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HOUSE OF COMMONS
CANADA

Maurice Vellacott, MP
Saskatoon-Wanuskewin

Government of Canada supports Saskatchewan Downtown Youth Centre

For Immediate Release

July 14, 2009

SASKATOON, SASKATCHEWAN – On behalf of the Honourable James Moore, Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages, Maurice Vellacott, Member of Parliament (Saskatoon-Wanuskewin), today announced funding for the Saskatoon Downtown Youth Centre's "Joe's Garage" project.

The Saskatoon Downtown Youth Centre is a community organization that provides activities and resources to empower young people at risk and help them reach their full potential. "Joe's Garage" is a project for young Aboriginal males aged 12 to 19 who are caught up in negative and violent street lifestyles. The goal of the project is to promote and encourage positive personal growth based on self-esteem, self-respect, respect for others, and teamwork.

"The Government of Canada is committed to helping urban Aboriginal young people gain valuable life skills," said Minister Moore. "This project will allow them to become more active participants in shaping their future and in contributing to the growth of their community and of Canada."

"The Saskatoon Downtown Youth Centre provides much needed services and opportunities for Aboriginal young people in our community," said Mr. Vellacott. "I am pleased that our Government is supporting Joe's Garage and is recognizing the important work done by this organization."

"It's amazing to see how Joe's Garage, with the support of the Government of Canada, can positively influence the young people who participate in this initiative," said Russ Misskey, Youth Worker with the Saskatoon Downtown Youth Centre. "Supportive relationships, opportunities, and life experiences-they can and do make a long-term difference in the lives of young people."

The Government of Canada has provided \$71,000 through the Urban Multipurpose Aboriginal Youth Centre component of the Department of Canadian Heritage's Aboriginal Peoples' Program. This program supports community and culturally-based projects for urban Aboriginal young people to improve their social, economic, and personal prospects and to strengthen their cultural identity.