



## NEWS RELEASE

### Students at Penticton's École Entre Lacs claim first place awards in the national contest

(Richmond, BC) April 23, 2008. Two Conseil scolaire francophone de la C.-B. (CSF) (BC Francophone School District – SD No 93) students from the Penticton area earned top honours in a national contest. Solenn Madevon, grade 8, École Entre Lacs in Penticton, and Natasha Perry Fagant, grade 11, Summerland Secondary Francophone Program, took first prize in the Mathieu Da Costa 2008 Challenge in the category: Best Writing in French. Solenn came first in the 13-15 age group and Natasha in the 16-18 age category.

The Mathieu Da Costa Challenge is an annual nation-wide contest sponsored by Heritage Canada. It invites Canadian youth aged 9 to 18 to celebrate, with a drawing or text in English or French, an Aboriginal or other ethnocultural Canadian who has made a significant contribution to the development of Canada.

Solenn Madevon's poem featured Josiah Henson, founder of the Black colony of Upper Canada. Born into slavery in the United States, Henson fled to Canada with his family in 1830 and, in 1834, founded the community of Dawn hoping to attract fugitive American slaves and help them succeed as farmers. He published his autobiography in 1849 and may have been the model for the protagonist in Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

Natasha Perry Fagant's poem features Pauline Johnson, popular poet and artist who lived in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Daughter of a Mohawk chief and an English mother, Pauline Johnson is known for her poetry which blends Aboriginal and European cultures. Her work demonstrates her pride for her Native heritage and presents the contradiction of writing poetry in English on Native themes intended for non-Native readers.

The students received their prizes from Honourable Jason Kenney, Secretary of State (Multiculturalism and Canadian Identity) in a ceremony in Québec City on Monday, April 21. They also won a three-day stay in Québec and a visit of its cultural and historical sites, during this year's 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations.

Francophone students from the Penticton area have been first-prize winners of the Challenge for the fourth consecutive year! Previously Shana Girard (2007) and Gaëlle Madevon (2006) from École Entre Lacs and Roman Blomme (2005) from Summerland Secondary School also received first prize in the Best Writing in French category.

*Since its creation in 1995, the Conseil scolaire francophone de la C.-B. offers educational programs and services geared towards the growth and cultural promotion of the province's Francophone learners. An active partner in the development of BC's francophone community, the Conseil has presently in its system, and distributed across 78 communities in the province, over 4,000 students and 39 schools, which includes 21 homogeneous schools.*

For more information, please contact École Entre Lacs in Penticton, at 250 770-7691.

#### Reference:

Paul de la Riva  
Director of Communications  
Conseil scolaire francophone de la C.-B. (School District No. 93)  
T. 604 214-2617 | Cell. 778 840-2733  
[pdelariva@csf.bc.ca](mailto:pdelariva@csf.bc.ca)

LA FIERTÉ FRANCOPHONE S'APPREND AUSSI À L'ÉCOLE