



MEDIA RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Local students win tickets from St. Joseph's Health Care Foundation to hear Nobel-laureate Archbishop Desmond Tutu

Several elementary and secondary school students have won rare tickets to see and hear Archbishop Desmond Tutu on May 22, 2009 at the Signature Speaker Series, an exclusive fundraising event for St. Joseph's Health Care London. Each student winner participated in the Signature Speaker Series' Youth Program in Social Advocacy, presented through the Thames Valley District School Board and the London District Catholic School Board, and developed in partnership with St. Joseph's Health Care Foundation.

Student winners from the Thames Valley District School Board are Jessica Skye Toomer, Grade 12 from Strathroy District Collegiate Institute; James Brooks, Grade 7 from Kensal Park French Immersion Public School. The winning projects for the London District Catholic were submitted by Rebekah Norris, Victoria Arnold and Connor Moffat, Grade 10 from Regina Mundi Catholic College; and St. Rita's Computer Club from St. Rita Catholic School.

The Youth Award Program was open to students from grades seven to 12, in both school boards. Students were encouraged to develop a project that addressed issues of social justice. Each project was expected to have an educational and awareness component and was required to demonstrate the impact that each person can make in improving the human condition.

"We are so proud of all of our students who made submissions to the Youth Program in Social Advocacy," says Laura Elliott, Executive Superintendent of Program Services. "This shows how involved our students are in finding solutions to social issues and that gives all of us hope for the future."

The winning projects used various medium and outreach activities to raise awareness about the nutritional needs and living conditions of children in Africa, child labour issues, and the challenges of living below the poverty line in Canada.

"Our students have a strong awareness of social justice issues and they are very technically talented, as shown in the work they have produced," said Wilma de Rond, Director of Education, London District Catholic School Board. "The opportunity to see Archbishop Tutu in person is something they will never forget."

Several hundred students from the winning schools will also receive tickets to watch a live simulcast of the Archbishop's presentation from the amphitheatre at the London Convention Centre on the evening of May 22, 2009.

"St. Joseph's is delighted to offer young people in our community the opportunity to be engaged in our event by igniting their interest in issues of social justice and provide them with the chance to hear a man whose advocacy and personal mission has changed humanity," says Michelle Campbell, president and CEO, St. Joseph's Health Care Foundation. "We hope that hearing Archbishop Tutu's powerful message

will leave a lasting and profound impression on them.”

- 30 -

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Backgrounder

St. Joseph’s Health Care Foundation gathers, grows and grants philanthropic funds that enable St. Joseph’s Health Care, London to pursue excellence in care, teaching and research. Through donor support, the foundation contributes to advances in the delivery of patient care, specialized equipment, research initiatives and capital funds for hospital building projects at St. Joseph’s Hospital, Parkwood Hospital, Mount Hope Centre for Long Term Care, Regional Mental Health Care London and St. Thomas and the Lawson Health Research Institute.

One of the largest charitable organizations in Southwestern Ontario, St. Joseph’s Health Care Foundation is accredited as an adherent to Canada’s Ethical Fundraising & Financial Accountability Code.

The Signature Speaker Series is a bi-annual event designed to reinforce public understanding of St. Joseph’s new and evolving role within the Canadian health care community and far beyond. It raises critical philanthropic funds for the Spirit of St. Joseph’s Health Care Fund, which supports the highest priority needs in care, teaching and research.

The inaugural event featured former U.S. vice president turned environmentalist Al Gore. The keynote speaker for the 2009 event, to be held May 22 at the London Convention Centre, is leading world activist and Nobel Peace Prize winner, Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

The evening will feature a private reception with key supporters and a black-tie dinner with a presentation by Archbishop Desmond Tutu. The evening will be moderated by CBC Morning anchor, Heather Hiscox.