



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Award-winning human rights program reaches over 14,000 Canadian youth

WINNIPEG, MB. – *April 21, 2017* – The Asper Foundation has announced the 2017 Human Rights and Holocaust Studies Program for grades 7 to 9 students across Canada. The program deals with topics ranging from racism to genocide and is aimed at promoting understanding and sensitizing Canadian students to the consequences of racism.

Since its 1997 inception, the program has become one of Canada's largest philanthropic educational initiatives, reaching over 14,000 students and chaperones in 204 communities spanning 12 provinces and territories.

In October 2014, The Asper Foundation and the Canadian Museum for Human Rights signed a memorandum of understanding which is now seeing the program's Canadian students travel to Winnipeg, Manitoba including a visit to the Canadian Museum for Human Rights. The Asper Foundation and the Canadian Museum for Human Rights hope this partnership will bring thousands of students from across Canada to the Museum over the coming years.

A program trip to Winnipeg with students from a Toronto school took place in September 2016. From April 30 to May 3, 2017, schools and community organizations from Maritime provinces are participating in a trip to Winnipeg. These two trips represent 285 students and chaperones.

David Asper, Chair of The Asper Foundation, commented, "We often hear from students about how participating in our Human Rights and Holocaust Studies Program has changed their lives for the better - how their hearts and minds were opened to the world of human rights. We are very proud to be able to provide this opportunity to so many students including a visit to the Canadian Museum for Human Rights and other resources in Winnipeg."

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. Program students also volunteer in their communities on public projects which has resulted in over 154,000 hours of volunteer community service being carried out across Canada since the program was established.

Dr. John Young, president and CEO of the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, said educating young people is one of the most powerful ways to promote human rights. "Education is the core of our mandate as Canada's new national museum," he remarked. "The Asper Foundation has been an invaluable and dedicated partner as we pursue our shared goal of encouraging a new generation of global citizens to help make the world a better place for the future."

Prior to travelling to Winnipeg, students participate in an 18-hour education program about human rights and the Holocaust with an added emphasis on Canadian history and current global events. In addition to their time at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, students are inspired and moved by human rights speakers. They visit sites such as Winnipeg Harvest, Journey to Churchill at Assiniboine Park Zoo, FortWhyte Alive and the Hermetic Code Tour at the Manitoba Legislative Building. As well, they are entertained by Folklorama artists and at the Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre.

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.

To cover program activities or obtain 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, please contact Maureen Fitzhenry, Media Relations Manager, tel. 204-289-2112, cell 204-782-8442, e-mail at maureen.fitzhenry@humanrights.ca or visit www.humanrightsmuseum.ca.