

PRESS RELEASE

WORLD CLASS DEBATERS ARRIVE IN WINNIPEG FOR PRESTIGIOUS ASPER CUP INTERNATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL DEBATE

November 26, 2008 – Rory Paul, Head of School and CEO, is pleased to announce the upcoming ***Fourth Annual Asper Cup International High School Debate*** which will take place November 30-December 1, 2008 at Gray Academy of Jewish Education, located at 123 Doncaster Street. Proud sponsors of the Asper Cup include ***The Asper Foundation, Investors Group, Winnipeg Free Press and Pitblado LLP.***

This year's tournament features top debaters from every competing province across the country from Newfoundland to British Columbia, in addition to a team from Israel. "We are delighted to host double the teams from last year and have so many of our top Canadian debaters competing. There is a buzz amongst the debaters looking forward to being in Winnipeg and being able to pit their ability against such high quality. This promises to be a barn burner," said debating teacher and coach, Linda Martin.

Joining the list of participating debaters for the top prizes at the Asper Cup are students who recently formed the Canadian Team that competed at the World Schools Debate held in Washington, DC in September. In particular, two of those students ranked fifth overall from amongst 33 competing countries, namely, Sam Greene (Holy Heart School - St. John's) and Tim Abdulla (St. John's-Ravenscourt – Winnipeg).

"When the Asper Cup made its debut in 2004, debating teams from around the globe arrived in Winnipeg to compete at Gray Academy. This prestigious event allowed our highly ranked students to not only perform on an international level, but to be introduced to a mosaic of people from different cultures and backgrounds," said Mr. Paul.

The growth in debating as a participating school in the last four years has been phenomenal with Gray Academy students regularly qualifying for the Canadian Team for the ***World Individual Public Speaking and Debate Championships***. In 2005, senior student Susan Schipper competed at the Worlds in Cypress where she placed 7th overall, followed by 2nd place overall in Debate at the Worlds in Connecticut. In April 2007, Shira Lerner, a Grade 12 student, qualified for the Worlds held in South Africa where she placed 15th overall in the combined categories of Debate, Persuasive Speaking, Impromptu Speaking, and Interpretive Reading.

This year, Gray Academy is proud to announce that Asper Cup competitor and Grade 12 student Josh Fineblit will be competing at the World Individuals – long considered ***the Olympics of Public Speaking*** - that takes place in England in March 2009. Josh placed 13th overall at the World Individual Public Speaking & Debate Championship held in Germany in 2007.

“We are delighted to once again host this prestigious debating tournament, and appreciative of the ongoing support of our sponsors: The Asper Foundation, Investors Group, and the Winnipeg Free Press, who have been with us since The Asper Cup made its debut in 2004, and we welcome our new sponsor Pitblado,” said Rory Paul.

The Asper Cup takes place from November 30-December 1 at Gray Academy:

Sunday, November 30

9:45 AM - Round 1
11:00 AM – Round 2
1:30 PM – Round 3
4:00 PM – Round 4

Monday, December 1

9:35 AM – Round 5
11:10 AM – Round 6
1:30 PM – Semi-Finalists announced
2:00 PM – **Semi-Final Rounds** in Multi-Purpose Room & Berney Theatre
3:00 PM – Finalists announced
3:30 PM – **FINALS** in Berney Theatre

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To interview Mrs. Martin and/or to cover The Asper Cup, please contact:

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