



For immediate release

**Katimavik is proud to announce that Canada's Governor General, Her Excellency the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean, has agreed to serve as Honorary Patron of the organization which celebrates its 30th anniversary this year!**

Montréal, January 9, 2008 – The Governor General of Canada, Her Excellency the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean, has extended patronage to Katimavik, as it marks the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its foundation. This announcement launches the celebrations in a special way for Katimavik, an organization that has shaped the lives of so many Canadians while contributing to the social and economic development of over 2,000 communities across Canada over the years. Founded in 1977 by Jacques Hébert, Katimavik is Canada's leading national youth service program. More than 28,000 young Canadians have participated in the program, learning valuable skills through volunteering, group living and discovering their country.

On behalf of the organization, Jean-Guy Bigeau, executive director of Katimavik, stated, "We are honoured and privileged that Her Excellency has agreed to serve as Patron for this special occasion. Her support will be an inspiration to all those who embrace the mission of our organization, that is, to foster the personal development of our nation's young people through a challenging program of national volunteer-service while helping to build capacity at the community level across the country."

**Program of activities**

Activities are planned for all those currently involved with Katimavik in the 99 communities that are partnered with the organization in 2008, as well as for alumni and friends of Katimavik so that they can reconnect with the organization, and for the general public who would like to learn more about this unique youth volunteer-service program.

- **Open houses in 99 partner communities throughout the spring 2008**  
Get a real taste of Katimavik by visiting an open house in/or near your hometown and meet current participants from across Canada, project leaders, project coordinators and members of over 700 community partner organizations. You'll see first-hand the dynamic lifestyle that animates these groups who volunteer 35 hours a week on work projects, manage their household and participate in numerous learning program workshops.

- more -

- ***Katimavik makes a gesture for the environment - May 24, 2008***  
**A volunteer-environment day extravaganza and festivities for all!**  
 Join us for the main event in any of the numerous communities across the country and participate in a full-fledged Katimavik volunteer-environmental project. Current participants in host communities will identify and organize the volunteer activity for which they deem the community would benefit the most from. This is the opportunity for Katimavik alumni and community members in 89 communities to roll up their sleeves and connect with a youth-driven initiative. A festive get-together will be organized as well to mark this unique occasion!
- **Virtual reunions for alumni – a contest to be launched in February 2008**  
 If you're one of the 28,000 alumni, participate in a fun contest by tracking down the other members of your group and get a chance to win great prizes!

Details for all the above activities as well as the list of communities involved, from Port Alberni, British Columbia, all the way to Goose Bay, Newfoundland-Labrador, are available in the section dedicated to Katimavik's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary at [www.katimavik.org](http://www.katimavik.org).

### **Katimavik background**

During their nine-month service experience, participants aged 17 to 21, live in 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.

In 2006-2007, 957 participants contributed the equivalent of **743,997 volunteer work hours** to over 700 non-profit organizations. The value of these volunteer hours is estimated at \$11,630,000.<sup>1</sup>

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

1. Calculated using the average wage in the volunteer sector, according to Statistics Canada.

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