

**DECEMBER 5<sup>th</sup>: International Volunteer Day****Youth constitute a major force in volunteerism**

**Montreal, December 2<sup>nd</sup> 2010** – International Volunteer Day (IVD) on Sunday, December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2010 marks the day we celebrate the significant contribution volunteers make to society. Celebrated on December 5<sup>th</sup> each year, the United Nations recognizes this day as an opportunity to pay tribute to volunteers for their dedication and their input to communities worldwide. For Katimavik, Canada’s main youth service organization, it is an opportunity to recognize the exceptional work of young volunteers across Canada.

On this occasion Katimavik wishes to underline the important role of youth who constitute a major force among the 12 million Canadians who spend time volunteering; one out of every five volunteers is under the age of 25.

“Katimavik would not have been able to deliver over 960 000 hours of service to 1 150 not-for-profit partners across Canada without the help of its 1 000 dedicated young Canadians that joined Katimavik last year alone”, said Daniel Lapointe, Katimavik CEO. “Katimavik is extremely proud of its volunteers and what they achieve in the many communities in which they serve”.

In addition to mobilizing thousands of young volunteers each year, Katimavik fosters active citizenship and implements structures that support and strengthen local volunteering long after the end of the 6-month term of service. “When you see how much people appreciate your time and help, it makes you want to keep doing it”, said Alison MacPhail, 2010-2011 Katimavik volunteer.

Young Canadians who are actively engaged in 6-month full-time volunteer programs away from their home province should be acknowledged and applauded. “The IVD brings us to reflect upon the contribution that youth bring to organizations like ours. Katimavik volunteers are outgoing, caring and enthusiastic to work helping people living with disabilities. They are open-minded citizens and a valuable asset for our organization and the services it offers. They are a perfect match”, stated Peggy Lund, Community Living Newmarket-Aurora Supervisor.

Youth between the ages of 17 and 21 are encouraged to lend a helping hand in communities across Canada, and an extraordinary way to get this done would be to register online at [www.katimavik.org](http://www.katimavik.org). Katimavik would like to thank all its volunteers currently in the field as well as the 30 000 volunteers that have, since 1977, contributed to fostering sustainable communities through challenging national youth service programs.

**About Katimavik**

Katimavik promotes civic engagement and fosters sustainable communities through challenging national youth service programs. Since 1977, Katimavik has enabled more than 30 000 Canadians to be involved in more than 2 000 communities throughout Canada. Volunteers between the ages of 17 and 21 live with 10 other youth from across the country in one or two communities. They commit to volunteering in the context of a six-month program where they will provide work 35 to 40 hours a week for a variety of not-for-profit organizations. Youth also benefit from Katimavik’s structured learning program that focuses on the development of lifelong personal, professional and social competencies in the areas of civic engagement, healthy lifestyle, cultural discovery, official languages, communication, environmental stewardship and project coordination. For further information please visit [www.katimavik.org](http://www.katimavik.org) or visit our blog at [www.gokatimavik.com](http://www.gokatimavik.com)

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