



MEDIA INFORMATION

AMERICAN LEAGUE EAST CHAMPIONS 1985, 1989, 1991, 1992, 1993
AMERICAN LEAGUE CHAMPIONS 1992, 1993
WORLD SERIES CHAMPIONS 1992, 1993

TORONTO BLUE JAYS COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

PHONE: (416) 341-1303 FAX: (416) 341-1250

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
TORONTO, ONTARIO
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BACK TO SCHOOL BRINGS JAYS' HELP TO STAY IN SCHOOL

New program provides funding for at-risk youth working towards high school graduation and a successful transition to post-secondary education

The Jays Care Foundation officially launches its **HOME RUN SCHOLARS** program in partnership with **PATHWAYS TO EDUCATION** with a pregame presentation this evening prior to the Toronto-Baltimore baseball game. Special guests this evening include Pathways students and board members as well as members of the Jays Care Foundation board of directors.

The new **HOME RUN SCHOLARS** initiative is an aggressive four-year commitment totaling **\$400,000** that will provide scholarships and support to students from the Pathways program, ensuring students graduate from high school, and have funds available for post-secondary education with the goal of reducing the high school dropout rate and improving opportunities for at-risk youth to achieve a college, university or trade school education.

PATHWAYS TO EDUCATION was first created and implemented in Regent Park by the Regent Park Community Health Centre in 2001. Pathways provides four key supports to young people from at-risk and/or economically disadvantaged communities to assist with the successful completion of high school and continuation to post-secondary programs. They are:

1. **ACADEMIC:** Tutoring in five core subjects, four nights a week
2. **SOCIAL:** Group mentoring for grades 9 and 10, specialty and career mentoring for grades 11 and 12
3. **FINANCIAL:** Immediate financial support such as free bus tickets tied to attendance and a bursary for post-secondary education (up to \$4,000 per student in the program)
4. **COUNSELLING AND SUPPORT:** Student-Parent Support Workers help connect teens, parents, school administration, teachers and community agencies

With the available resources, individuals become more actively engaged in their career development and strive to overcome any obstacles or barriers to success.

"Pathways to Education Canada exemplifies the type of organization that the Jays Care Foundation aims to partner with in an effort to improve the lives of at-risk children and youth in our community," said **MELINDA ROGERS**, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Jays Care Foundation.

The Jays Care Foundation has provided funding to Pathways to Education since 2006. The new Home Run Scholars program will serve youth in the Regent Park, Rexdale and Lawrence Heights communities.



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*"The Jays Care Foundation and the Toronto Blue Jays are strong in their commitment as community leaders in achieving results-driven social change," commented **CAROLYN ACKER**, CEO of Pathways to Education Canada. "Our partnership will provide further opportunities for youth in low-income communities across Toronto."*

The **JAYS CARE FOUNDATION** is working to ensure children in need have the opportunity to make positive choices in life by providing programs that support physical activity, education, and life-skill development.

PATHWAYS TO EDUCATION CANADA is a charitable organization created to help communities reduce poverty and its effects by lowering the dropout rate and increasing access to post-secondary education among disadvantaged youth in Canada. Pathways launched its initial program in Regent Park in Toronto in 2001 and has now expanded with local partners to five additional locations in Canada.

For More Information Please Contact:

Toronto Blue Jays Communications Department
(416) 341-1302/03

**please note, representatives in attendance will be available from approximately 5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.*