

— MEDIA ADVISORY/PHOTO OPPORTUNITY —

**SAINT THOMAS ACADEMY/VISITATION MOCK CRASH TO
RAISE AWARENESS OF DRUNK DRIVING RISKS DURING
PROM SEASON**

WHAT: Saint Thomas Academy and Convent of the Visitation school CHOOSE groups will host a Mock Crash to simulate a drunk driving incident, including the events leading up to the crash and afterward. Three impact speakers – including Visitation English teacher Rita Speltz, who was hit by a drunk driver – will provide context before and after the simulation. The CHOOSE groups hope that the simulation will help high school students make a connection about the decision to drink and drive and the potential consequences for themselves, their friends, and strangers on the road. Mendota Heights fire and police departments will be assisting with the event, and AAA is sponsoring the event.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), nearly one-third of young people under age 21 killed in traffic accidents die from alcohol-related causes during April, May and June. During typical prom weekends in 2004, 46 percent of traffic deaths among 15-20 year-olds were alcohol-related. Of those alcohol-related fatalities, 69 percent involved a 15-20 year-old driver with alcohol in his/her system (source: BuzzFree Prom <<http://www.buzzfreeprom.com/>>)

WHEN: Friday, April 23 – 1:25 p.m.

WHO: Impact speakers: Mendota Heights police chief, a Dakota County attorney and Rita Speltz, a Visitation teacher hit by a drunk driver
Saint Thomas Academy cadets
Convent of the Visitation school students
Mendota Heights police and fire departments

WHERE: Saint Thomas Academy parking lot
949 Mendota Heights Road
Mendota Heights, Minn.
651-454-4570

About Saint Thomas Academy

Founded in 1885, Saint Thomas Academy is an all-male, college preparatory, Catholic, military/leadership school committed to preparing young men to succeed in college and in life. Nationally accredited by the Independent Schools Association of the Central States (ISACS), the Academy challenges young men to excel academically, spiritually, morally and physically in and out of the classroom.

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