



PRESS RELEASE

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NATIONAL ESSAY CONTEST ENCOURAGES CANADA'S HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TO EXPRESS THEIR VIEWS IN FRENCH

\$140,000 in scholarships up for grabs in French for the Future's fourth National Essay Contest

Toronto, October 20, 2008 – What is your cause and what would you do to promote it if you had an unlimited budget and unlimited powers? That's what high schools students are asked to examine for *French for the Future's* fourth annual National Essay Contest.

"It's about giving students a voice on the causes that are important to them, and listening to their ideas on how to get youth involved," says Helen Coltrinari, President of *French for the Future*. "With the exceptionally low voter turnout during this month's federal election, it is now especially important to encourage involvement among young people."

Apathy is Boring (www.apathyisboring.com), a partner in this contest, is a national youth led organization that uses art and technology to educate Canadian youth about democracy. It sees this contest as a fantastic opportunity to point students in the direction of lifelong active participation. "*Apathy is Boring* is all about encouraging youth to be creative, and embrace the potential that they have to make a difference. That is what the theme of this contest is all about," says Ilona Dougherty, co-founder and Executive Director of *Apathy is Boring*.

Grade 10, 11, and 12 students from across Canada (Secondary IV and V in Quebec) are eligible to enter the contest, either in the French-second-language or French-first-language category. Winners in each category will be awarded \$20,000 scholarships to the *University of Ottawa*, and the original award-winning essays will be posted on the *Apathy is Boring* and *French for the Future* websites. Information on how to participate is available on *French for the Future's* website: www.french-future.org.

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For more information, please contact:

Myriam Lafrance, Project Director

mlafrance@french-future.org

416-203-9900 x225

French for the Future is a not-for-profit organization focused on the Canadian reality that youth are significantly advantaged, both socially and professionally, by pursuing a bilingual education. The principal goals of the organization are to highlight the positive social and career benefits of being bilingual and to forge linguistic and cultural links among secondary school students enrolled in French First Language and French Second Language courses. The organization was created after the Quebec referendum in 1995 in order to promote bilingualism in Canada.

366 Adelaide St. East, Suite 444, Toronto, ON, M5A 3X9 Tel: 416.203.9900 Toll-free: 1.866.220.7216

Fax: 416-203-1369 Toll-free: 1.866.506.7589

www.french-future.org