



Ryan's Well Reaches Significant Milestone – Completion of its 500th Water Project

April 15, 2009 (KEMPTVILLE, Ont.) – The Ryan's Well Foundation announced today that it has reached a significant milestone in the Foundation's history – the completion of its 500th water project. Ryan Hreljac, Founder, was joined for the announcement by Dr. Jane Goodall, Founder of the Jane Goodall Institute and patron of the Foundation, following her address to over 200 youth at Algonquin College.

"This is such an incredible achievement for us and brings us one step closer to reaching my dream of clean water for all," said Ryan Hreljac. "But our work must continue. There are still almost a billion people without clean water."

The Ryan's Well Foundation grew from Ryan's commitment after learning about the great need for clean and safe water in developing countries. In 1999, at age seven, Ryan's first well was built at a school in a northern Ugandan village that continues to serve thousands of people.

"The world is facing a global water crisis and access to clean water in developing countries is one of the biggest issues. The work that Ryan and his Foundation are doing is critical in improving people's health and conserving precious natural resources," said Dr. Goodall. "Young people like Ryan provide a powerful example for us all of how every individual can make a real difference."

To date, the Foundation has financed 500 water projects in 16 countries serving more than 621,712 people. Many of its projects are in Northern Uganda where the Foundation has a long history assisting in rebuilding communities destroyed by long-time civil unrest. Access to a safe water supply is a key factor in determining the health of a community, the quality of the environment, access to education and promoting improved conditions for development.

"My first visit to Uganda in 1999 opened my eyes to the lack of clean water in these communities," said Ryan. "Reaching this goal would not been possible without the support and dedication of our staff, board members, and most important, our volunteers and donors. The generosity of our donors of all ages is what motivates me to continue to educate and inspire others to make a difference."

The Foundation engages local partners in each country to implement water, sanitation and hygiene projects including planning, implementation, education and skills training for ongoing management. This approach empowers communities and locals to take ownership of their water resources as they will need to manage and maintain their own water supply and sanitation for years to come.

About Ryan's Well Foundation: The Ryan's Well Foundation has three primary goals: **BUILD, EDUCATE** and **MOTIVATE** – building water and sanitation projects in developing countries; educating students about the need for clean water and the possibility of making a difference in their world; and motivating people, especially youth, to take action and make a positive change in our world. Founded in 2001, Ryan's Well is a registered Canadian charity.

Water and Sanitation Facts: The United Nations has identified lack of clean drinking water as one of the primary causes of death among children in developing countries. More than one in six people worldwide - 894 million - don't have access to safe drinking water, and 2.5 billion people, including almost one billion children, live without even basic sanitation.

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