



## **MEDIA ADVISORY**

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### **Awards celebrate unique youth contributions**

While Calgary's youth are often touted for their academic achievements, it's not every day that we recognize their broad range of contributions outside of school.

That's why the ConocoPhillips Youth of Distinction Awards, now in its 8<sup>th</sup> year, celebrates deserving youth ages 13-18 that bring vitality and leadership to their communities.

"Our city is renowned for its generous citizens and strong volunteer spirit, and the young people in our communities are no exception," says Jennifer Hilliker, program coordinator with Youth Central. "They volunteer their time, care for our environment, help a friend through tough times, or bring attention to issues that are going unnoticed. Even though they are young, these Calgarians have already achieved more than some have in a lifetime."

To reflect a wide range of achievements, the awards recognize youth with seven different awards: Advocacy, Environmentalism (Group and Individual), Leadership, Peer Support, Perseverance and Volunteerism.

In addition, with prize money and recognition on the line, local schools with the most nominations are in a "Race to Nominate" their students. ConocoPhillips will award the top three schools with cash prizes to use however they see fit at their school.

"ConocoPhillips is committed to supporting and acknowledging youth through the Youth of Distinction Awards because these young citizens are the leaders of tomorrow. We know this will strengthen communities now and in the future," says Barbara Simic, Manager Community Investment, ConocoPhillips Canada.

The award winners will be honoured at a gala ceremony on May 7, 2011 at the Calgary Zoo. Nominations are being accepted until March 4, 2011. For more information about the ConocoPhillips Youth of Distinction Awards, please call Youth Central at 403-266-5448 or visit [www.youthcentral.com/yoda](http://www.youthcentral.com/yoda).

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*Youth Central (formerly Child and Youth Friendly Calgary) is a charitable non-profit organization established in 1992 and is based on the firm belief that young people who experience being contributing members of society will become adults who have a sense of ownership and a responsibility to their community. Our mission is to inspire, engage and celebrate youth through community participation.*