

Be a shining light in 2010! Canadians invited to apply as torchbearers for Vancouver 2010 Paralympic Torch Relay

Vancouver, BC, November 27, 2009 — With just over 100 days to go until the start of the Paralympic Winter Games, Canadians who dream of carrying the Paralympic Flame as part of the historic Vancouver 2010 Paralympic Torch Relay - a 10-day inspirational journey starting on March 3, 2010 that celebrates the endless possibilities of the human spirit and the world's top winter Paralympians - are invited to apply today as torchbearers at www.YouGottaBeHere.ca.

Positions are available through the public torchbearer application program, operated by the Province of British Columbia, which is open to all Canadian residents who are aged 13 or older by March 3, 2010. The Vancouver 2010 Paralympic Torch Relay is presented by Coca-Cola and RBC and supported by the Government of Canada and the Province of British Columbia.

"As the provincial host of the Vancouver 2010 Paralympic Winter Games, British Columbia wants to welcome all Canadians to apply today for this once-in-a-lifetime chance to proudly carry the Paralympic Flame," said Mary McNeil, Minister of State for the Olympics and ActNow BC. "We're looking for everyday people who embody the Paralympic values of courage, determination, inspiration, and equality in their everyday life - much like the world's best winter Paralympians."

All applicants will need to describe why they want to be a torchbearer and how they embody the Paralympic values in their everyday life. Each torchbearer selected must also have transportation to and from their assigned torchbearer location. Applications will be accepted at www.YouGottaBeHere.ca until 11:59 pm (Pacific Time) on January 6, 2010.

The Paralympic Flame will visit community celebration sites in Ottawa, ON (March 3), Quebec City (March 4) and Toronto (March 5), as well as Victoria and Esquimalt (March 6), Squamish (March 7), Whistler (March 8), Lytton and Hope (March 9), Maple Ridge (March 10), and Vancouver (March 10, 11 and 12) in British Columbia.

On March 11, 2010, the relay will turn into a 24-hour event through Vancouver's downtown core surrounding Robson Square as part of a day-long celebration of culture and sport counting down the final moments until the magical Opening Ceremony of the Games in front of tens of thousands at BC Place.

"This 24-hour celebration in downtown Vancouver is a great way to welcome the world's best Paralympians to our country for the first time and show the world that we're ready and excited to host the Games," said the Honourable Gary Lunn, Minister of State (Sport) for the Government of Canada. "We can hardly wait to see our proud Canadian Paralympians triumph here at home in Whistler and in Vancouver."

"The schedule for the Vancouver 2010 Paralympic Torch Relay has also been finalized, and we're proud to announce that Toronto is joining the list of 11 celebration communities previously announced as part of the 10-day relay," Minister of State Lunn continued. "Canadians in our country's largest city will have an opportunity to cheer on the flame on March 5, 2010."

During the relay, an estimated 600 torchbearers will carry the flame in the curved steel blue torch, designed and manufactured by Bombardier, while wearing their matching blue official keepsake torchbearer uniform, produced by the Hudson's Bay Company.

www.YouGottaBeHere.ca.