

July 2011



FOUNDATION FOR THE STUDY OF PROCESSES OF GOVERNMENT IN CANADA

NEWSLETTER

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APPLY NOW!

- 3 sessions will be offered next year:
  - November 13 to 18, 2011
  - February 26 to March 2, 2012
  - March 25 to 30, 2012
- Applications are available online now! [www.forum.ca](http://www.forum.ca)

## Ottawa, the place to be!

This Spring, while the country was buzzing with an election, over 200 students were in Ottawa, creating a fever of their own. A few blocks from Parliament Hill, high school students came together to participate in Forum. They had the opportunity to walk in the shoes of today's leaders, simulating Cabinet Meetings, a First Ministers Conference, role playing holding a mock election and debating the issues of the day. Their experience was brought to life exploring Parliament Hill, attending Question Period, sharing a breakfast with Senators and finally having dinner with MPs.



Forum participants in front of Rideau Hall  
March 25 to April 1st, 2011 Session

### In this issue

- *Forum for Young Canadians 2011*
- *Membership*
- *Sponsors*
- *Testimonial*

## In the words of Nicolai, Nicota and Elliot: Forum is the experience of a lifetime!

Three of last year's participants share their Forum experience. Nicolai, a student from the Yukon appreciated the simulations and the interaction with other youth from across the country:

*"The simulations during the Forum week were a practical opportunity to learn about the different tasks that government officials have. For an entire week, we played different roles such as Prime Minister of Canada (if elected) or journalist and asked questions about the party's platform. We worked with people our age that came from across the country and shared similar interests.*

*I am proud to say that through Forum, I met at least one person (now friend (s)) from each province or territory. It is simply incredible!" Nicolai – 2011 participant.*

Nicota, an Aboriginal student from Fort McMurray loved her learning experience:

*"My name is Nicota, I am 17 years old and I am from Fort McMurray, Alberta. The greatest experience I had on this trip was to be able to see what goes on in the House of Commons and to meet people from all over Canada. I've made some really great friends and hope to see them again sometime in the future." She adds; "If you are interested in politics, then Forum for Young Canadians is a great experience to see what really goes on, and to see first hand what it's all about. I've learned so much being in this program that I probably would otherwise never have learned." Nicota- 2011 participant.*

Elliot, will always remember the speakers and people he met over the course of the week.

*"My Forum experience was an unforgettable memory that I will always cherish. I learned tons of new stuff about Parliament and how the process works on several different things. We met so many interesting and knowledgeable people over the course of the week. Forum for Young Canadians was in some cases a life changing experience, and was a great learning experience." Elliot – participant 2011*

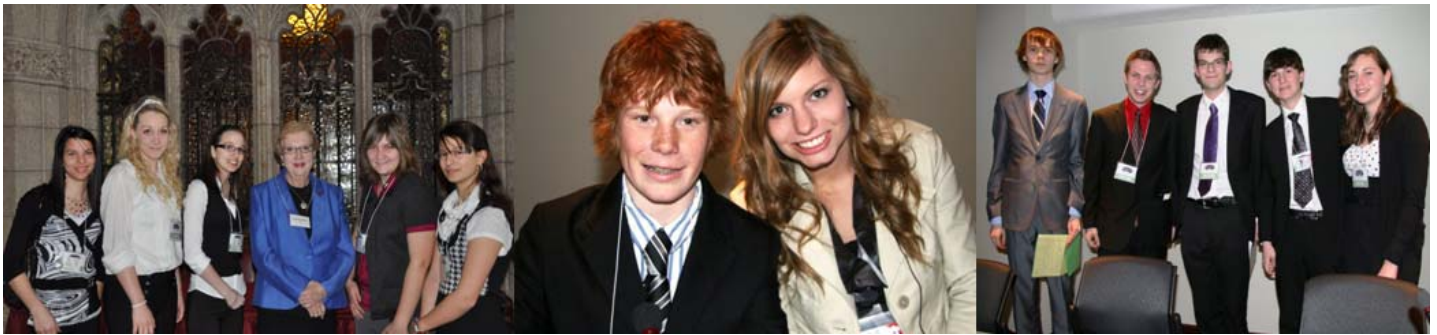
# Your membership makes the difference... For only \$10 become a member of the Foundation!

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Companies and organizations across Canada support the program – **but it is not enough, your membership makes the difference!**

It is through both \$10 memberships and the donations we receive that Forum is able to provide this amazing experience. Your membership will be effective from September 1, 2011 until August 31, 2012. During this time we look forward to sharing with you all the news here at Forum. We hope that you will be able to attend the Annual General Meeting in October so that you too can experience some of the “Forum Magic” that keeps our volunteer alumni coming back year after year.

**If you are already a member, renew your membership by August 30th so we can ensure that everything is in order for the Annual General Meeting.**



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## Donate now!

