



**PRESS RELEASE**

***13th Provincial Gala Hosted by Honorary President Pierre Karl Péladeau***  
**The Québec Entrepreneurship Contest Announces its Provincial Prizewinners!**

**Québec City, June 16, 2011** – This evening, the Québec Entrepreneurship Contest announced the provincial prizewinners in its 13th edition at the Centre des congrès de Québec. Nearly 800 guests were on hand to see the entrepreneurial spirit that drives this year's crop of finalists. Over the course of the evening, 40 provincial prizes totalling \$300 000 were awarded to participants from Québec's 17 regions. The finalists in attendance had already received over \$292 000 in prizes at the regional level last May. The provincial prizewinners were picked from among 3 476 projects developed by 54 000 participants. During the ceremonies, awards were handed out for entrepreneurial projects carried out in the schools, as well as for new businesses operating in seven sectors of activity.

The Honorary President for this event, Pierre Karl Péladeau, President and Chief Executive Officer of Quebecor, took the opportunity to congratulate the participants and to reaffirm his support for the development of a more entrepreneurial society. Speaking to the hundreds of provincial finalists, he said, "It's by constantly supporting boldness and innovation that we will enable the Québec of tomorrow to achieve its full potential, one business at a time. Each one of your projects is a step in the ladder of Québec's economic development."

This event, which is meant to support the emergence of new businesses in Québec and the implementation of entrepreneurial projects in the schools, was presented by the Desjardins Group, which has been a partner of the Contest since its creation. Monique F. Leroux, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Desjardins Group, also addressed the finalists. "In addition to having a significant impact on the confidence, pride and academic motivation of young people, there is no doubt that this Contest is contributing to the emergence of a healthy entrepreneurial culture among the new generation, and helping to create innovative businesses with promising futures. In doing so, its values and mission are aligned perfectly with those of the Desjardins Group with respect to financial, cooperative and business education, socioeconomic development on the individual and societal levels, and sustainable prosperity."

The Desjardins Grand Prize Gala represents the high point of the activities of this far-reaching Contest launched last September. Over 400 resource people and hundreds of juries took part in the impressive selection process. "The strength of the Contest resides mainly in the diversity and range of its support system. Last May, the Contest's 17 regional finals brought together over 5 000 finalists and partners. We are an exceptional showcase for all the energy currently being devoted to the development of an entrepreneurial culture in Québec," said Natacha Jean, President and Director General of the Contest.

**And the winners are . . .**

Nearly 1 000 educational institutions ranging from the elementary to the university levels were involved in this year's Contest. At the Provincial Gala, 17 provincial prizewinners were announced from among the 176 finalists from across the province. The breathtaking ideas presented within the framework of this Contest show that young people have much to gain from the entrepreneurial projects they develop in class and at school. And they are better off as a result. These budding entrepreneurs have developed a truly incredible range of projects related to sustainable development, international aid, community revitalization, healthy lifestyle habits, mutual assistance, and the list goes on. The guests were greatly impressed by the enthusiasm of our school system with regard to entrepreneurship.

Also, 150 new businesses operating in seven sectors of activity were in the running this year. Businesses in the finalist category were directly involved in the creation of 2 382 new jobs in 2011.

This year, the Défi de l'entrepreneuriat jeunesse Grand Prize, valued at \$20 000, was awarded to **Les Écrans verts**, a business in the Lanaudière region that produces aesthetic and ecological acoustic and visual screens made from plant materials. Their products are intended for residential, commercial and government markets ([www.lesecransverts.ca](http://www.lesecransverts.ca)). The two young entrepreneurs who spearheaded the project received this prestigious prize from the Minister of Economic Development, Innovation and Export Trade, Clément Gignac, who addressed the assembled guests: "I am delighted to see that Québec is the home of a generation of new entrepreneurs with limitless aspirations. The sense of quality and the enthusiasm of the prizewinners we have seen tonight within the context of these Québec Entrepreneurship Contest provincial finals lead me to believe that it is possible to change course with regard to entrepreneurship in Québec. However, we must all work together to develop a true culture of entrepreneurship that meets the needs of all Quebecers. This is why the Québec government has made entrepreneurship a priority and why we are currently developing a provincial entrepreneurial strategy. We share the joint responsibility of raising Québec's entrepreneurial profile.

You are invited to **view the complete list of winners** at [www.concours-entrepreneur.org/lauréats](http://www.concours-entrepreneur.org/lauréats).

### About the Québec Entrepreneurship Contest

The Québec Entrepreneurship Contest is intended to develop Québec's entrepreneurial culture through the implementation and promotion of new businesses and entrepreneurial projects in the schools and the community at large. The Student Entrepreneurship division encourages the creation of projects that contribute to the development of entrepreneurial characteristics in the schools, all the way from elementary school through to university. The Business Creation division, for its part, encourages entrepreneurs who are just starting up a business. The Contest extends throughout Québec, thanks to the unparalleled commitment of hundreds of resource people.

This initiative was made possible by over 40 partners including the Québec government, the Desjardins Group, Argent-Groupe TVA, Rogers, Service Canada, the Barreau du Québec, the Fonds de solidarité FTQ, Gaz Métro, Ingenio, a subsidiary of Loto-Québec, La Capitale, Financial Group, La Fondation des CMA, SAJE accompagnateur d'entrepreneurs and Saputo.

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