



## **PRESS RELEASE**

**For immediate release**

### **Katimavik helps community groups and future leaders "Get a Life" Dynamic campaign timed to inspire community action**

Montréal, March 30, 2009 – Katimavik, Canada's most prominent national volunteer organization, announced today the launch of its new campaign "Get a Life" encouraging youth to consider participation in an institution that has changed thousands of local communities and millions of lives. "Get a Life" is reaching out to Canadian youth to inspire them to help community-based organizations and improve their country while developing themselves through volunteerism.

"There has never been a more important time to invest in national youth service," said Jean-Guy Bigeau, Katimavik's Executive Director. "Capitalizing on the benefits of civic engagement through volunteerism by young and dedicated Canadians will help build our communities and country as we move past this difficult recession. 'Get a Life' is the most significant campaign to bolster new applicants in the 32 year history of our organization. If young Canadians want to see their country and change it for the better, Katimavik is right for them."

"Get a Life" will entail a broad-based social media campaign including a newly branded website at [www.gokatimavik.com](http://www.gokatimavik.com). Every high school guidance counsellor in the country will receive a promotional kit highlighting the organization and providing tips on how they can help students "get a life". Television public service announcements will also air across Canada.

"The impact of the Katimavik volunteers on our community cannot be understated. Together they have helped weave a strong social fabric from St. John's, to Victoria, to Iqaluit." said Katimavik work partner Roger Verville of Drummondville, Quebec. "In a changing society facing many challenges, Katimavik volunteers provide essential services in the areas of health, education, the environment and poverty reduction. The benefit for volunteers is immeasurable. The program helps them expand their social and cultural horizons, as well as harbour lifelong friendships with people from across the country. Katimavik volunteers help bind Canada together. "

"It was amazing to see how my actions had an impact. With Katimavik I was empowered to make a significant contribution while developing personally and professionally," said alumni Gregory Rooke of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. "I was sent across the country to Huntsville, Ontario at a very important time in my life and able to try something new, gain work experience, and find a path that has led to personal growth and professional success. Through Katimavik I 'got a life' by stepping into the real world and experiencing life away from home."

Katimavik is a national volunteer service organization that aims to empower youth to make a significant contribution to local communities and participate in nation-building while fostering their personal and professional development through a challenging youth-volunteer, leadership and service-oriented program. In 2008 alone the participants contributed 743,997 hours of volunteer work valued at \$11,630,000. The ongoing work of the organization is made possible through generous corporate partners and the government of Canada.

#### **About Katimavik**

Since 1977, Katimavik has enabled nearly 28,000 Canadians to be involved in more than 2,000 communities throughout the country. During their volunteer service experience, which now ranges from the classic nine-month program to the new six-month programs, participants aged 17 to 21, live in two or three Canadian communities, where they volunteer 35 hours a week for a variety of non-profit host organizations. Everyday life consists of living with ten other young people from across the country, along with a project leader. The staff member provides supervision and

facilitates the implementation of structured learning programs through a series of workshops and activities pertaining to leadership skills development, learning our official languages, environmental stewardship, experiencing cultural diversity and integration first-hand, as well as adopting a healthier lifestyle. The intent of the program is to shape responsible citizens while contributing significantly to the social and economic development of Canadian communities.

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