

Coast to Coast

# Record number of students visit Holocaust museum

*Asper program  
set new record  
this spring*

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**WINNIPEG** — The Asper Foundation's Human Rights and Holocaust Studies Program has had a record-breaking year for student and community participation.

The foundation, in partnership with other organizations, sent 800 participants from 18 cities — the largest number in the program's history — to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. this spring. More than 4,000 students have visited the museum since the program began in 1997.

"We successfully increased our national

reach by 60 per cent over last year," said Jeff Morry, the Asper Foundation's senior program manager. "Our program is now being offered in 78 cities and communities across the country."

In the program's first year, Grade 8 students from the Winnipeg Jewish community's Gray Academy visited the museum. The program was then expanded to Jewish Grade 9 students attending other city schools and later to allow Grade 9 students in the general population in Winnipeg and across Canada to participate.

The program aims to promote tolerance and to sensitize Canadian high school students to the consequences of racism. A significant portion of the costs are borne by the Asper Foundation.

In 2004, the Human Rights and Holocaust Studies Program received an award from the Canadian Human Rights Commission in recognition of its creative means of advancing

and protecting human rights and working to address racism in our communities.

Before students visit the Holocaust museum, they take a course, given over 18 hours, on human rights and the Holocaust, with emphasis on American history, the civil rights movement and human rights in the world today.

Students are required to volunteer in their communities when they return from Washington. The final component of the program is a graduation ceremony.

"Canadians strongly believe in upholding the rights of people in our own country and around the world. This is evident from the impressive growth in this special program across Canada," said Babs Asper, co-founder of the Asper Foundation.

The Asper Foundation is spearheading the establishment of the Canadian Museum for Human Rights in Winnipeg, which was in-

spired by the impact of the Human Rights and Holocaust Studies Program. The museum is projected to be the largest human rights institution and centre for education in the world today.

The program will be expanded in the coming years and will sponsor tens of thousands of high school students and their chaperones from across Canada on visits to the Washington Holocaust museum each year.

The Asper Foundation recently launched a website for its Human Rights and Holocaust Studies Program at [www.humanrights.asperfoundation.com](http://www.humanrights.asperfoundation.com).

"The site will be a wonderful opportunity for past and present program students, families and administrators/chaperones across the country to share their thoughts in password-protected chatrooms and post photos, and for people to get general information on the program," Morry said.