

10-YEAR-OLD WINS NATIONAL WRITING CONTEST, DIRECTS \$60,000 TO HABITAT FOR HUMANITY BUILD

Essays drive over \$450,000 in Genworth Canada donations to Habitat builds since 2007

Toronto (January 23, 2012) – A 10-year-old Ethiopian-born girl who won a national writing contest about the meaning of “home” will direct a \$60,000 grant from the contest sponsor to the local Habitat for Humanity building project of her choice.

Edelawit (“Eddie”) Schnell, a Grade four student who lives with her adopted family in Calgary, had her essay chosen from over 3,200 entries as the winner of the 5th annual Genworth Canada ‘Meaning of Home’ writing contest. The contest is open to fourth, fifth and sixth Grade students from across Canada.

Eddie wrote a touching account of her life in Ethiopia, where she was responsible for helping run her home and could not attend school. Eddie’s mother sent her to Canada for a better life, and her essay compares experiences in both homes.

“At the end of the day I would use the [river] water to make dinner. My Birth Mom told me she was sending me to a place where they would take better care of me...Now I am in a perfect school with friends...Water comes from a tap and I know it is clean...home is different to me than to a lot of other kids ...Sometimes things in life can be hard but having a good home can make a difference.”

As this year’s winner, Eddie selected Habitat for Humanity Southern Alberta as the affiliate of her choice to receive the \$60,000 project grant. And for the first time this year, Genworth Canada donated five dollars per entry, so every participating student helped make a difference.

“I never cease to be amazed by the quality of writing and the emotions expressed in the essays we receive,” said Brian Hurley, Chairman and CEO, Genworth Canada. “Through simple and honest words, these young Canadians remind us of the importance of home and a family’s love in their lives.”

Genworth Canada established the Meaning of Home contest in 2007 to raise awareness among Canada’s youth of the importance of having a safe and secure home. Since 2007, the contest has resulted in more than \$450,000 being donated by Genworth Canada to more than 30 Habitat for Humanity affiliates in Canada.

“Eddie’s essay is an inspiration, she truly knows the value of a good home,” said Stewart Hardacre, President and CEO of Habitat for Humanity Canada. “We are thrilled to see more children responding to this contest with such heartfelt entries each year, and are thankful to Genworth Canada and the many teachers, parents and associations that make this contest possible.”

The five runners-up in this year’s essay contest, each of whom selects a Habitat affiliate to receive a \$5000 grant, are:

- Jacob Frigault from Sainte-Marthe-sur-le-Lac, Québec
- Sofia Vavaroutsos from Woodbridge, Ontario
- Kate Barkhouse from Dartmouth, Nova Scotia
- Caitlin Sankaran-Wee from Vancouver, British Columbia
- Katie McDonald from Wellesley, Ontario

The winning entry and runners-up were chosen from a list of 24 semi-finalists.

To celebrate this year’s anniversary of the Meaning of Home contest, Genworth Canada and Habitat for Humanity Canada are publishing a commemorative book of winning and finalist entries from the last five years. All proceeds from book sales will also be donated to Habitat for Humanity affiliates in Canada.

To read this year’s winning entries, order the book or find out more about how to enter next year’s contest, visit www.MeaningofHome.ca.

About Habitat for Humanity Canada:

Founded in 1985, Habitat for Humanity Canada (HFHC) is a national, non-profit organization working towards a world where everyone has a safe and decent place to live. With the help of over 50,000 volunteers every year and 67 affiliate partners from coast to coast, HFHC’s mission is to break the cycle of poverty through affordable housing and the promotion of homeownership. Additional information about Habitat for Humanity Canada is available at www.habitat.ca.

About Genworth Canada:

Genworth Canada is the brand name of Genworth Financial Mortgage Insurance Company Canada, a subsidiary of Genworth MI Canada Inc. (TSX:MIC), and has been the leading Canadian private residential mortgage insurer since 1995. Known as “The Homeownership Company”, it provides default mortgage insurance to Canadian residential mortgage lenders that enables low down payment borrowers to own a home more affordably and stay in their homes during difficult financial times. Genworth Canada combines technological and service excellence with risk management expertise to deliver innovation to the mortgage marketplace. As of September 30, 2011, Genworth Canada had \$5.4 billion in total assets and \$2.7 billion in shareholders’ equity. Based in Oakville, Ontario, the Company employs approximately 265 people across Canada. Additional information about Genworth Canada is available at www.genworth.ca.

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