



MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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High School Students Commemorate Raoul Wallenberg Day

Congregation Agudas Israel and the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission (SHRC) are remembering Raoul Wallenberg, Canada's first honorary Canadian Citizen and a defender of human rights during the Second World War, at a commemorative event at Holy Cross High School in Saskatoon on Friday, January 11, 2013.

In 1944 Raoul Wallenberg undertook bold, and personally risky, humanitarian efforts that saved the lives of tens of thousands of Hungarian Jews from the Holocaust. Using his business skills and his position as a Swedish diplomat, he created safe houses, provided food and medicine, issued individuals protective passports, and is credited with stopping a massacre by the Nazis. Wallenberg's actions came to the attention of authorities near the end of the war and it is believed that he was killed while in the then Soviet Union.

Elie Fenyes, a Saskatoon high school student, will relay the story of how his grandmother was saved by Wallenberg's actions in Hungary when she was a young girl. "We are thankful that the youth of today's generation are continuing to honour the memory of Raoul Wallenberg, whose inspiring actions made possible a future for so many people. Today, young people like Elie are demonstrating the power of the individual to think and do good," said Jan Gitlin, Media Liaison for Agudas Israel Synagogue.

"We must all learn from Raoul Wallenberg's actions," said David Arnot, Chief Commissioner for the SHRC. "His legacy demonstrates that our freedom requires us to actively show our respect for others, defend our shared human rights, and promote our civic responsibility as Canadian citizens."

In 2001 the Government of Canada declared that January 17, the day Wallenberg disappeared, would be commemorated as "Raoul Wallenberg Day" in Canada.

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