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**YOUTH INVESTMENT FUND PROVIDES \$48,734 TO YOUTH PROJECTS**

WHITEHORSE – The spring Youth Investment Fund (YIF) is providing \$48,734 to help support 17 summer projects ranging from water safety camps to native graduation ceremonies.

“Yukon youth are an important part of our future and our government is committed to continue supporting our younger generation,” Premier Dennis Fentie said. “It is a pleasure to see the community developing a variety of interesting projects for the upcoming year.”

The successful projects were announced today by the ministers of the fund's sponsoring departments: Premier Dennis Fentie, minister responsible for the Youth Directorate; Highways and Public Works Minister Glenn Hart; Health and Social Services Minister Peter Jenkins; Justice Minister Elaine Taylor; and Education Minister John Edzerza.

The Recreations and Parks Association of the Yukon will receive \$4,924 to help put on a water safety camp in Teslin and Burwash. A Youth Fest was a part of the recent Watson Lake Music Festival with the help of a \$4,260 investment. Bringing Youth Toward Equality will receive \$4,000 for their Get on the Road to Connecting Youth project in which staff are traveling to communities to give workshops on bullying, leadership, First Nation land claims and sexual health.

Crime Prevention Yukon and the Youth Achievement Centre will receive \$4,000 to help take eight youth on a historical and cultural hike on the Gladstone Trail. The Faro Recreation Centre will also receive \$4,000 to provide various summer activities, including a dance camp, a gymnastics camp, a hiking/canoe trip, a trip down the Tatshenshini and boxing club activities.

The Ross River Recreation Society will receive \$4,000 to help fund a Youth Centre Coordinator position to organize youth activities in the community. The Whitehorse Youth Centre Society will acquire \$3,300 to help with their Food and the Future project to promote increased nutrition, food choice and food preparation skills.

The Ross River Dena Council will receive \$3,000 to help with the Finlayson Lake Healing Camp while the Tr'öndek Hwëch'in in Dawson will get \$3,000 to help fund two camping retreats for boys and girls. The Whitehorse RCMP will also be given \$3,000 to help host a Cop Camp.

In Watson Lake, the Mad Hatters Theatre Group will receive \$2,000 to assist with a Theatrical and Leadership Training Camp. The Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre will acquire \$2,000 to help fund a series of hip hop summer camps for young women in Pelly Crossing, Dawson City, Carmacks and Whitehorse.

The Tr'öndek Hwëch'in will be given \$1,750 to help put on a Fashion Design Course over the summer. Also in Dawson, the Klondike Institute of Art and Culture is getting \$1,500 to support their Youth Art Enrichment Program. The Teslin Tlingit Council received \$1,500 to help fund a Conference on Clan System Governance.

In Whitehorse, the Yukon Association for Community Living will receive \$1,500 for Supported Summer Recreation. And finally, the Council of Yukon First Nations received \$1,000 to help fund the recent Native Graduation Ceremonies.

The Youth Investment Fund supports community-driven initiatives aimed at addressing the needs of Yukon youth. Many of the projects are designed to help youth "at risk".

Since the fund's inception in 1995, 345 projects have been funded. The next deadline for applications is October 2005. For more information on the Youth Investment Fund, call 667-3709.

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