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MINISTER MEILLEUR ANNOUNCES RECIPIENTS OF 2005 GREAT GRANTS AWARDS

Toronto, November 3, 2005 – Seven remarkable Ontario not-for-profit organizations were honoured for the difference they have made in their communities at a celebration held this evening. The recipients of the 2005 Great Grants Awards were announced by Madeleine Meilleur, Ontario's Minister of Culture, and Helen Burstyn, Chair of the Board for the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

"OTF Great Grants Awards recognize the true leadership of community organizations," said Minister Meilleur. "The grants remove barriers to employment and education, help Ontarians to be healthy, and improve the prospects of Ontarians of all backgrounds. The results of the grants greatly exceed our government's financial investment. These organizations contribute to our quality of life and help build stronger and more prosperous communities."

"Great Grants Awards shine a light on the work of OTF grants across Ontario," said Burstyn. "They recognize the great work of outstanding people that have stepped forward to help build healthy and vibrant communities throughout the province. Our Foundation is committed to building the capacity of the voluntary sector through investments in community-based initiatives."

Seven organizations were selected from more than 3,800 others who have received funding from the Foundation since 2002.

Great Grants Awards

- Minister's Award – for generating the most impact across the province:
Ontario Sustainable Energy Association (OSEA) is the force behind the increasing number of Ontarians interested in green power alternatives. OSEA relentlessly works at making community green power initiatives a widely acceptable option for meeting Ontario's energy needs.
- Chair's Award - for exemplifying how to build healthy and vibrant communities that meet the needs of Ontario's diverse groups:
Peel Region's Community Environment Alliance – Share-IT recycles computers and other IT equipment for use by low-income families and individuals. In addition to recycling, the program reduces hazardous e-waste in landfill sites. Its success has raised interest across Ontario and abroad.

- Award of Distinction - for enhancing one or more of OTF's granting priorities: **Toronto's Sketch**, an art studio for at-risk youth, turns lives around by helping artistic youth find the confidence and skills necessary to leave the street, return to school or find employment.
- Arts and Culture: **Prescott-Russell's Francoscénie** produced the musical "L'Écho d'un peuple", one of the most significant cultural and artistic achievements of the local community with over 300 volunteer participants on stage. The production is now used as a teaching tool at Francophone schools.
- Environment: **Tobermory's 2004 Provincial Envirothon** c/o Bruce Peninsula Biosphere Association galvanized its rural host community and left behind five Legacy Projects to enhance local forestry and preserve wildlife and soil.
- Human and Social Services: **Hamilton's St. Joseph Immigrant Women's Centre's** innovative pilot program attracted government funding and made possible the creation of an office to support experienced, foreign-trained nurses in overcoming language and academic barriers and finding employment.
- Sports and Recreation: **Thunder Bay's Lakehead Canoe Club** increased participation from local and regional youth and adults in dragon boat racing. They are building a strong Northwestern Ontario competitive force at the national level.

The Ontario Trillium Foundation, an agency of the Ministry of Culture, receives annually \$100 million of government funding generated through Ontario's charity casino initiative. OTF builds healthy and vibrant communities throughout Ontario by strengthening the capacity of the voluntary sector, through investments in community-based initiatives in the areas of Arts and Culture, Environment, Human and Social Services and Sports and Recreation.

The 2005 Great Grants Awards were sponsored by the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation, with additional support from TVOntario.

-30 -

More information and copyright-free photographs on 2005 Great Grants are available at www.trilliumfoundation.org

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