



MEDIA RELEASE
MAJOR DONATION CAPS OFF SUCCESSFUL YEAR

May 11, 2009, Calgary: EducationMatters learned that the best gifts are worth waiting for when they announced at their annual Report to Community luncheon today, that in December 2008 they received their largest single donation/pledge to date from local Calgary businessman and philanthropist Allan Markin. **Markin pledged \$1 million to the Trust over 4 years.** The new Allan Markin Healthy Learners Fund will support programs for high need students placing a priority on healthy learning, exercise, nutrition and especially vitamin D.

All children deserve a healthy start in school,” said Markin to the 130 luncheon guests. “Good health, exercise and nutrition should be embedded values.” Chris Fong, Chair of the Board of Governor at EducationMatters presented Markin with artwork from a 2nd grade student at Cecil Swanson School which depicted a ‘happy day playing soccer in the sunshine’. “

In 2008, EducationMatters issued over \$520,000 in program grants and over \$98,000 in student Awards. Since its inception in 2003, EducationMatters has received **\$5 million** in pledges/contributions from individuals, corporations and institutions achieving its PLUS campaign goal and granted over **\$2 million** for Calgary’s K-12 public education students. EducationMatters has **impacted over 100,000 students and their families.**

“I am grateful for the tremendous community response to supporting our mission and vision,” said Chris Fong, Chair of the Board of Governors at EducationMatters. “I am humbled by the continued spirit of generosity that is really making a difference for these kids.”

Also, Pat Cochrane, Chair of the CBE Trustees and EducationMatters board member, announced the 2009 recipient of the **CBE’s (Calgary Board of Education) Distinguished Alumni award** would be **Steve Allan**. Allan, a chartered accountant and vice president of RMS Richter is most noted for his contributions to the Calgary Exhibition and Stampede culminating in his term as Chairman of the Board from 2005-2007. Allan has been involved in the Rotary Club of Calgary, the Calgary Foundation, the Calgary Zoological Society, the Saddledome Foundation, The Calgary Stampeders Football Club, the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra and Boy Scouts of Canada. The award will be officially presented to Allan on October 22nd at the annual dinner event which is a fundraiser for EducationMatters’ Future Leaders Fund. Last year’s event netted over \$100,000.

Other 2008 highlights mentioned by Barbara Burggraf, executive director of EducationMatters were the over 1200 student award applications, the new funds established including the Dr. Brendan Croskery Aboriginal Culture fund (in honour of retired CBE Chief Superintendent) and the Schools Helping Schools Fund established by Briar Hill School parent council to support schools who might not have the capacity to fundraise. As well, the Trust reported on the progress of the Kafé12 initiative to improve high school completion rates in this city 20% by 2020. In the past year, hundreds of community members representing educators, business, social service agencies, government, parents and students have been having virtual and real conversations on how to make a substantive improvement the current completion rate which is only at 70%

The Report to Community luncheon was emceed by Lord Beaverbrook High School student Jessica Wurz, student speakers Tavon, Ivy and Zafeer from Rundle School debated on the value of learning, and 25 students from Capitol Hill school made lots of beautiful music with their djembe drums.

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EducationMatters is Calgary’s public education trust and engages the Calgary community in supporting Calgary’s public education students, now and in the future. The trust is the PLUS that gives student more so they can have the best possible learning experience.

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