



For Immediate Release

Markham Receives Canada Games Day Grant

Markham, February 20, 2006 – The Canada Games Council has awarded a grant to the Town of Markham to host a Canada Games Day in September 2006.

Markham was one of six Ontario communities selected including: Oakville, Hamilton, Midland, Sarnia-Lambton and Thunder Bay. Each will receive a grant of \$5,000 to support hosting the events.

The Canada Games Day event in Markham, hosted by Markham Sport Council, will be part of the Milliken Children's Festival, an annual event which drew 12,000 people in 2005. The Canada Games Day, on September 9, 2006, will offer sport and physical activity "try it" events as well as demonstrations and presentations from the sports community organizations and other service groups with a stake in promoting physical activity, health and wellness.

Formed in 2005, the Markham Sport Council supports and advises the Town of Markham on sport-related planning and strategic initiatives, promotes active involvement in sport and physical recreation and provides a network for sport organizations to share experiences and resources.

"This Canada Games grant will help make youth in Markham aware of the event, during the Milliken Children's Festival, while, at the same time encourage them to become more involved in a physically active lifestyle," said Markham Mayor Don Cousens.

Canada Games Day is a community event offering young people, 4 to 14 years of age, a sport and educational experience that mirrors the excitement and spirit of the Canada Games. For each event, the organizers follow an easy-to-use Canada Games Day resource kit. Children participate in unique sport activities, answer Canadian trivia questions and receive special awards. The Ontario Canada Games Days will be a rallying point for Ontario communities to engage residents, strengthen volunteer networks, increase youth physical activity and raise funds for community sport councils.

"Thanks to support from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, we can reach into communities to inspire dreams and build champions within Ontario's youth," says Sue Hylland, President and CEO, Canada Games Council. "Leaving a lasting legacy of healthy communities and strengthened volunteerism allows the Canada Games to become part of Ontario communities for the future."

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Background Follows

Contact: Markham Sport Council Coordinator Tamara Roth 905-472-6717 ext. 1
Markham Corporate Communications Marjorie Rebane 905-479-7754

Markham Receives Canada Games Day Grant - Background

Building on the success of the Games, the Canada Games Council has broadened its focus from Games only, to Games and between Games initiatives.

Held once every two years, alternating between summer and winter, the Canada Games represent the highest level of national competition for the next generation of national team athletes and future champions. The Games have been hosted in every province at least once since their inception in Quebec City during Canada's Centennial in 1967.

The Games are proud of their contribution to Canada's sport development system in addition to their lasting legacy of sport facilities, community pride and national unity. The Canada Games Days represents one of the new programs under the Canada Games Councils between the Games initiatives titled Dreams and Champions Programs, which have received a generous contribution from Canadian Heritage (Sport Canada) and the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

Canada Games Dreams and Champions initiatives are meant to inspire Canada's youth to participate in sport and physical activity by providing the programs, tools and support to build next generation champions who reach and succeed at higher levels.

The organization of the Canada Games is made possible through the contribution and support of the federal, provincial/territorial and host municipal governments and the Canada Games Council. The next Canada Winter Games will be held in Whitehorse, Yukon, in 2007.

The Canada Games Council is grateful for the support of the Ontario Trillium Foundation, an agency of The Ministry of Culture, for this initiative.

For more information and to request a Canada Games Day resource kit please visit canadagames.ca or contact the Ontario Canada Games Day Project Manager, Paul Jurbala at paul@communityactive.ca