



## **PRESS RELEASE (15<sup>th</sup> Oc)** **Jer's Vision Inaugural Gala**

Jer's Vision: The Jeremy Dias Foundation is Launching Canada's First National Anti-Discrimination Scholarship for Youth. The scholarship seeks to recognize youth who have demonstrated a commitment to their community in addressing issues of discrimination, especially those affecting the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ) community. The award is open to any graduating Canadian high school or CÉGEP student entering an accredited post-secondary institution and/or any Canadian student currently enrolled an Undergraduate program at an accredited post-second institution. It is the **first national** anti-discrimination scholarship of its kind in Canada, and is the **first national LGBTQ scholarship for youth** in Canada

The foundation was created by 21 year old Jeremy Dias (and recent nominee for Political Activist of the Year), who faced animosity in high school (Sir James Dunn Collegiate and Vocational School, Sault Ste. Marie, ON) for being both gay and a visible minority. When he attempted to make a difference by changing attitudes through educational activism, his school and school board (Algoma District) opposed his efforts to make the school "Queer-Friendly". In Fall 2002, Jeremy launched a human rights complaint against his school and school board on the grounds of discrimination. After three years of strenuous negotiations, Sir James Dunn and the Algoma District School Board offered a financial settlement (one of the largest of its kind), but refused to apologize or make changes in the district or the school. Dias has announced that he has used the settlement to create Jer's Vision: Canada's First Anti-Discrimination scholarship.

The Jeremy Dias Foundation scholarship is being launched with an Inaugural Gala on October 15th, 2005, at Suite 34 (34 Clarence St. in the Byward Market, Ottawa. The Gala, a fundraiser and launch for Jer's Vision, is currently scheduled to feature internationally renowned queer performers including: the B-Girlz, Deb/Dirk, Ginette Bobo, Robyn De Cradle and Oni the Haitian Sensation, as well as other performers yet to be announced. Speakers include: Hon. Jack Layton, Hon. Hedy Fry, Hon Marlene Jennings, Alex Munter, Alexa McDonough, Bill Siksay, Libby Davies, and more to be announced. The event will also offer a variety of culinary delights, an art auction, a fashion show, pianists, fire manipulator and much, much more, all to celebrate those youth who are fighting discrimination and and in this manner provide them with a lasting legacy of higher education.

We are honoured to announce that the following cities have proclaimed Jer's Vision Day in their city: Ottawa, Halifax, Edmonton, St Johns, Regina, Sault Ste. Marie, and Peterborough.

Doors open at 6:00 p.m. and the show starts at 7 p.m.

This will be the most unique and amazing show, something never before seen in Ottawa (or anywhere for that matter).



# Jer's Vision.org

Canada's Youth Diversity Initiative  
L'initiative canadienne des jeunes pour la diversité

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Jer's Vision is a registered charity and is run by a volunteer Executive Director and Board of Directors so that the maximum amount of funds raised can go directly towards the scholarship fund. The foundation is working to grow a large endowment fund, with the annual interest going towards yearly scholarships.

Thank you,

Jeremy Dias  
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