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NEWS RELEASE

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Vanier Nursing Department Sends Textbooks to Malawi

Montreal, February 8, 2010. “It’s weighty knowledge indeed – in fact 500 pounds of knowledge bound in nursing textbooks packed in a container destined for Lilongwe, Malawi” explains Vanier Nursing teacher Melodie Hicks. “The Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception picked up the \$9000 shipping costs. They agreed to carry the textbooks free of charge if we helped to fill the container with articles they needed to run their many schools, orphanages and hospitals.” So, Vanier nursing students and faculty donated computers, bedding, school supplies, kitchenware and textbooks to help fill the 20 foot container.



“Vanier Nursing teachers donated the textbooks,” indicates Melodie. “There were personal texts, out-dated ones and desk-top copies sent by publishers for our perusal - all published within the past five years. They covered nursing topics, such as Fundamentals of Nursing, Communication techniques for nurses, Obstetrics, Pediatrics, Medicine, Surgery, Psychiatry and Pharmacology. In all we sent nine boxes of nursing books.”

“We collected and packed all fall,” says Melodie. “It was an amazing project that came together.” It took a dozen volunteers from various community groups six hours to load and fit the boxes into every available space in the container. In the end, 352 boxes including fifty computers, 30 bicycles, 3 wheel chairs, 7 sewing machines and much more were packed.

The container will take six to eight weeks to arrive in Lilongwe, Malawi, where Kamuzu College of Nursing is located. The idea of sending textbooks to Malawi started when Melodie and her Nursing Department colleague Michelina Catalozzi visited Kamuzu College in August 2009, and noticed how limited the resources were in the library. Because books are heavy, shipping them is expensive, so Melodie and Michelina jumped at the opportunity to send textbooks when it presented itself.

Kamuzu College Principal, Dr. Address Malata, and Dean, Regina Msolomba, have already expressed their appreciation for the much needed books and have also accepted to visit Vanier this spring. Many events will take place during their visit including a nursing conference to be held at Vanier.

