

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **QMS Equestrian Coach Tops in BC**

#### ***BCHJA Awards QMS Athletes and Head Coach***

**February 1, 2016 - Duncan, BC, Canada** – The 2015 equestrian show season was filled with success for riders and coaches at Queen Margaret's School. The British Columbia Hunter Jumper Association (BCHJA) agreed and presented several awards to students and the school's head coach at their recent Awards Gala in Burnaby, BC.

After an incredible show season which saw Grade 12 rider *Kassidy Keith* win double national medals in Toronto, it came as little surprise when she was recognized in multiple categories in Burnaby. Kassidy was presented with the *Carol McGill Sportsmanship Award*, given to a junior rider who best exemplifies the qualities of sportsmanship and compassion to their equine partner, the *Maple Meadows Year End Junior Equitation Award*, won for earning the highest standing in the 3'6"–3'9" equitation divisions over the season, and the *Championship for the Junior A Equitation Division*. "This year was one of the best years of my life," exclaims Keith. "I am so thankful to everyone who helped me get to this point and who supported me."

Grade 10 rider *Emily Cake* also walked away with two awards at the BCHJA Gala, including *Reserve Champion in the 1.10m Junior Jumper Division* and fourth in the *1m Junior Jumper*. "Emily really stepped up and displayed adaptability this season, showing her skill set on a variety of different horses," shares Jodine Buydens, QMS Equestrian Director. "We are very proud of the tremendous work put in by all of our athletes throughout the 2015 season."

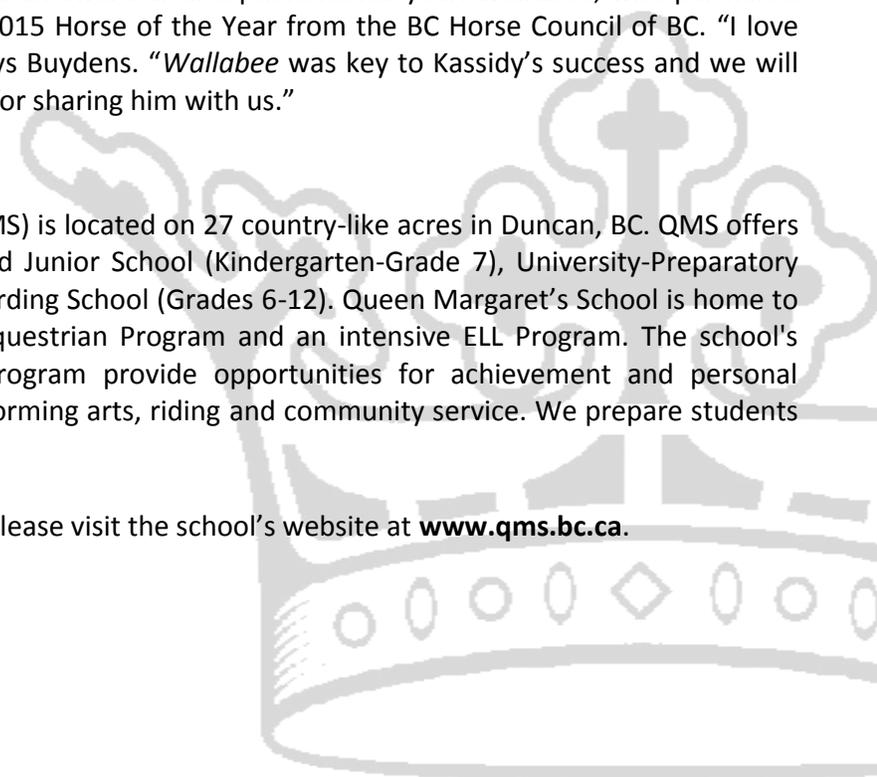
It was also an exciting evening for QMS Head Coach *Cheryl Keith*, who was recognized with *the BCHJA Coach of the Year Award*. "It was a huge surprise when they announced my name," says Keith. "I've been coaching for over 20 years and this is definitely one of the pinnacles of my career. It was really memorable to stand on stage with my daughter, Kassidy, and my student Emily. I am very honoured."

An equine member of the QMS Royals also earned an award after a phenomenal year. *Wallabee*, who partnered with Kassidy Keith on her national titles, earned 2015 Horse of the Year from the BC Horse Council of BC. "I love that he was recognized for his hard work too," says Buydens. "*Wallabee* was key to Kassidy's success and we will always be grateful to QMS Alumni Jolene Benham for sharing him with us."

#### **About Queen Margaret's School**

Established in 1921, **Queen Margaret's School (QMS)** is located on 27 country-like acres in Duncan, BC. QMS offers a co-ed Early Childhood Education program, co-ed Junior School (Kindergarten-Grade 7), University-Preparatory High School for girls (Grades 8-12) and all girls Boarding School (Grades 6-12). Queen Margaret's School is home to Canada's *only* on-campus school English riding Equestrian Program and an intensive ELL Program. The school's comprehensive scholastic and extra-curricular program provide opportunities for achievement and personal growth through academics, sports, visual and performing arts, riding and community service. We prepare students for university, for higher education, for life.

For more details about Queen Margaret's School, please visit the school's website at [www.qms.bc.ca](http://www.qms.bc.ca).



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**Photo:** QMS rider *Kassidy Keith* and her mother, QMS Head Coach, *Cheryl Keith* were both winners at the recent BCHJA Awards Gala in Burnaby. Kassidy earned three awards while her mother took home Coach of the Year honours.

