



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 14, 2008

Jonathan Howard Honoured by PEI Legislature

CHARLOTTETOWN - Jonathan Howard, a 24-yearold Mississauga, Ontario resident, who is running across Canada in support of Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), was honoured this afternoon by Premier Robert Ghiz and the PEI Legislature when the Province welcomed him to PEI and offered support for both his Run the Dream campaign and those affected by ASD in Prince Edward Island. A copy of the the Premier's House Statement is attached to this release.

"Reaching my third Province and second capital city is certainly an exciting moment for me," said Jonathan, whose campaign is partnered with the Autism Society of Canada and its provincial chapters. "I am particularly excited to be in Prince Edward Island as there are many individuals, including the Premier and the Honourable Shawn Murphy, who have worked so hard in the province to better the lives of those affected by ASD. I'm inspired by the accomplishments of this province, and am striving to inspire others in the same way."

Earlier in the day, Jonathan was greeted into the province at Charlottetown's Confederation Landing Park by Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development, Gerard Greenan, Mayor Clifford Lee and President of the Autism Society of PEI, Michelle Pineau.

"The Autism Society of Prince Edward Island is particularly moved by the fact that Jonathan is making this contribution to the betterment of the lives of those affected by Autism Spectrum Disorders while not being intimately connected to ASD himself," said Pineau. "Often times we see family members become active and much less so, those who are not intimately connected. We welcome Jonathan and his Run the Dream campaign to our province and celebrate the accomplishments and support that he is receiving."

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Following Prince Edward Island's leg of the run, Jonathan will return to Nova Scotia and head towards Halifax. All are welcome to attend fundraising events and community activities that are scheduled throughout Nova Scotia for the next two weeks, including May 15th in Springhill, and May 21st in Halifax. Government officials, Autism Society representatives, community leaders, and those who are affected by ASD will be in attendance at these events. Jonathan's full itinerary through the Maritimes is available at www.runthedream.ca.

Run the Dream is a nine-month solo run across Canada that began in St. John's, Nfld., on March 25th and is expected to finish in Victoria, B.C., in December. Jonathan will cover approximately 8,500 kilometres, and visit more than 650 communities in 10 provinces. In addition, the campaign is targeting \$2.5 million in support of a variety of charities that work to assist children and families affected by ASD.

For more information on Run the Dream, please visit www.runthedream.ca.

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Attachment: ***House Statement by Premier Robert Ghiz***

Run the Dream would like to thank our sponsors: TELUS, AON, M-O Freightworks, Gatorade, Medcan Clinic, Flash Reproductions, Mariposa Cruises, Minavox, KCC Leasing, Brightworks, Spa Sensations, The Diamond Studio, Landmark Sport Group, and Whitewater Web Solutions.

For more information, or to arrange an interview with Jonathan in the Maritimes, please contact:

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HOUSE STATEMENT

BY

Premier Robert Ghiz

Run with Jonathan

(in support of Autism)

May 14th, 2008



Province House

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Madame Speaker, earlier this afternoon the Social Services and Seniors Minister and I had the privilege to meet a young Canadian outside on the steps of Province House who is running across Canada to raise awareness of autism and funds for the Autism Society of Canada.

Solo runner Jonathan Howard is a 24 year old from Mississauga who says he was born to run, born to lead and born to dream.

Mr. Howard had a dream to run across Canada.

He has already covered hundreds of kilometres since dipping his toe in the Atlantic Ocean off St. John's, Newfoundland on March 25.

He has since strained his Achilles tendon, run through gale-force winds and seen his first moose in the wild.

Mr. Howard hopes Run the Dream will raise at least two and a half million dollars, which will be given to organizations across the country that support families and children with autism.

Autism is one of the most common neurological disorders affecting children and one of the most common developmental disabilities... affecting approximately 1 in every 165 children born today.

The disorder changes the way the brain processes information and can affect all aspects of a person's development.

Individuals with autism have varying degrees of difficulty in social interaction and communication, may show repetitive behaviours and have unusual attachments to objects or routines.

Although no one in his own family has the disorder, Jonathan has worked with children who do.

Jonathan and the Run the Dream crew has met with autism support groups throughout Atlantic Canada as well as parents and family members of people who have autism.

I encourage members of this assembly and all Islanders to do their part to welcome Jonathan and support his dream as he makes his way across Prince Edward Island, raising money for this important cause.

On behalf of members of the Legislative Assembly and all people of Prince Edward Island, we wish Jonathan and the Run the Dream team all the best.

Thank you, Madame Speaker.