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ST. PATRICK ACADEMY STUDENTS EXPLORE HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY AT VERDANT PASTURES IN SCITUATE, RHODE ISLAND

Providence, RI (September 20, 2022) – An educational partnership between three entities, St. Patrick Academy in Providence, the North American Catholic Educational Programming Foundation, Inc. (NACEPF), and Mobile Beacon, a subsidiary of NACEPF, has been expanded to include the hands-on study of U.S. history and exploration in archaeology.

Today, students from the St. Patrick Academy U.S. History II Honors course visited Verdant Pastures, where they received their first on-site lesson in “homestead” archaeology. The students searched for artifacts at the former site of a 20th century farmhouse; upon returning to the classroom, they will focus on researching the origins of the artifacts and writing essays on their findings.

“We are very fortunate to have a partnership with NACEPF and Mobile Beacon and to have access to this extraordinary farm,” says Principal, Christopher Myron. “It is important for our students to observe and gather research, and then apply what they have learned to their studies.”

NACEPF and Mobile Beacon are headquartered in Johnston, RI and the 170-acre farm, called Verdant Pastures, is the site in Scituate for outreach and programs. Along with the educational initiatives, Verdant Pastures raises produce in their greenhouses, which is then donated to local charities, such as food pantries, who serve Rhode Island’s food-insecure populations. St. Patrick Academy and NACEPF have enjoyed a long-standing collaboration in this endeavor. Produce has been harvested in the past by SPA students and faculty.

In spring 2022, St. Patrick Academy, NACEPF and Mobile Beacon produced a pilot program based on STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math) curriculum. In March through May of last year, SPA students conducted field observations on the farm, recorded their findings in journals and researched the history of the area. In the coming months, the students



will study the applied sciences, and specifically agronomy, the science of soil management and crop production.

In support of the coursework, Mobile Beacon has provided mobile hotspots and unlimited broadband service for students while conducting field observations that require on-site internet access.

The land of Verdant Pastures has important historical significance for Rhode Island. It was formerly owned by the Governor Stephen Hopkins of Scituate, who signed the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution.

“NACEPF and Mobile Beacon are pleased to welcome St Patrick Academy students to Verdant Pastures,” said Katherine Messier, Vice President of NACEPF and Executive Director of Mobile Beacon. “We’re thrilled to bring this new curriculum to life by use of the farm. I hope this is the first of many opportunities where NACEPF and Mobile Beacon can support local schools, colleges, or universities across Rhode Island who are interested in creating their own curriculum,”

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About St Patrick Academy: Founded in 2009 by Reverend James T. Ruggieri, St. Patrick Academy provides a Catholic college-preparatory education to all students, regardless of need, who aspire to spiritual, personal and academic excellence. Serving 100 students from metropolitan Rhode Island, SPA provides a rigorous curriculum, and offers a comprehensive program of athletics, after school and enrichment clubs, academic support services and tutoring, and personal and career counseling. St. Patrick Academy is rich in ethnic diversity - in fact, thirty-one countries are represented in our student body. Most of our students are the first in their families to attend college and many are the children of immigrants. Approximately 75% of our student population is of Hispanic heritage, 20% of African American heritage and 5% are from other ethnic heritages. Additionally, over half of our students speak more than one language at home, including Spanish, French, Portuguese, Haitian Creole, and Cape Verdean Creole.

At St. Patrick Academy, no student is turned away due to an inability to pay tuition. This year, St. Patrick Academy will award more than \$900,000 in tuition assistance, thanks to the generosity of generous donors, Diocesan assistance and foundation grants. For more information visit the website: <https://www.stpatsri.org/>.

About NACEPF: North American Catholic Educational Programming Foundation, Inc. (NACEPF) is a Rhode Island-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and the second largest



Educational Broadband Service (EBS) licensee in the United States. NACEPF's broadband service, religious and educational programming, and advocacy efforts support education at every level. NACEPF's worldwide philanthropic efforts focus on providing access to the resources essential to human development and well-being. This includes access to healthy food, clean water, safe housing, education, healthcare, and faith-based services. NACEPF's wholly-owned subsidiary, Mobile Beacon, provides broadband service to educational, nonprofit, and community anchor institutions throughout the United States. To learn more, visit www.nacepf.net.