
Event Testimonials

POLITICIANS

“I would like to take the opportunity to salute Mr. Mandela, a great humanitarian, for his many accomplishments and applaud the efforts of the Nelson Mandela Children’s Fund.”

- Dalton McGuinty, Premier of Ontario, April 2008

“The Spirit of Mandela 2008 will help in raising awareness and assist in providing an understanding of the plight of individuals suffering from conditions brought on by global poverty, human rights injustices and health concerns. Their lives stand to be enriched through the Spirit of Mandela 2008. I congratulate the Canadian Chapter of the Nelson Mandela Children’s Fund on their successes to date and in particular the work in the Toronto Districts and Province of Ontario. Underprivileged individuals living in disadvantaged conditions are supported and strengthened through the remarkable efforts of Mr. Mandela. His work will continue to have an impact within South Africa and worldwide.”

- Rodney J. MacDonald, Premier of Nova Scotia, January 8, 2008

“Mr. Mandela is a source of inspiration for the entire world and for the thousands of men and women still struggling for peace and democracy. His historic role in establishing the principle of forgiveness as an instrument of justice and healing through the Truth and Reconciliation Commission still inspires us. Mr. Mandela commitment to democracy, human rights, and peaceful coexistence between people regardless of skin color or religion remains a sterling example for younger generations.”

- Jean Charest, Premier of Quebec, December 18, 2007

“In April, the following formed part of a statement I made in the Legislature: “I can think of no better way to honour the spirit of a man – one of the most important fighters for democracy, freedom and justice in the 20th century.” It is important for young people across Ontario to learn about one of the great heroes in the world. The Nelson Mandela story focusing on freedom, forgiveness, and justice will be told for many years to come. It is a powerful idea that young people in Ontario can help young people in South Africa through involvement with the Spirit of Mandela in their schools, and through donations.”

- Kathleen Wynne, Minister of Education, Ontario Ministry of Education, July 26, 2007

EDUCATORS

“Ontario’s school leaders strive every day to model and educate our students about the values of Nelson Mandela in the area of social justice, human rights and racial equality. Mr. Mandela is surely one of the world’s most respected and influential leaders, demonstrating the respect and caring that we want all our students to emulate. The Spirit of Mandela Week will be an incredible opportunity to bring the values of Mr. Mandela to our classrooms and our children’s lives. We are excited about the opportunity to explore the cultural differences between Canadian and South Africans while helping identify ways in which we can increase our support for the programs of the Nelson Mandela Children’s Fund. As such, we are honoured to be a part of the NMCF steering committee.”

- Lisa Vincent, President, Ontario Principals' Council, January 16, 2008

"The teacher of Ontario support the goal of the Spirit of Mandela Week to expand the reach of Nelson Mandela's example to inspire our students to share the aspirations of putting an end to child poverty."

-George (Joe) Lamoureaux, President, Ontario Teacher's Federation, December 15, 2008

"We are proud to offer our support of your plan to expand the Spirit of Mandela Week program across Ontario. This program, offered in Toronto over the past years, gives our members and their students the opportunity to learn from the life of Nelson Mandela, the importance of education, forgiveness, leadership, and social justice. It gives them an opportunity to give to the children of South Africa and thus extend their understanding of the world in which they live. One of our priorities as a federation is "to promote social justice in the areas of anti-poverty, non-violence, and equity" and to "support international assistance and co-operation". We could not imagine a better way to address these two priorities together than to support the Spirit of Mandela."

- David Clegg, President, Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario, August 22, 2007

"The funds raised by the TDSB are understandable modest in relation to the needs of the children of South Africa. However, the outcomes for our students in this project go well beyond the student fundraising objectives. The importance for our students lies in the capacity of this project to promote understanding of and empathy for the circumstances which produce inequity and injustice in society. This is an important part of the goal of our schools which is to develop future citizens who will contribute to the improvement of the human condition in their world. Nelson Mandela and his life provided the inspiration for our students to develop that understanding and empathy. The Spirit of Mandela event provides a practical way for these students to act on their new awareness in ways which benefit the disadvantaged children of South Africa. This is an important part of the goal of our schools which is to develop future citizens who will contribute to the improvement of the human condition in their world."

- Gerry Connelly, Director of Education, Toronto District School Board, August 14, 2007

"Nelson Mandela is a revered and vital force in the struggle for human rights and racial equality. His warmth, courage, and unshakeable commitment to the cause of freedom have inspired millions of all ages and all races around the world. In his lifetime, Nelson Mandela is making the world a better place and is inspiring others to do the same — he has become an extraordinary role model for our children."

- Rick Johnson, President, Ontario Public School Boards' Association, August 8, 2007

"Today's students are growing up in a world that is more interconnected than ever before. As educators, it is incumbent upon us to help this generation of global citizens develop an awareness and understanding of social justice issues, represented so profoundly by the work and life of Nelson Mandela. Educators can connect students with their global community and encourage leadership and volunteerism by supporting the work of the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund and its projects with the children of South Africa. The "Spirit of Mandela" campaign provides an excellent opportunity to do so."

- David Clegg, President, Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario, December 17, 2007

STUDENTS

"The Ontario Student Trustees' Association is proud to support the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund (Canada) and their Spirit of Mandela initiative. Nelson Mandela is a man of great integrity and character and is true inspiration to all citizens, especially the youth and students of Ontario. Our organization is confident that the Spirit of Mandela Week will serve as both a strong educational and inspirational tool for students. We believe strongly that this initiative and week of activities will be mutually beneficial to the students of Ontario as well as the youth and people of South Africa. In addition to educating young people, it will serve to inspire them to aid and assist our global peers an ocean away."

-Cordy Welton, President, Ontario Student Trustees' Association, March 23, 2009

CHILDREN

"I can't believe Nelson Mandela had to go to jail to get freedom. We are really lucky today that everyone can be equal."

- Sarah-Anne Seale, 14-year-old, J.S. Woodsworth Senior Public School, Spirit of Mandela Week 2007

"I'm proud that we raised that money. I didn't know we'd be able to do it. There are kids in poverty. I'm proud that they can now have books and can go to school and learn."

- Felicia Hyman, Grade 7 student, J.S. Woodsworth Senior Public School, Spirit of Mandela Week 2007

"My heart's been touched after two lessons of Spirit of Mandela Week at the school. His [Nelson Mandela's] humility, courage and confidence have had a big impact on me."

- Diayan Rajamohan, 14-year-old, J.S. Woodsworth Senior Public School, Spirit of Mandela Week 2007