



*For immediate release*

## **Each dollar invested by Katimavik generates more than two dollars in economic return in every participating community**

### **A social and economic impact study of Katimavik reveals positive outcomes for both communities and participants**

**Montréal, June 27, 2006** – A new social and economic impact study of the Katimavik program conducted by R.A. Malatest & Associates Ltd., program evaluation and market research consultants, concludes that Katimavik generates positive economic return for its community partners – each dollar invested generates an average return of \$2.20. Thus, the total value of volunteer work performed by all Katimavik participants on an annual basis in 105 communities is estimated at \$16,138,331. The data are based on the value of the volunteer labour and other induced economic benefits.

Interview data disclosed other residual benefits. For example, Katimavik's involvement encouraged the participation of additional volunteers and the creation of new partnerships and, in some instances, increased partners' investment. The study estimates that, on average, the induced volunteer contribution resulted in 137 additional volunteer hours and \$1,432 in gains. Moreover, community partners reported an average of \$11,618 in economic benefits and \$10,214 in investments from new partners. The majority of community partners also indicated that, without participation in Katimavik, their projects would have either not proceeded or proceeded at a reduced level. Most partners acknowledged that the program helped their organization meet its goals and they appreciated the respect participants had for the values and issues of their respective communities. As some participants explained: "We set up clubs for troubled kids to give them guidance and a place to go and they are still using it. For teenage moms we started a program for them and their children and they are still using that today. [...] The economic contributions of what our group did for the communities were huge – from fundraising several thousand dollars in two days to teaching in school and renovating buildings."

The study reveals that participants completing the program demonstrate a higher self-assessed level of leadership skills and work ethics compared to non-participants — skills that are highly valuable in the job market. One participant interviewed during a focus group discussion concerning his Katimavik experience said: "The group living situation has definitely made me more aware of my role in groups and what it takes to be in a team, [as well as] planning and organizing."

Results of the study's survey of participants suggest that the Katimavik experience did have an impact on their career plans. Indeed, when asked whether or not Katimavik influenced their career plans, two-thirds (66%) responded that it had. Half of respondents (49%) said the experience helped them choose a career path, while one in five (20%) said the Katimavik program led them to make a positive change in their career path. Some (less than 10%) offered alternative explanations for how participation in the program influenced their career plans, including the fact that the experience broadened their horizons, created new opportunities for them, helped them further develop their character, and provided them with a wide range of positive experiences. As for nearly a quarter (23%), Katimavik affirmed their career choice and gave them added motivation to pursue it.

"The survey also reveals that participation in the Katimavik program results in a significantly greater (90% vs. 66%) ability to relate positively to other regions of the country for participants compared to

non-participants,” stated Jean-Guy Bigeau, Executive Director of Katimavik. “The results suggest that, through their involvement in the Katimavik program, participants have gained understanding and appreciation for cultural, linguistic, and regional differences within Canada. They also have a greater appreciation for the value of volunteerism in building strong communities.” In the words of a participant: “[Katimavik is] a great way to build character – both personally and nationally. Canada is such a widespread country and we have so little awareness or contact with one another that Katimavik builds a real ‘esprit de corps’ and can really bolster a sense of national awareness.”

The complete study can be accessed via the Katimavik Web site at: [www.katimavik.org](http://www.katimavik.org).

### **The Katimavik program**

Katimavik offers youth between the ages of 17 and 21 an exciting nine-month journey of self-discovery in three different regions of Canada. The program is based on the concept of service learning, which integrates both personal and professional development through volunteer work on community projects. In addition to working 35 hours a week on community projects participants benefit from a learning program that focuses on developing leadership skills, official languages proficiency, protecting the environment, cultural discovery and a healthy lifestyle. Each Katimavik participant contributes an average of 900 hours of volunteer work to community partner organizations. Since 1977, more than 25,000 young Canadians have participated in the Katimavik program, developing their sense of civic responsibility and gaining self-confidence. Katimavik’s goal is to form responsible citizens who will contribute significantly to Canadian society.

### **DOING. LEARNING. BUILDING A NATION... ONE COMMUNITY AT A TIME.**

*The Government of Canada, through the Department of Canadian Heritage,  
is proud to provide financial assistance to Katimavik.*

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