

# PRESS RELEASE



CÉGEP  
VANIER COLLEGE

821 Ste-Croix, St-Laurent QC H4L 3X9 Tel: 514.744.7500 Fax: 514.744.7505 info@vaniercollege.qc.ca www.vaniercollege.qc.ca

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## **Danish Students' visit a wonderful success at Vanier College**

On April 28, Vanier College bid a tearful goodbye to a group of 16 Danish and German students who had arrived on March 29 to spend a month at the college. The students, who came from Denmark and Germany, studied English in the morning and French in the afternoon with Vanier's Language School.

Several departments and campus organizations helped to integrate the visitors into the life of the college. The Vanier College Students' Association was particularly welcoming, hosting a party and opening its door to them. In fact, the VCSA offices became the rallying place where the international students hung out and made new VCSA friends who took them on many outings to explore downtown Montreal.

The French Department also threw them a party, and a German class benefited by having conversation partners and native German speakers during one of their classes. A visit to the Biodôme and the Botanical Gardens with the international students of the Language School cemented more friendships and helped the Danish and German students gain a greater appreciation of different cultures and countries from around the world.

While in Canada, the European students lived with families of Vanier students who had offered their homes for the month. This home stay program was a great plus for the visitors. The families welcomed them with wonderful enthusiasm and their only complaint was that they didn't have enough time to show their guests everything of interest in Montreal. As well, the home stay program offered the Danish and German students who come from very homogenous cultures, a unique opportunity to get to know a different culture and way of doing things.

As part of their English and French curriculum, the visiting students explored the Jean Talon Market, visited the Old Port and the Biodôme, and made their own pizza at a Saint-Laurent Loblaws cooking class. Trips to Niagara Falls at night, Quebec City overnight, and to the Museum of Civilization in Hull, broadened their understanding of Canadian and Quebec identity as well as the role of Natives within the country. The students were particularly pleased that two Vanier native students were able to share with them their perspectives and concerns.



“Vanier’s warm welcome, the Vanier home stay program, and the trips to different parts of Montreal and to Niagara Falls, Ottawa and Quebec City made this visit extraordinary for our guests as well as for the Vanier community,” commented Judy Macdonald of the Language School. “The international students fell in love with the openness, the bilingualism, and the multiculturalism of Montreal, of Ville Saint-Laurent, and of Vanier. They appreciated their teachers and the home stay families, and, above all, the Vanier students who welcomed them so unreservedly and with such warmth.” On the morning their departure, Gaby Haulsen the English teacher who had accompanied them from Europe exclaimed, “Everyone is crying. No one wants to leave!”

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For information please contact:  
Marguerite Corriveau, Vanier Communications Officer  
Telephone: (514) 744-7500, ext. 7596  
Email: [marguerite.corriveau@vaniercollege.qc.ca](mailto:marguerite.corriveau@vaniercollege.qc.ca)