

Vanier College graduate awarded Don McGillivray Memorial Prize in Explanatory Journalism

Montreal, December 7, 2011. What better birthday present for a budding journalist than to win a journalism prize. It was on his birthday that Vanier graduate Akiva Levitas received a cheque for winning the 2011-2012 Don McGillivray Memorial Prize in Explanatory Journalism from Concordia University where he is currently studying. His winning article "Everything's changing," published in the Cree magazine "The Nation" reported on a project that studied how climate change in the James Bay area is transforming the environment and how hunters, trappers and communities must adapt.



Akiva, who graduated in June 2011 from the Vanier Communications: Arts, Media and Theatre Program, didn't hesitate last summer when Martin Siberok, the Coordinator of the Communications program at Vanier and the Copy Editor of "The Nation", suggested he apply for a three-week internship on the publication. "I got accepted and started writing for the magazine immediately," Akiva says. "I've continued writing for them and in all I've written twenty to thirty articles for them since July."

The internship was a remarkable opportunity for Akiva. Not only did he travel to Quebec's northern Cree territories, but he also met interesting people. "I've interviewed former Prime Minister Paul Martin and Quebec Premier Jean Charest," he confides. Akiva is also lucky to be writing about a subject that interests him. "I've always been interested in nature programs and the Discovery Channel. I'm interested in how nature relates to communities, especially those in the North; so it's great to be writing about these topics."

The Don McGillivray Prize in Explanatory Journalism aims to encourage journalistic writing that explains a complicated story in easy-to-understand terms. Don McGillivray was a national reporter, editor and columnist for over forty years, and a professor of journalism at Concordia and Carleton universities. He covered public affairs, politics and economics in Ottawa and aimed to make sure his readers understood the business and economics of government.