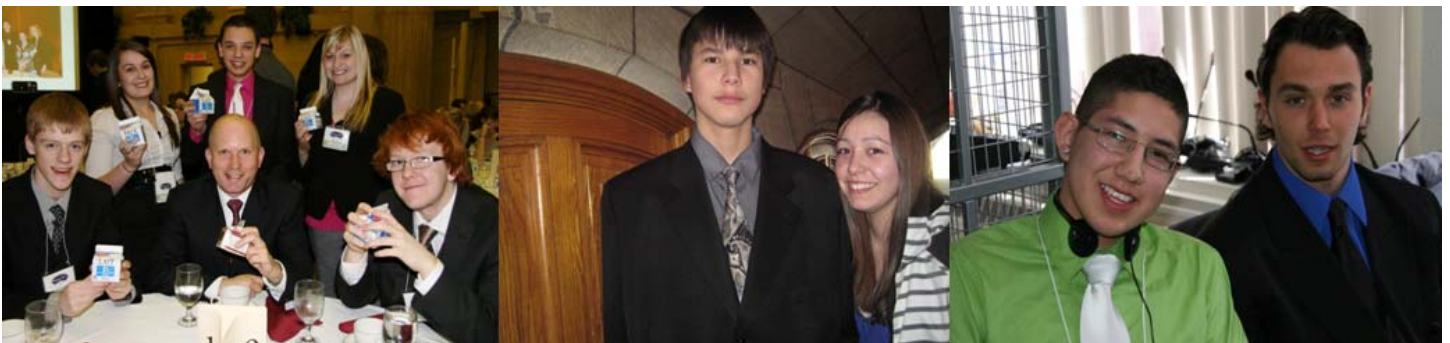
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**Your \$25 donation** helps to ensure that participants have the opportunity to meet and spend time with other youth from across Canada through social events such as Talent Night and the Graduation Dinner.

**Your \$50 donation** supports the Opportunity Fund. Through generous donations made to this fund, youth from across Canada who would not otherwise be able to participate due to their circumstances are able to experience Forum.

**Your \$100 donation** offsets the cost of volunteer alumni expenses. Forum volunteers come from all walks of life, they are past alumni, Public Service employees, students or everyday Canadians just like you and I who give one week of their time to realize the Forum program. They ensure the learning objectives of the program are met and the safety and security of all.

**Your \$250 donation** offsets the cost of the MP Dinner and participants meeting with their MP. Participants tell us over and over again that the MP Dinner and spending time with their MP was the highlight of their Forum experience. By donating \$250 you too are ensuring this night continues to be the moment where “Forum Magic” comes to life.



# Forum for Young Canadians is possible through the generous support of our Sponsors!

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### Forum Opportunity Fund

Through the Forum Opportunity Fund, a few bursaries are available to qualifying students to help offset the cost of attending Forum. Without this help, they would not be able to live the Forum for Young Canadians experience! The Opportunity Fund is supported by our Grantors, Sponsors and individual Canadians across the country.

*"I want to thank you so much for choosing me as one of the 2010 bursary recipients. This meant the world to me, and more. Granting me this bursary gave me the chance to go to Ottawa and learn all I can about government. The study of public affairs is a passion, and I try to take every opportunity to increase my knowledge. When I first heard about this program, I was really excited that there was such a program offered to young Canadians like myself. However as I read more about it I noticed the price and my excitement turned to sadness. I knew I would love to have more hands-on learning, but I also knew my family would never be able to afford this opportunity. I could see the opportunity moving farther away from me, until my father told me that there was a bursary program offered to teens in my position. My hope began to rise because the opportunity came back into focus and I could see myself going once again. For this and for opening the door to the program, I thank you many times over. " **Kristina – 2010 participant.***

## A Word from Alumni Norm Villegas

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Volunteers are as essential to the Foundation as citizens are to a democracy. The ideas and experience, enthusiasm and commitment they contribute make each Forum session a unique and powerful event. But more importantly, they make each Forum session possible. Alumni get involved in different ways: as Forum Logistics Assistants, Group Leaders or by being Forum Ambassadors and spreading the word about the program in schools and communities. Norm Villegas, a Forum alumnus and volunteer shared with the students, during one of our sessions, his experience at Forum for Young Canadians and how it helped shape his life today. We wanted to share his story with you!



I attended Forum during Session 1, 1997 when we were still rooming and boarding at Ashbury College. At the time, I wanted to become a medical doctor because I was good in math and science. However, after attending Forum, I realized that just because I was good at something didn't mean that I had to pursue my studies or career in that area. Instead of beginning the journey to become a medical doctor, I chose a vastly different path and pursued a Bachelor's degree in International Relations from the University of Windsor. Following my graduation, I moved to Ottawa in late August 2001 to pursue a Master's degree in Political Science.

I began volunteering with Forum in March 2001 when I was first accepted as a Logistics Assistant. When I moved to Ottawa a few months later, I began volunteering in the office on a fairly regular basis. Through my involvement with Forum, a whole new world of experiences and opportunities was opened up.

While volunteering in the Forum office, I was invited to attend a youth roundtable of the Canadian Commission for UNESCO (CCU). Little did I know that six months later I would be elected to the Executive Committee of the CCU as their first Youth Observer. In my position, I had the great honour to officially represent Canada at the youth component of the 2003 UNESCO General Meeting in Paris, France. Taking advantage of the fact that I was already in France, I decided to travel north to visit the Canadian National Memorial at Vimy Ridge. The guides recounted the story of those who died and I, too, wanted to share Canada's story with visitors to Vimy Ridge. After an extended competition, I found myself back at Vimy Ridge, sharing the story of those who gave their life on the ridge.

Having learned so much about my country while working at Vimy Ridge and the Newfoundland Memorial at Beaumont-Hamel, I wanted to experience more of my country. When I returned from France, I applied to become an English-language monitor in New Brunswick. Thankfully I was chosen, and in 2005 I moved to the village of St-François-de-Madawaska, NB. I returned to Ottawa in 2006 to complete the Master's degree that I had started in 2001. It took me 5.5 years to complete a Master's degree that should have taken no more than 2 years to complete. My journey was longer than I had expected, but I decided to take advantage of every opportunity that presented itself. Had it not been for Forum, the last 13 years of my life would have been markedly different. Not only do I have wonderful memories and interesting experiences, but I'm also working in an area that I'm passionate about.

**Norm Villegas – Alumni 1997**

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***Be a Voice!***

**We love to hear what our alumni are up to! Send us your testimonial and pictures!**

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