

## INFORMATION - COMMUNIQUÉ

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### COMMUNIQUÉ – POUR DIFFUSION IMMÉDIATE

#### **Réseau canadien d'éducation et de communication relatives à l'environnement (EECOM) - Les Prix canadiens d'excellence pour l'éducation relative à l'environnement 2007 vendredi, le 25 mai 2007**

**Kananaskis, Alberta** – Le samedi 26 mai 2007 - Le Réseau canadien d'éducation et de communication relatives à l'environnement (EECOM) annonce les récipiendaires des Prix canadiens d'excellence pour l'éducation relative à l'environnement 2007. La cérémonie de remise des prix a lieu lors de la conférence *En route vers un avenir viable* à Kananaskis en Alberta. Les prix sont présentés dans six catégories, en reconnaissance de la contribution d'individus et d'organismes exceptionnels engagés dans l'éducation relative à l'environnement à travers le Canada.

Les récipiendaires sont :

- Pablo Defossés (Catégorie : Enseignant - de la maternelle à la fin du secondaire)
- Ontario EcoSchools (Catégorie : Organisme sans but lucratif)
- Cathy Dueck, Surveillante, Ecology Park, Peterborough (Catégorie : Individu du milieu des organismes sans but lucratif)
- Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (Catégorie : Commission/conseil scolaire - de la maternelle à la fin du secondaire)
- Programmes *Childrens' Garden* et *Exploring Toronto*, Ville de Toronto - Parcs, Foresterie et Récréation (Catégorie : Agence gouvernementale)
- Dr. Alan Warner (Catégorie : Personne d'un établissement post-secondaire)

EECOM est le réseau national bilingue à but non lucratif du Canada pour le développement de l'éducation et de la communication relatives à l'environnement. Le Réseau EECOM oeuvre de façon stratégique et en collaboration afin de faire avancer l'éducation relative à l'environnement à l'ensemble du Canada contribuant à accroître l'alphabétisation environnementale et l'engagement des Canadiens envers l'environnement menant ainsi à un avenir sain.

Les Prix canadiens d'excellence pour l'éducation relative à l'environnement d'EECOM reconnaissent des individus et organismes qui ont su influencer collectivement des centaines de milliers de citoyens canadiens et contribuer à la mise en oeuvre de cette mission.

Pour de plus amples informations, veuillez s.v.p. communiquer avec : Natalie Swayze, Directrice exécutive [nswayze@eecom.org](mailto:nswayze@eecom.org) - (204) 221-2007 ou Grant Gardner, Président du Conseil d'administration [ggardner@mun.ca](mailto:ggardner@mun.ca) - (709) 737-8155

(Ci-jointe - Information au sujet des récipiendaires)

*Demandes des médias devraient être acheminées à :*  
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### **Background Information on the 2007 on the Award Recipients**

#### **Pablo Defossés**

#### **Category: K-12 Teacher**

Pablo Defossés has created an innovative educational program, GARAF (Groupe d'Aide pour la Recherche et l'aménagement de la Faune) that links school learning to concrete actions of conservation of ecosystems and habitats. Primary and secondary students involved in this program work on real environmental problems with the help of experts in the field. For eight years, GARAF has involved the whole community, including the school district, teachers, students, parents and local organizations, which makes it a powerful example of environmental education for a sustainable future. In 2007 alone, almost 2000 students and 35 teachers participated in projects under this program.

#### **Ontario EcoSchools**

#### **Category: Non-Profit Organization**

Ontario EcoSchools works with school boards to develop environmental policies and standards that can be applied consistently in their schools to conserve energy and minimize waste. EcoSchools has developed and field-tested resources to support boards in implementing environmental policies and standards, including comprehensive guides on energy conservation, waste minimization, and environmentally-friendly school ground design. EcoSchools offers workshops, presentations and a Certification program to support boards as they integrate teaching and sustainable operations practices. In addition, curriculum expectations that relate to environmental issues have been identified and elementary and secondary teaching resources developed for Grades 1-12. Through experiential, holistic, learning EcoSchools helps students understand what it means to be an environmental steward and how their actions can impact their community.

