that was involved with reaching out to and helping single mothers reach their full potential.

“I wanted a home away from home and a family that would cultivate me,” Moss said. “The mission, to sum it all up, said how ‘dedicated’ CSM is to the education of women in an environment that calls forth potential and fosters leadership all while paying attention to the development of the mind, body and spirit. I submitted my application that day.” CSM delivered what it promised.

During her time at CSM, Moss has co-founded E.B.O.N.I., a student organization designed to promote educational, professional, political and social needs and goals of the African and African-American communities. She was named the 67th Queen of Hearts, a distinction for those exemplifying character, leadership and service. She pushed to have a black history class taught at CSM, and now in her last year, has fulfilled that goal. Moss was named to Who’s Who Among Colleges and University Students which highlights those who enhance the positive image of American students through their contribution to community and school. She was also inducted into CSM’s Sigma Phi Sigma, a National Mercy Honor Society.

Moss is now the single mother of four daughters. She has overcome uterine cancer and recently had an ovarian cancer scare.

“God isn’t done with me yet,” Moss beamed. “I have a gift – I focus all of my energy on making things positive, no matter how negative they are. I couldn’t imagine my life being any different than it is.”

Moss volunteers at the Washington Branch Library as a cook and server for the family reading program known as Prime Time. She also mentors a young mother in the community with the Connection’s Project, which implements successful community strategies to improve birth outcomes in the African-American communities.

Humbly, Moss said, “I can honestly testify that College of Saint Mary has done just what they set out to do. I would like to thank CSM for not only allowing me to secure a future for myself, but for my four daughters as well. With all that I do, I see myself falling into the category of what the Walking Woman represents.”

*College of Saint Mary, founded in Omaha in 1923, is the region's only Catholic college for women. With approximately 1,000 students, CSM is dedicated to the education of women in an environment that calls forth potential and fosters leadership. For more information on CSM, visit CSM.edu.*

###