



Media Release

May 21, 2010

Over 100 children and youth recognized at 10th Annual Reach for Success Youth Recognition Awards

The 10th Annual Reach for Success Youth Recognition Awards – hosted by the Quinte Children's Foundation in partnership with Hastings Children's Aid Society, Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory and Mohawk Family Services – was an amazing celebration of the remarkable successes of over 100 children and youth.

"The Youth Recognition Awards are always the highlight of our year and this year's event, May 20 at the Empire Theatre, was no exception," said HCAS Director of Children Services, Angus Francis.

"We borrowed this year's theme from the Olympics - **"I believe"** - because that's what this event is really all about; getting kids to believe that they can go to college; to believe that they can go to university; to believe that they can do whatever they set their mind to."

Christa Antle-Baldwin, the event's co-chair, says a key benefit of presenting Reach for Success Scholarships at the awards ceremony is the impact it has on the children attending that evening. "They witness first hand the rewards of hard work and determination. They see kids, who may have grown up in situations similar to their own, successfully completing high school and moving on to post secondary education," she said. "It sends a strong message to the younger kids that they can dream their dreams of university and college and receive the support they'll need through programs like Quinte Children's Foundation Reach for Success Scholarships."

This year, 34 youth shared \$45,000 in Reach for Success Scholarships, the highest number ever presented in the event's 10 year history, and 60 children from Hastings County and Mohawk Territory received \$50 Youth Recognition Awards for their successes in the areas of arts, academics, sports, volunteer work, heritage and culture and personal best. As well, 12 scholarships to the Quinte Ballet School were awarded.

In honour of their achievements, participating children and youth received certificates of congratulations from MMP Leona Dombrowsky and MP Daryl Kramp. Francis says it's remarkable how often children service workers see these awards proudly displayed when they visit a child's home. "The recognition really means something to the kids."

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In her comments, Brandi Hodge, Executive Director of Quinte Children's Foundation, emphasized the importance of the annual bursaries. "The Reach For Success Scholarship Program acknowledges the incredible achievements of some great kids; kids that have had a few more life challenges than most," she said. "We want them to, literally, reach for success... and when those possibilities are right there for the grabbing, we are there to support them financially with their studies, give them that little boost they need to keep going and let them know we believe in them."

Another major highlight of the evening was the recognition of Jesse Ryan, the recipient of a \$4,500 a year Clark Bursary for 4 years, with a \$1,000 gift upon graduation, and Jonathon Lindsay-McBain, winner of a \$1,000 Clark Award.

Clark Bursaries are awarded through the Ontario Association of the Children's Aid Societies, and were established by Ron and Nancy Clark to help youth in care achieve their academic and career goals.

According to the event's co-chairs, Christa Antle-Baldwin and Nicole Broderick, the awards have taken on a life of its own and get bigger and better every year, thanks to the vision and hard work of Mohawk Family Services, the staff at Hastings Children's Aid Society and, of course, the contributions of the Quinte Children's Foundation. "We can't thank the Quinte Children's Foundation enough for hosting the event each year and providing our youth the financial aid they need to make their dreams of further education and a brighter, most successful future, a reality."

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