

News from **SickKids**[®]

FOUNDATION

Lifestyle/Parenting editors:

SickKids Foundation honours young heroes at Kids Believe in SickKids Giving Gala

Toronto, ON – November 20, 2007 – SickKids Foundation is celebrating National Child Day by honouring young heroes who embrace the spirit of giving by raising money for The Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids). More than 200 children and youth will be honoured for their fundraising efforts at the Kids Believe in SickKids Giving Gala on Tuesday, November 20, 2007, hosted by Luba Goy, star of CBC's Royal Canadian Air Farce.

A lemonade stand, a fun fair, a car wash and a first communion were among the creative ways that children raised money for SickKids. Collectively, the winners' efforts raised more than \$100,000. While only four awards will be handed out at the second annual event, the efforts of all of the children in the Kids Believe in SickKids program will be celebrated at the Giving Gala.

"It's amazing to see all these children, no matter how old they are, embracing SickKids Foundation as their charity of choice," explained Paula Roberts, Vice-President, SickKids Foundation. "We pride ourselves on being a leader in encouraging philanthropy, especially in children. We believe that healthier children lead to a better world and what better way to help sick children than to encourage other children to fundraise on their behalf."

This year's winners include:

- Spirit Award - Jack Yeilding, 5

Jack's Lemonade Stand - \$14,435

Jack is a five-year-old boy with intractable epilepsy – a type of epilepsy that does not respond to medication. He was experiencing several daily seizures which took a toll on his young body. His mother, Jodi, wanted Jack to take control of his health and well-being and thought that by involving him in philanthropy would show him that his epilepsy could also have a positive effect on his life. It started with some small pocket change and grew to an annual event in Oakville, Ontario. Jack's Lemonade Stand raised more than \$14,435 for epilepsy research at SickKids.

- **Top Fundraising Individual - Shania Johnston, 9 (posthumously)**
Shania's Sunflower of Hope - \$63, 230
 Shania was diagnosed with neuroblastoma – a cancer of the nervous system – in June 2006. She decided that she wanted to help other kids also faced with cancer and within weeks, designed bracelets to sell in support of SickKids Foundation. This then-seven-year-old girl who loved sunflowers decided that making bracelets was not raising enough money. Shania's Sunflower of Hope, a fun fair at the Markham Fairgrounds, was created and collectively with the bracelets, she raised \$63,230 for neuroblastoma research at SickKids. Though she passed away in July 2007, she has left a lasting legacy that continues to inspire her family, friends and community.
- **Top Fundraising Group - Islamic Foundation of Toronto (school)**
Islamic Foundation of Toronto fundraisers - \$25,000
 High school students at the Islamic Foundation of Toronto wanted to help kids who were faced with illness and trauma. Two of their fellow classmates were severely injured in a car accident and spent several weeks recovering at SickKids. They decided to host several events to raise money for SickKids including a car wash, pin selling event, raffle tickets and a potluck dinner. The students at the Islamic Foundation of Toronto raised \$25,000
- **Top Tribute Donation – Anthony and Sophia DiGiorgio (7 and 9 respectively)**
Anthony and Sophia DiGiorgio's first communion - \$4,180
 Anthony DiGiorgio is a seven-year-old boy from Woodbridge and is a patient in the Ophthalmology clinic at SickKids. Along with his sister, Sophia, 9, and their family, they started planning the siblings' first communion. The DiGiorgio's have always taught their children the importance of giving to others and were thrilled to learn that their children chose to donate their gifts received at their first communion to SickKids. Anthony and Sophia DiGiorgio donated \$4,180 to SickKids highest priority needs.

Since its inception in 2005, almost 1,000 children have joined our ever-growing Family of Heroes by participating in the Kids Believe in SickKids program. The SickKids Family of Heroes encompasses the children and their families, doctors and nurses, researchers and other SickKids staff and community supporters that have all embraced SickKids through their spirit of giving.

The Kids Believe in SickKids program has raised more than \$600,000 for children's health care. Funds raised by the program are designated to the highest priority needs established by the hospital each year. Last year, many areas of the hospital were supported by these funds including vital research projects and the play area of the surgical day care unit. To learn more about the program, please visit: www.sickkidsfoundation.com/kidsbelieve

About SickKids Foundation:

In September 2005, SickKids Foundation launched the largest fundraising campaign for a hospital in Canadian history with a goal of \$500 million to be reached by 2011. SickKids Foundation was established in 1972. Its mission is to inspire its communities to invest in health and scientific advances to improve the lives of children and their families in Canada and around the world. Its vision is “Healthier children. A better world.”

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