

# PRESS RELEASE

## PROVINCIAL EXCELLENCE AWARD GIVEN TO GRAY ACADEMY STUDENT COUNCIL PRESIDENT Yael SHROM

May 11, 2007 – Rory Paul, Head of School and CEO and Hart Sera, Principal, for Gray Academy of Jewish Education and the Winnipeg Board of Education are proud to announce that Yael Shrom is the recipient of the prestigious ***Provincial Excellence Award from the Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation.***

This award is given in recognition of Yael Shrom's academic achievements, her significant contributions to our community, her leadership and her commitment to innovation. She is one of over 240 provincial and territorial excellence award laureates selected this year across Canada. The Millennium Scholarship brings with it an award of \$16,000 and provides students with opportunities to pursue the post-secondary education they need to prepare themselves for the future.

The Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation is a private, independent organization created by an act of Parliament in 1998. It encourages Canadian students to strive for excellence and pursue their post-secondary studies. The Foundation distributes \$325 million in the form of bursaries and scholarships each year throughout Canada.

"Yael's achievements are remarkable. Within Winnipeg's small Jewish community and large general community, Yael has been an active and staunch supporter of human rights and quality of life. She has held chair and coordinator positions raising medical funds and social programming funds through CancerCare Manitoba, The United Way, Jewish Child & Family Service, and the Jewish Federation of Winnipeg. Yael is a leader in her community and a future leader in the community at large," said Rory Paul, Head of School and C.E.O.

Yael Shrom, President of Student Council, is a Grade 12 student who is no stranger to leadership and community involvement. In Grade 9, she was the head of the fundraising committee, followed by the position of Secretary the next year, and was the Vice President in Grade 11.

Yael's student council goals for this school year were threefold: The first was to establish a council that worked as a connecting piece between the student body and the administration. Second, she wanted student council to remain the charitable council that it is known for, whereby they have raised funds for various charities such as CancerCare, Shalom Residences, Magen David Adom, among others. And third, she wanted to make student council a shaping force in each student's life with spirited pep rallies, celebrations of Jewish holidays and random fun days.

Recently, Yael's leadership and determination to make a difference were evident in her student-driven **Loonie Toonie** provincial-wide fundraiser for cancer that attracted the media attention of Global TV, Shaw TV, the Winnipeg Free Press and the Canadian Jewish News. Also, for Raoul Wallenberg Day, the selection committee was quite impressed that the student's petition to free three kidnapped Israeli soldiers reached Prime Minister Stephen Harper.

"What I love about Gray Academy is that because there is a smaller atmosphere, I am able to take advantage of all of these opportunities, whereas at other schools, I would not be able to. How many people at a large high school can say that simultaneously, they were involved in student council; played on the volleyball, basketball and soccer teams; went on educational trips to Israel, the U.N., and the **March of the Living** trip; became a journalist for the school newspaper and a peer tutor; and also performed in the school band? At Gray Academy, the smaller, more nurturing atmosphere, allows for every student to excel in the activity and program that he or she chooses," Yael Shrom enthusiastically said.

Yael was the recipient last year of the **Special Contribution to School Life award**; and this week at Convocation, Yael received the **Gray Academy of Jewish Education Gold Medal** for best combining high academic achievement in Grade 11 and Grade 12, participation in extra-curricular activities and overall contribution to the school.

"My receipt of this award is directly linked to my attendance at Gray Academy. I would never have been able to achieve the things I have without the resources and support of the teachers and administration. I am accepting this scholarship in honour of Gray Academy," Ms. Shrom emphatically states.

Gray Academy of Jewish Education is a JK-12 university preparatory school that places equal value on Jewish and General academic programs, and provides opportunities to nurture the emotional well-being and spiritual development of all students.

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