



For immediate release

Katimavik receives green light for continued funding

Montréal, December 20, 2006 – The federal government has approved Katimavik’s funding for another program year until the fall of 2008. In a telephone conversation with the chair of the board of directors, Robert Giroux, the minister of Canadian Heritage, Bev Oda, confirmed that funding will be extended at its current level of \$19.7 million for the 2007-2008 program year. “This will provide the opportunity for close to a 1,000 more young Canadians to participate in Katimavik and engage in national youth service”, says Robert Giroux. Today, he and Jean-Guy Bigeau, executive director of Katimavik, were convened to discuss the details of the contribution agreement. This good news will allow the organization to start its recruitment efforts as of January 2007.

“We are very relieved,” says Jean-Guy Bigeau. “We have been working very hard with the current government as well as the leaders of the other parties to try to get our message across. This is a clear indication that this government recognizes the value of Katimavik and the benefits it provides for both youth and communities.”

“This decision confirms that Katimavik is a valid option for Canadian youth, bridging the gap between high school and post-secondary education and engaging them to be active citizens. We look forward to working with the government this year in shaping the program to respond to the needs of Canadians and ensure multi-year funding so that even more youth can engage in volunteer service,” says Bigeau.

For nearly 30 years now, Katimavik has offered 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 and group life. At the end of the program, each participant will have contributed an average of 900 hours of volunteer work – 35 hours a week – for non profit organizations. During the 2006-2007 program year, 957 participants are volunteering for over 700 community partner organizations in 87 communities across Canada. Over 9,000 candidates applied to the program this past year.

In 2006, a national study (Malatest & Associates) concluded that each dollar invested in Katimavik generates an average return of \$2.20 to Canadian society. For the 2005-2006 program year, this represented a total economic return of \$16,138,331 in 105 communities. This data is based on the value of volunteer work and other secondary economic benefits. Each Katimavik participant contributes 900 hours of service over a period of nine months at the community level, in areas such as health, education, recreation and environmental conservation.

Personal benefits for youth include increased employability, improved academic performance, and higher participation rates in civic activities and second language acquisition, not to mention a very high return rate to post-secondary education with a clear direction for the future.

Since 1977, more than 27,000 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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