

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Award-winning human rights program empowers and transforms  
Canadian youth at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights**

**WINNIPEG, MB. – April 26, 2019** – The Asper Foundation has announced the 2019 Human Rights and Holocaust Studies Program for grades 7 to 9 students from 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 205 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.

From fall 2018 to spring 2019, community organizations from British Columbia, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia are participating in program trips to Winnipeg.

Leonard Asper, Chair of The Asper Foundation, commented, “The overarching theme of many of The Asper Foundation’s activities is the fundamental value of human dignity and human rights. This program is one our flagship initiatives that directly speaks to this value. It’s even more relevant today given the extraordinary national and international challenges related to human rights abuses. Awareness precedes and underpins action. The Asper Foundation is proud to provide the education that facilitates this awareness including a visit to Winnipeg and the Canadian Museum for Human Rights. The personal feedback from program students over the years makes us confident they become empowered and take action to protect human rights.”

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.

“This outstanding partnership is one of the ways we are working to build a national hub of human rights leadership here in Winnipeg at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights,” said CMHR president and CEO John Young. “It is a privilege to work alongside the dedicated team at The Asper Foundation to impact thousands of young people from across Canada.”

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 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 Jeffrey Morry, Senior Program Manager, The Asper Foundation, tel. 204-989-5539, or e-mail at [jmorry@aspergroup.com](mailto:jmorry@aspergroup.com). For more information on the program, visit <http://humanrights.asperfoundation.com>. For information on The Asper Foundation, visit [www.asperfoundation.com](http://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](mailto:maureen.fitzhenry@humanrights.ca) or visit [www.humanrightsmuseum.ca](http://www.humanrightsmuseum.ca).**