

Katimavik



**Services Jeunesse
Youth Services**

Press release ***For immediate release***

Environmental Innovation presented by Katimavik **Launch of new *Eco-Internship* program in collaboration with the Government of Quebec**

Montreal, April 7, 2008 – Katimavik, Canada's leading youth volunteer service program, is proud to announce the launch of the Eco-Internship program, a new environmental initiative in collaboration with the *Secrétariat à la jeunesse*, a branch of the Government of Quebec.

Managed by Katimavik – Youth Services, a subsidiary of Katimavik-OPCAN, Eco-Internship is an internship focused on sustainable development which aims to develop volunteer-based learning programs that promote eco-citizenship. This program will be offered to CEGEP graduates and university students specializing in science, the environment or related fields. Participants will complete six-month internships in various regions of Quebec where they will volunteer for public, semi-public and non-profit organizations dedicated to environmental protection and sustainable development.

While broadening their knowledge of sustainable development issues and exploring concepts of eco-citizenship, interns, aged 18 to 30, will apply their skills in environmental protection by taking practical steps in addressing local ecological needs.

The program is modelled on Katimavik's proven formula, which combines volunteering and group living to enable youth to gain leadership, communication, team work and citizen involvement skills. Furthermore, participants will increase their knowledge of environmental issues through learning components focused on biodiversity, water management, climate change, energy efficiency, agriculture and urban development.

"We are extremely pleased that the Government of Quebec recognizes the value that such a program will have on our young participants, the communities involved and on the environment!" says Jean-Guy Bigeau, Katimavik's executive director.

This pilot project's first phase commence with a cohort of interns who will begin their internship in June of 2008. They will be followed in September 2008 by two other groups. Each participant will complete a two-part internship, lasting three months each, in two different regions of Quebec.

In the medium term, Katimavik hopes to secure partnerships with other Canadian provinces in order to offer future participants a pan-Canadian experience.

About Katimavik

Katimavik offers youth between the ages of 17 and 21 an exciting nine-month journey of self-discovery in three different regions of Canada, where they volunteer 35 hours per week for non-profit organizations. Participants live with 10 other youth from across Canada, along with a project leader. This employee supervises the group and ensures the implementation of our learning program, which is delivered through a series of activities and workshops focused on various themes: developing leadership skills, official language proficiency, protecting the environment, cultural discovery and a healthy lifestyle. The program's main objective is to foster responsible citizenship and contribute significantly to the socio-economic development of Canadian communities.

In 2006-2007, 957 participants provided the equivalent of **743,997 volunteer work hours** to over 700 non-profit organizations, which are valued at about \$11,630,000¹.

ABOUT THE *ECO-INTERNSHIP* PROGRAM:

Managed by Katimavik – Youth Services, a subsidiary of Katimavik-OPCAN, the Eco-Internship is an internship program offered to young CEGEP graduates and university students, aged 18 to 30, and designed for organizations across Quebec dedicated to environmental protection and sustainable development.

The project includes a 12-month pilot phase, during which the program will be developed, implemented and experienced by 100 participants. Internships will begin in June and September 2008.

For more information about the program: www.ecostage.qc.ca

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1. Result based on the average salary in the volunteer sector, according to data obtained from Statistics Canada.