



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Award-Winning Human Rights Program Breaks 13,600 Mark Across Canada

WINNIPEG, MB. – April 16, 2015 – The Asper Foundation has announced the 2015 Human Rights and Holocaust Studies Program for grade-nine students across Canada.

Since its 1997 inception, the program has become one of Canada’s largest philanthropic educational initiatives, reaching over 13,600 high-school students and chaperones in 204 communities spanning 12 provinces and territories.

In 2015, 17 communities and 34 schools and community organizations in seven provinces are participating in the program. Over 1,000 high school students and chaperones will travel to freedom memorials and the renowned US Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC on five separate trips taking place between April and June 2015.

Students also volunteer for 16 hours each in their communities on public projects which has resulted in over 145,000 hours of volunteer community service being carried out across Canada since the program was established. The Asper Foundation and its program partners contribute and raise over one million dollars annually to facilitate the participation of high school students and their chaperones in the program.

The program deals with topics ranging from racism to genocide and is aimed at promoting understanding and sensitizing Canadian high school students to the consequences of racism.

In 2004, the program received the Human Rights Award from the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission and, in 2008, The Asper Foundation received the New Brunswick Pioneer of Human Rights Award from the New Brunswick Human Rights Commission.

On October 7, 2014, the Canadian Museum for Human Rights and The Asper Foundation signed a memorandum of understanding that will see Canadian students switch the travel destination from Washington, DC to Winnipeg, Manitoba including a visit to the Canadian Museum for Human Rights as part of the foundation’s program. The first national group of students will visit the Museum in spring 2016.

David Asper, Chair of The Asper Foundation, commented, “The extraordinary success of our Human Rights and Holocaust Studies Program inspired my father with the dream to build the Canadian Museum for Human Rights. We are thrilled that the program’s Canadian students which we have been sending to the US will finally be able to have a Canadian human rights experience.”

The Asper Foundation and the Canadian Museum for Human Rights hope that this partnership will bring thousands of students from across Canada to the Museum in Winnipeg, Manitoba over the coming years.

Feedback from students in the program proves the value in the effort: “I will stand strong for what I believe in and will take on the responsibility to educate other people in the future”; “This program had a profound effect on me”; “It taught me that we are all responsible to teach others about human rights”; “I am more willing to take action now instead of just talking about what should be done”; and, “It is up to us and our generation to pass our knowledge to future generations.”

The program includes an 18-hour education program on human rights and the Holocaust with an added emphasis on American history, the civil rights movement and the current situation in the world today. The program’s educational curriculum was developed by human rights and Holocaust educators for The Asper Foundation. After the educational component is completed, students participate in a trip to Washington, DC (moving to Winnipeg, Manitoba in 2016) where they spend several days at the US Holocaust Memorial Museum and other important monuments relating to human rights and freedom.

The Asper Foundation spearheaded the establishment of the Canadian Museum for Human Rights as a Canadian national Museum which opened September 20, 2014 in Winnipeg, Manitoba. It is the founding member of a consortium comprising private and public institutions that supported the Museum’s creation. The Museum made ground-breaking history as it is the largest human rights institution and centre for education in the world today.

The Asper Foundation was established in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada in 1983 to build upon the philanthropic objectives of Dr. Israel Asper and the Asper family. It undertakes and develops major initiatives in the areas of Jewish charity as well as culture, education, community development and human rights locally, nationally and internationally.

For coverage of the program or more information, media are asked to contact Mr. Jeffrey Morry, Senior Program Manager, tel. 204-989-5539, or e-mail at jmorry@aspergroup.com. For more information on the program, visit <http://humanrights.asperfoundation.com>. For information on The Asper Foundation, visit www.asperfoundation.com. For information on the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, visit www.humanrightsmuseum.ca.