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For Immediate Release

MSVU to Lead New Study on Seniors' Housing Needs in Atlantic Canada

February 4, 2005, Halifax – Every minute of every day another baby boomer turns 55 in Canada. The Atlantic provinces have more seniors per capita than any other part of the country and that number is growing faster than anywhere else in Canada. How will governments in this region handle this challenge?

That is the focus of a new almost \$1.2 million research project announced today at Mount Saint Vincent University (MSVU). The study, **Projecting the Housing Needs of Atlantic Canadians**, brings together seniors, academics, service providers, housing developers and government departments from all four Atlantic provinces to determine how to meet the housing needs of this rapidly aging population.

“The single greatest mistake we could make today would be to assume that the coming boomer age wave will act in any way like today’s seniors or accept what currently exists,” says Don Shiner, Associate Professor at MSVU and lead investigator of the research project. “If we understand how and why aging persons will make future decisions, we can better prepare to evolve our responses to these needs. Our project will match these needs, both with what exists now and with what might exist in the future.”

Funding for the study comes from a \$1 million dollar grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada – Community-University Research Alliance (CURA) program. An additional \$181,000 comes from the government of Nova Scotia, the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Dalhousie University, the University of Prince Edward Island, Memorial University of Newfoundland, the University of New Brunswick and MSVU.

“We have a history at Mount Saint Vincent University of partnering with members of our community on innovative projects that address the challenges of today and tomorrow,” says Dr. Sheila A. Brown, MSVU President and Vice-Chancellor. “With MSVU’s Nova Scotia Centre on Aging and Canada Research Chair on Aging and Caregiving Policy we are committed to research that shapes public policy, supports community initiatives and helps ensure that individual seniors have access to the services they need.”

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The research will result in policy recommendations that will be used to assist government decision makers, housing developers and community organizations in designing and planning for seniors' housing needs over the next 20 years.

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