

GRADE FOUR STUDENT USES WORDS TO BUILD A HOME
Old Man In Sleeping Bag Inspires Genworth Financial Canada
Student Writing Contest Winner

Toronto (January 22, 2008) – It was the old man in the sleeping bag who helped Sarah Murray really understand the meaning of “home,” and her inspiration ultimately will help a deserving family have a home of their own.

Sarah, a Grade 4 student from Kingston, Ontario, won the grand prize in the first annual “Meaning of Home” writing contest, sponsored by Genworth Financial Canada in support of Habitat for Humanity Canada.

Her winning entry will help provide a new Habitat for Humanity home to be built in Kingston for a deserving family. Genworth will help fund the home by making a \$60,000 donation in recognition of Sarah’s winning entry. She also wins a new Dell computer to help her further develop her writing skills.

Sarah wrote about a homeless man she often sees when out shopping with her mom, and how his lack of a place to call home caused her to reflect on her own home, and how important it is to her.

“If you walked by my house you may hear laughter or crying,” Sarah wrote. “You see, I can do both in my home because I feel safe. My home is special because my family makes our home comfortable for all of us.”

“I hope I always have a home to come to... I pray for the old man in the sleeping bag - that he can find a home, a place with a bed so he can put his sleeping bag away forever,” Sarah wrote.

Genworth introduced the “Meaning of Home” contest to help spread the message of giving more broadly.

“Sarah’s submission moved all of the judges,” said Peter Vukanovich, President of Genworth Financial Canada. “At such a young age, she demonstrated an enormous amount of compassion for another human being.”

“Like our partners at Habitat, we want to make homeownership more affordable and accessible for all Canadians,” Vukanovich said. “A home is not something to take for granted; all of the Meaning of Home submissions were impressive, as they reminded us of this very important message.”

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Genworth invited students across Canada (with the exception of Quebec) to submit a short story, poem or essay online, expressing their thoughts on what “home” really means to them. Over 1,900 entered the contest, which ran from October 1st to October 31st. Teachers were encouraged to download education modules from the www.meaningofhome.ca website to help bring the notion of community giving into the classroom.

Three runners up also will help a family have a home of their own. Genworth will donate \$5,000 to a Habitat for Humanity affiliate of each runner up’s choice to support the building of a new home.

The runners up are Brennan Wong (Grade 5) of Richmond Hill, Ontario; Marissa Nahirney (Grade 6) of Edmonton; and Katrina Cabrera (Grade 5) of Richmond, B.C.

Each runner up also receives a \$100 gift certificate from Chapters-Indigo.

About Habitat for Humanity Canada:

Founded in 1985, Habitat for Humanity Canada is a national, non-profit, faith-based organization working for a world where everyone has a safe and decent place to live. With the help of over 35,000 volunteers and 72 organizations from coast to coast, their mission is to break the cycle of poverty through affordable housing and the promotion of home ownership.

Additional information about Habitat for Humanity Canada is available at www.habitat.ca.

About Genworth Financial Canada:

Our products help people make their dreams of home ownership come true. At Genworth, we believe in delivering value to the communities where our people live and work. Our partnerships with Habitat for Humanity and other charitable initiatives are tangible ways to demonstrate our commitment to affordable and accessible homeownership. In helping to build homes, we help to build a brighter future for both our young people and for people in need.

Genworth Financial Canada, The Homeownership Company, works with lenders, mortgage brokers, real estate agents and builders to make homeownership more affordable and accessible throughout Canada. The company combines global experience in mortgage insurance with technological and service leadership to deliver innovation to the mortgage marketplace.

Additional information about Genworth Financial Canada is available at www.genworth.ca or through mortgage lenders.

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About Genworth Financial:

Genworth is a leading financial security company meeting the retirement, longevity, lifestyle protection, investment and mortgage insurance needs of over 15 million customers. It has a presence in more than 25 countries, including the United States, Australia, Canada, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and 17 other European countries. For more information, visit genworth.com.



Sarah Murray (centre), winner of Genworth Financial Canada's Meaning of Home writing contest, and Raquel Welch-Merrithew (left), Account Manager, Genworth Financial Canada, present a \$60,000 cheque to Habitat for Humanity's Richard Moore (right), Chair, Board of Directors, Kingston. The money will fund a Habitat Home for a family in the Kingston area.

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For additional information or to arrange interviews:

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