



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### ***Presentation of Plaque of Recognition***

## **The Asper Foundation Recognizes Madeleine Levy as Outstanding Supporter of Human Rights and Holocaust Education**

**WINNIPEG, MB. – May 30, 2011** - The Asper Foundation is pleased to announce it has recognized Ms. Madeleine Levy as an outstanding supporter of human rights and Holocaust education. As part of a ceremony held at Temple Anshe Sholom in Hamilton, Ontario on May 29, Mr. Jeffrey Morry, Senior Program Manager of The Asper Foundation, presented Ms. Levy with a plaque of recognition personally signed by Ms. Gail Asper, President of The Asper Foundation. Mr. Morry commented, "Madeleine Levy is widely recognized as a dedicated community leader and great supporter of human rights and Holocaust education. As Program Chair of The Asper Foundation Human Rights and Holocaust Studies Program in the Hamilton region, she plays an instrumental role in leading a committed team dedicated to delivering the program to a large and diverse group of students from many Ontario communities. The Asper Foundation is proud to recognize Ms. Levy for her remarkable contribution to the area of human rights and Holocaust education and for her strong commitment to the program." The ceremony marked only the third time in the program's history that The Asper Foundation presented this plaque of recognition.

Since the 1997 inception of the program in Winnipeg, Manitoba, it is now one of Canada's largest educational initiatives. It has reached almost 9,400 high school students and chaperones in 116 cities and communities spanning 12 provinces and territories. In 2011 alone, 57 high schools and community organizations from 38 cities in seven provinces participated in The Asper Foundation's award-winning Human Rights and Holocaust Studies Program. Almost 1,200 high school students and chaperones travelled to freedom memorials and the renowned US Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC on five separate trips between March 13 and May 18. The Asper Foundation contributes and raises, with partners, over a million dollars annually to facilitate the participation of high school students and their chaperones in the program.

The Asper Foundation Human Rights and Holocaust Studies Program is aimed at promoting understanding and sensitizing Canadian high school students to the consequences of racism. It deals with topics ranging from racism to genocide and its extraordinary success in communities across Canada was the inspiration for the original vision of the Canadian Museum for Human Rights. In 2004, the program received the Human Rights Award from the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission "in recognition of (its) creative means of advancing and protecting human rights and working to address racism in our communities" and The Asper Foundation received the 2008 New Brunswick Pioneer of Human Rights Award from the New Brunswick Human Rights Commission in recognition of "human rights pioneers for their historic contributions to the protection and promotion of human rights in Canada."

Program students have commented, "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 curriculum for the educational component of the program was developed specifically by human rights and Holocaust educators for The Asper Foundation. After the educational component is completed, students participate in a trip to Washington, DC where they spend several days at the US Holocaust Memorial Museum and other important monuments relating to human rights and freedom. Students are also required to volunteer for 16 hours each in their communities on public projects of their choosing which has resulted in over 100,000 hours of volunteer community service being carried out across Canada since the program was established.

The Asper Foundation is the founding member of a consortium comprising private and public institutions that spearheaded the establishment of the Canadian Museum for Human Rights as a Canadian national Museum in March 2008. Construction in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada began in 2009 with the opening projected for 2013. The Museum has made groundbreaking history as it will be the largest human rights institution and centre for education in the world today. It will explore the subject of human rights and its purpose is to promote understanding, respect and to encourage reflection, dialogue and action.

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 culture, education, community development and human rights locally, nationally and internationally.

**For further information, media are asked to contact Mr. Jeffrey Morry, Senior Program Manager, The Asper Foundation at 204-989-5539 or by e-mail at [jmorry@aspergroup.com](mailto:jmorry@aspergroup.com). For more information on the program, visit [www.humanrights.asperfoundation.com](http://www.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, visit [www.humanrightsmuseum.ca](http://www.humanrightsmuseum.ca) and [www.friendsofcmhr.com](http://www.friendsofcmhr.com).**