

Vanier College Celebrates the 25th Annual Symposium on the Holocaust and Genocide

Montreal, November 10th 2016- Vanier College, in collaboration with the Holocaust Education and Genocide Prevention Foundation and the Raoul Wallenberg Centre for Human Rights, are pleased to announce that 2017 will mark the 25th annual Symposium on the Holocaust and Genocide. Vanier College is also extremely proud to announce that Professor Irwin Cotler has been named the Honorary Chairman of Vanier's 25th Annual Symposium on the Holocaust and Genocide. As well, the keynote speaker for the 25th anniversary event will be Vanier graduate Dr. Charles Small, founder and Director of the Institute for The Study of Global Antisemitism and Policy. The symposium will take place from April 3rd to April 7th 2017.

"Vanier's Symposium on The Holocaust and Genocide is truly an exceptional educational event. It has grown exponentially over the years and serves an important tool to ensure Vanier's students and employees remain aware of the horrors of the past while also sensitizing them to genocide, discrimination and prejudice taking place in the present," said Vanier's Director General John McMahon.

"The conference takes place at an extraordinary juncture of intersecting historical events on the eve of the 70th anniversary of the genocide convention - sometimes referred to as the Never Again convention, but which has been violated again and again; and the eve of the 70th anniversary of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights - referred to as the Magna Carta of Human Rights - but which continues to be violated in every one of its particulars, and the 150th anniversary of Canadian Confederation. It is a time to ask ourselves - what have we learned - and what must we do?" said Mr. Cotler.

For more than two decades Vanier has been the only college in Quebec to sponsor a week-long event dedicated to raising awareness of the Holocaust. Each year event organizers plan a comprehensive calendar of activities involving guest-speakers, lectures, films, survivor testimony and student participation. For example, in previous years some of the guest speakers have included Catherine Chatterley, the Hon. David Kilgour and Jack Jedwab.

The theme of the 2017 symposium, which is taking place from April 3rd to April 7th will be Justice and Accountability.

In addition to the symposium there will be a two-day conference taking place at Vanier on March 30th and March 31 2017 featuring numerous panel discussions and speakers.

As well, in May 2017 40 students from Vanier and State University of New York at Plattsburgh (SUNY Plattsburgh) will be participating in a trip to Europe entitled Moral Responsibility and Global Citizenship. Dr. Richard Schaefer the Coordinator of Religious Studies and a historian will also be working on bringing SUNY students to the conference and symposium. In addition, there will be remote links created throughout the conference and symposium that will be webcast from Montreal to SUNY-Plattsburgh classrooms and made available to high school classrooms in Plattsburgh as well as to remote areas across the province of Quebec. This will be facilitated by Mountain Lake PBS and LEARN Québec.

“It is extremely fitting that an event like the Symposium on the Holocaust and Genocide has been taking place at Vanier College for a quarter of a century. Vanier is proud to be one of the most culturally diverse educational institutions in North America with students from over 90 different nationalities. Since its inception in 1970 Vanier has also been a leader in terms of protecting human rights and fostering multicultural and ethnic harmony throughout our campus,” said Vanier teacher Marlene Grossman, who has been organizing the symposium over the last few years.

Mr. McMahon said that Vanier is committed to continuing the journey of Holocaust education.

“We feel it is essential to take all the necessary means to ensure the symposium continues to take place at Vanier. It is crucial to do so since exploring the Holocaust and Genocide helps highlight the personal responsibilities that citizens bear to combat antisemitism, racism and all forms of bigotry and hatred whenever and wherever it happens,” said Mr. McMahon.

Our collaborators:




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