



**LOCATED IN THE COTE-DES-NEIGES-NOTRE-DAME-DE-GRACE BOROUGH**

## **THE MONTREAL CANADIENS CHILDREN'S FOUNDATION INAUGURATES ITS FIFTH OUTDOOR BLEU BLANC BOUGE RINK**

**MONTREAL (February 5, 2013)** – As part of its **BLEU BLANC BOUGE** program launched back in September 2008, the **Montreal Canadiens Children's Foundation** unveiled its fifth outdoor multipurpose and refrigerated community rink at Confederation Park in the Cote-des-Neiges-Notre-Dame-de-Grace borough. To mark the official opening, 50 children from the area took to the ice and skated alongside a few players from the Canadiens.

Built in accordance with NHL standards and dimensions (200 feet by 85 feet), the artificial ice rink features a quality of ice that matches the highest professional rinks standards. Located in Confederation Park, the new facility offers the flexibility necessary to accommodate the practice of other seasonal sports activities. The skating season scheduled to take place from the end of November until mid-March, while various types of ball games, such as soccer, and in-line hockey as well as a variety of different sporting activities will take over for the spring, summer and fall months.

"There is no doubt that sports play a key role in the healthy development of our children and we are convinced that the construction of this fifth community rink in the Cote-des-Neiges-Notre-Dame-de-Grace borough will provide children from the area with an state-of-the-art facility for them to use and enjoy while being physically active," said **Geoff Molson**, President and CEO of the Montreal Canadiens.

The initiative is part of **BLEU BLANC BOUGE**, the Foundation's flagship project whose objective it was to build five outdoor multipurpose and refrigerated community rinks to accommodate various sporting activities in less privileged neighbourhoods in the Montreal area. Eager to provide high quality infrastructures, the Foundation reached a five-year partnership with the **FTQ** (Fédération des travailleurs du Québec), **Fonds de solidarité FTQ**, City of Montreal blue collars, FTQ construction workers and local entrepreneurs who all contributed to the project by providing financial resources, materials and manpower. The Foundation also worked closely with **W. Graeme Rouston, Chairman of Bauer and Arena Design Services**, a leader in the area of arena products and services, in the implementation of this type of playing surface.

«FTQ Secretary General **Daniel Boyer** was persuasive when asked his thoughts on the **BLEU BLANC BOUGE** project: "I must say that as the years go by, our members are prouder than ever to have been part of the construction of such magnificent rinks in those five Montreal boroughs. Even more so the City of Montreal blue collars and the FTQ construction workers who were directly involved in the project and who have much in common with all the kids who will enjoy this facility. For the FTQ and the Fonds de solidarité FTQ, this endeavour must keep on going."

Each of those community rinks is known as an animated gathering area for sports and physical activity that provides youth from these backgrounds to discover the advantages of a healthy and physically active lifestyle. To ensure the success of this program, the Foundation formed a dynamic partnership with **Québec en Forme** and shared the ultimate goal of improving the health of children living in underprivileged areas. As an organization promoting the well-being of children, Québec en Forme works closely with the Foundation in selecting the district and the community partners towards the development of an efficient activation of the facilities and to assess the impact of the program.

### **CANADIENS DE MONTRÉAL**

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"For the fifth straight year, **Québec en Forme** is pleased to team up with the Montreal Canadiens Children's Foundation and work together towards yet another BLEU BLANC BOUGE rink, this time in Notre-Dame-de-Grace. We believe that such initiatives contribute to create environments that are conducive to a healthy lifestyle among children growing up in underprivileged areas. It is our hope that children and the neighborhood schools will see this rink as unique stage for sports that will entice everyone to play along and have a good time while being active. These are values essential to all of us at Québec en Forme," said Québec en Forme General Manager, **Eric Myles**.

With phase one of the project successfully completed with the construction of five rinks in underprivileged boroughs in the greater Montreal area, the Montreal Canadiens Children's Foundation will be looking at extending its mandate further to bring its healthy lifestyle program to areas outside of Montreal in the coming years.

"I am pleased to know that a new rink will make it possible for the youth of the borough, particularly those of the District of Loyola, to enjoy ice sports. This additional tool will help promote a healthy and active lifestyle as it will further enhance the opportunities provided by the Notre-Dame-de-Grace Sports Centre and the Notre-Dame-de-Grace Cultural Centre all the while contributing to improve the quality of life of our residents. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all those who were involved in this project coming to fruition and more specifically the Montreal Canadiens Children's Foundation," said Mayor Applebaum.

The Côte-des-Neiges-Notre-Dame-de-Grace borough is a respected leader on the island of Montreal region because of its community-based initiatives and concerted governing methods that continually meet the needs of its residents. It is a borough that shines through its vision and political commitment. The borough supports the adoption of healthy lifestyles, as was shown by a cutting-edge plan that met infrastructural needs while offering intervention and prevention tools for young people. Over and above the rallying efforts that went into the borough's BLEU BLANC BOUGE N° 5 bid, an enthusiastic and well-organized campaign was undertaken by local youth to obtain new sports facilities (a petition, fundraising events and communications plan were part of their successful strategy). Their exciting campaign showed just how important the needs were, but, most importantly, demonstrated the pride and dedication that young people have when it comes to their community.

"By improving our equipment and recreational infrastructure, we are meeting the needs of the citizens, which continue to be the priority for this borough. Indeed, creating public gathering places like this one encourages intergenerational exchanges, all in a spirit of recreation and fun," said Lionel Perez.

Over and above the infrastructure, the borough benefited from the generosity of **Bauer** who donated 100 pairs of skates, helmets and sticks to create a bank of supplies to fill the needs of various local organizations working with children.



## About the Montreal Canadiens Children's Foundation

The Montreal Canadiens Children's Foundation is determined to provide a better and healthier future for children in need, and is committed to encourage and promote a healthy and active lifestyle among the youth. Since its inception in August 2000, the Foundation has donated more than \$15 million to over 450 charitable groups working to support the well-being of children across Quebec.

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## SPONSORS AND OBSERVATIONS

Bringing this type of ambitious project to life requires the support and involvement of numerous partners and collaborators. On behalf of all the children, students and entire families who will enjoy this new facility, the Montreal Canadiens Children's Foundation wishes to sincerely thank all those who contributed to this exciting project:

### PROJECT SPONSORS



### MAIN COLLABORATORS



### GENEROUS PARTNERS



A study by *Groupe de recherches sur les espaces festifs* for Québec en Forme to measure the overall impact the new rinks have on the lives of neighborhood residents showed that since the implementation of the facilities some 73% of kids engaged in skating while 63% of kids like their neighborhood more since the rinks were built.

Also, 80% of residing adults take their kids skating and that 79% of them indicated that the building those rinks provided them with an opportunity to spend more time with members of the family.

As of 2012, at the time of the report, users of the BLEU BLANC BOUGE rink had reached **100,000 people**.

Observations found in the 2012 report showed that the Montreal North BLEU BLANC BOUGE rink was used by **at least one school** every single available day during the school schedule.

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