

## EXPERIENCES CANADA HOSTS PAND-EPIC YEAR END CELEBRATION AND AWARD CEREMONY FOR YOUTH ACROSS CANADA

(Ottawa – June 29, 2021) For the first time in its 85-year history, Experiences Canada is bringing together all of its nearly 2000 youth participants ages 12-18 in this year’s programming for a coast-to-coast year-end celebration – virtually of course!

“It has been a challenging year for youth. Most of their school and extra-curricular activities shifted online, and opportunities to explore the world beyond their homes and classrooms were curtailed,” explained Deborah Morrison, President and CEO of Experiences Canada. “We wanted to find a way to address the two key impacts of the pandemic: boredom, and the feeling of isolation.”

For an organization known exclusively for offering in person exchanges and travel experience, this was not an easy shift. Their flagship virtual exchange program was redesigned to encourage twinned groups and individual youth to create multimedia projects about the histories, cultures, and daily lives of their communities and share them with one another. They also created a virtual choir, and opened an online art gallery.

“Ensuring that youth have the ability to connect and learn about each other’s culture, history and heritage is crucial, especially in a virtual world. By connecting meaningfully with each other, we can truly appreciate the beauty and diversity of Canada. I am very impressed by the resilience these young Canadians have all shown during the pandemic. It was not easy, but they rose up to the challenge,” said the Honourable Steven Guilbeault, Minister of Canadian Heritage.

“Whether they have been sharing stories about their community as part of our virtual exchanges; creating music videos as part of the virtual choir; or contributing art to the virtual art gallery; we’re pleased to support the important work of Experiences Canada in continuing to find creative ways to bring young Canadians together,” added Andrew Thunder, Director of Corporate Responsibility at North West Company.

Hear from youth participants first-hand talk about how their pandemic year has gone and what they’ve learned on their virtual adventures. Be the first to stroll the virtual Art Gallery; attend the world premiere of four music videos; and take a tour across Canada with our new interactive map featuring youth projects from every corner of the country! Take a sneak peek [here!](#)

**Media and the general public are welcome to attend!**

**WHEN:** Tuesday June 29th, 2021. 7pm EST

**WHERE:** To be held via zoom, and livestreamed on Facebook Live

**[Register to attend](#)**

Let’s explore Canada through the eyes of our young people, and give these young creators a rousing virtual round of applause!

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[www.experiencescanada.ca](http://www.experiencescanada.ca)

Charitable Registration/Numéro d'enregistrement: 107971343RR0001

## **For more information or to arrange interviews with participants contact:**

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### **About the Virtual Exchanges**

Individual youth, schools & youth groups across the country have created videos, websites, and other multi-media features that showcase their communities and were shared with each other throughout the program. All of these projects have been brought together and uploaded to our interactive virtual map of Canada – enabling the rest of us to “travel across Canada,” visiting communities as a virtual journey across the country as seen by the eyes of our young people.

During the live event, the virtual map of Canada will be launched with a series of clips featuring interviews with youth participants and samples of the multimedia projects they created.

### **About the Virtual Choir**

The Choir is made up of 25 youth aged 11-17 from across Canada who all share a passion for singing. Since March the choir has met weekly for rehearsals, and learned, recorded, and created videos for four distinctly Canadian songs.

During the live event we will debut the videos the youth have created for: Scars To Your Beautiful (Alessia Cara), Blinding Lights (The Weeknd), Un Canadien Errant (Whitehorse), and Northern Lights (The Jerry Cans). We will also hear from a few choir members about their experience in the program.

### **About the Virtual Art Gallery**

Throughout May and June, young artists have been encouraged to submit artwork following the theme ‘Pandemic Perspectives’. The virtual gallery provides a space for young Canadians to express themselves through art and share their talents with the rest of the country. The gallery serves to build community awareness and connectedness by showcasing the incredible challenges & strengths Canadian youth have faced and overcome during the pandemic.

During the event, pieces from the gallery will be highlighted and the Gallery Award winners will be announced.



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