The judges commented: "We applaud Ontario EcoSchools for their innovative leadership. It is difficult for youth involved in creating positive environmental change to believe their actions have an impact when they don't see the environment being valued by the institutions that teach them. Ontario EcoSchools is leading the way to ensure our educational institutions 'Walk the Talk' and set an example for environmentally responsible citizenship."

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**Cathy Dueck, Supervisor  
Ecology Park, Peterborough  
Category: Non-profit Individual**

Through Cathy's initiative, hard work and vision over the past 25 years, the Peterborough region is significantly greener, and the community is more aware and enthusiastic about creating natural spaces in urban areas. The list of her accomplishments is long and impressive. Cathy led the development of Ecology Park, a unique and important naturalized garden, where she initiated many creative development and habitat conservation projects, including the preservation of local species at risk. She has worked with residents to reduce use of pesticides and other harmful chemicals, helped restore shorelines and lakes, increased public awareness about the importance of riparian ecosystems, and educated thousands of students and adults about the importance of preserving local wildlife. She helped to establish several Tall Grass Prairie meadows, created a seed stock of indigenous plants, and established an active environmental educator's network in the Kawartha region. Cathy has had a major influence in the greening of Peterborough's urban landscapes and citizens. As one of the judges commented: "Cathy took on the fundraising role in addition to implementation, as well as finding volunteers to preserve her vision and accomplishments. She also developed some outstanding partnerships. I thought her legacy was incredible."

**Ottawa-Carleton District School Board  
Category: Outstanding K-12 School District**

Since the founding of its first Outdoor Education Centre in 1966, the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board has been an innovator and pioneer in designing and delivering quality Outdoor Education programs. The Centres' facilities include wetlands, a designated Migratory Bird Sanctuary, a pioneer village, canoeing and ropes courses, outdoor and indoor classrooms and sleeping and cooking facilities for 129. With the commitment of many community volunteers, the centres provide 23,000 K – 12 students with meaningful outdoor educational experiences every year.

The judging committee was particularly impressed with the sustainability of their programs and the years of service and reach. Ottawa-Carleton has prioritized outdoor and environmental education, even though there is now no budget line for Outdoor Education Centres in the provincial education funding formula. The Ottawa community has demonstrated its commitment to the Centres by dedicating countless volunteer time and funds to ensure that the Centres survive.

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### City of Toronto's Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division Childrens' Garden and Exploring Toronto Programs

#### Category: Government Department or Agency

The Children's Garden and Exploring Toronto Programs have helped to change the way Toronto's citizens experience their greenspaces. Thousands of students, families and campers participate in education programs on Toronto's heritage and natural history, urban ecology, food preparation, plant care, drama, art and music. The High Park Children's Garden was established in 1998 as the flagship garden and is the site of the Eco Camp, school programming, community events and Garden Drop-In Programs. It was voted one of the top 60 public places in the world by Project for Public Spaces! To meet the huge demand for its programs, the Children's Garden and Exploring Toronto Programs embarked on a District Training Initiative in 2001, to transfer the program model across the city, with the establishment of 24 new children's gardens and the training of 114 staff and community leaders.

As noted by the judges: The reach, replicability and success of the Toronto Parks programs made it a clear winner. Any program that provides 2 1/2 days of intensive direction in using its tools ensures a well-grounded capacity for achieving its objectives. They have created a model that could work in other urban areas --- both large and small.

#### Dr. Alan Warner

#### Category: Post-Secondary Individual

Alan Warner's long-time commitment to environmental education and sustainability in both his professional and personal life stands out. The judges noted that "Alan's name is synonymous with EE in Nova Scotia and he has been a key figure in EE for decades".

A professor at Acadia University, Alan teaches courses in environmental education and experiential recreation. He is a published author and a long time social justice activist, working with the international development community on fair trade issues with businesses and cooperatives. Alan's work brings theoretical knowledge to experiential learning programs in an interactive, effective and magical way. He is a "model" educator who lives what he teaches, and has mentored hundreds of students, educators and activists. His ability to collaborate and develop networks is illustrated by the many partnerships he has developed, including EECOM, the Nova Scotia Environmental Network, Adventure Earth Centre, Heartwood, and Just Us Coffee.

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