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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Youth Advisory Council Announces Grant Recipients
Funding will support youth-led projects across Hamilton

HAMILTON – Hamilton Community Foundation’s Youth Advisory Council (YAC) has awarded grants to 15 groups across the city for youth-led community improvement projects. The focus of the projects ranges widely, from arts, to the environment, to educational outreach and even a fashion show, but their common link is the involvement of young people from start to finish.

Not only do youth create, plan and execute the projects, young people who are members of YAC also review the applications and recommend those to receive grants. Though the review takes hours of diligent work, YAC members find the proposals from their fellow youth exciting.

“This is the third year I have reviewed the youth-led projects, and I can easily say that the ideas are always inspiring” says YAC co-chair Emmaline Houston, 18. “The true passion, creativity and optimism of Hamilton’s youth shines through on the applications. After visiting a few of the projects from the past couple of years, I fully expect that the kids who are involved now, will continue to be as committed to bringing change in the future. It gives you a bright outlook for the future of Hamilton.”

These grants are made to youth between the ages of 11 and 25 for projects that improve community, school or neighbourhood. The Foundation provides up to half of the project costs, provided that the project team can find matching support in the community.

One project being funded is *Light Up the World with a Passion for Fashion*, a fashion show being mounted by students at Bishop Ryan Catholic Secondary School on May 22. The students are raising funds for the Light up the World Foundation, which supplies LED lights to areas such as Sierra Leone, where the alternative would be burning kerosene fuel in homes, creating dangerous and unhealthy conditions. The show is entirely student-organized, featuring student-designed fashion and involving over 80 young people in a variety of volunteer roles.”

“This grant really provided us with opportunities to make the show the best it can be” says Bishop Ryan student Marleigh White, 17, who is the team’s business co-ordinator. “Our planning team had ideas that were fantastic, but originally out of our league. This support helped us take this show to the next level and raise more funds for Light Up the World.”

“This program is really about the Foundation’s belief in the contribution that young people make” says Linda Hughes, adult advisor to the YAC. “It’s youth looking at what youth can and want to do to improve the world.” Ms. Hughes notes that the program began in 2005 as a pilot in 13 cities through Community Foundations of Canada, and Hamilton youth have always been at the forefront. “In the program’s first year, most community foundations received one or two applications,” she says. “Hamilton received 27.”

HCF’s Youth Advisory Council (YAC) provides young people with an opportunity to work together with HCF as they raise funds and make grants in our community to benefit other youth. YAC members learn about Hamilton’s strengths and needs, get involved in the community, gain leadership and provide a youth perspective to HCF’s work.

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(Complete list of grants attached)

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**Hamilton Community Foundation
Youth-led Community Action Project Grants
2009**

Organization / Project Name	Description	Grant	Description
Bishop Tonnos Catholic Secondary School - <i>"Soundworks Annual Benefit Concert"</i>	An annual benefit concert that brings the community together to celebrate music, as well as the commitment to raising awareness and money for those in need of support. The money raised from the concert will be used to support causes such as Poverty, and the Environment.	\$500	Annual concert
Hamilton Free Skool - <i>"Hamilton FreeSkool"</i>	To support projects that foster community and work to address injustice in the city with classes on a variety of subjects incorporating a very diverse group of people.	\$350	To purchase and compile resource manuals.
Crown Point Community - <i>"Our Garden for Clean Air"</i>	To learn fundamental gardening skills to foster teamwork and promote a healthier environment.	\$1,000	Community gardens – veggies, flowers, fruit Have confirmed funding
Bishop Ryan Secondary School - <i>"Light Up the World with a Passion for Fashion"</i>	To fundraise through a fashion show and promote LUTW in support of their mission to relief poverty by giving the gift of light to Sierra Leone (the poorest nation in the world).	\$1,200	Show on May 22
Living Rock Ministries - <i>"Youth Arts Awareness Project 2009"</i>	To raise awareness for the youth arts community in Hamilton by showcasing youth bands, artwork, and poetry or story reading with involvement of local bands.	\$500	Subsidizing the Rock Action Council.
Engineers Without Borders - <i>"School Outreach"</i>	The EWB presents ready made interactive presentations to Junior High and secondary schools to engage students and allow them to think about what kind of international community they would like to build. The funds will be used to educate Hamiltonians about development and extreme poverty through community events, education sessions and presentations.	\$1,000	
Good Shepherd Centres Hamilton - <i>"P.O.W.E.R. (Providing Opportunitites with Education and Resources)"</i>	Notre Dame House School wishes to fundraise by distributing anti-poverty buttons for donations for the inner city sports programs to provide new sports equipment.	\$500	To purchase button-maker and supplies.
Parkview Secondary School - <i>"Beautify Balsam"</i>	To improve community spirit and beautify Balsam Street in front of school.	\$1,000	

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St. Thomas More Catholic Secondary School - <i>"More Outreach Program (MOP)"</i>	To provide students with basic necessities such as clothing, food, and transportation that they may not be able to receive at the current time.	\$600	To purchase food vouchers for prefects outreach program.
The LGBTQ Community Wellness Centre - <i>"The RADAR Youth Artstravaganza"</i>	To create a positive environment where LGBTQ youth are able to break the silence of being queer in a straight world and express themselves through art.	\$850	For purchase of art supplies.
Sanford Boys and Girls Club - <i>"Sanford's Best Dance Crew"</i>	To give the youth a chance to showcase their talents and have an opportunity to learn new skills. They will be competing team against team	\$850	To rent video equipment.
Sanford Boys and Girls Club - <i>"Sanford Cuisine"</i>	To provide a fine dining experience completely organized by youth and children	\$500	For food to cook.
Youth Engagement & Action in Hamilton (YEAH) - <i>"Writing All Wrongs"</i>	To create something that reflects the youth perspective in McQuesten through original music and dance, to teach determination and teamwork and encourage creativity through writing as well as providing an outlet for expression.	\$1,785	Creative project to shoot a video in McQuesten, record songs about the neighbourhood.
Youth Engagement & Action in Hamilton (YEAH) - <i>"Hockey Night In Greenhill Ball Hockey League"</i>	To get young people involved and help steer as many youth as possible away from gangs and other poor decisions they might be making.	\$1,503	
Youth Engagement & Action in Hamilton (YEAH) - <i>"Jamesville Youth Film Showcase"</i>	To provide us and our audiences with awareness about some of the issues that we face and to provide the opportunity for us to make suggestions on how to improve the quality of life in Jamesville.	\$859	Creating a short film to document issues and problems in Jamesville. Plan to hold a showcase for youth films.
	TOTAL	\$12,997	