



WE HAVE OUR WINNERS!

OTTAWA: Three students – Maxim Ralchenko, Marky Freeman and Jonathan Whyte – came out on top at the national championship of *The Great Canadian Geography Challenge*, held online yesterday at www.geochallenge.ca.

Forty students, supervised by teacher-monitors, competed online for two hours from school locations in each province and territory. The goal? Fun, scholarships, merchandise prizes and berths on the Canadian team going to the National Geographic World Championship in San Diego, California this coming August.

The Great Canadian Geography Challenge, presented by HSBC Bank Canada, is a national student geography competition designed to foster an interest in geography among young students by allowing them to use their knowledge in a fun and engaging way. Yesterday's event was the culmination of a series of Challenges that began 8 months ago in 816 schools across the country. More than 150,000 students under the age of 16 participated in this year's Challenge.

Maxim Ralchenko, 13, in grade 9 at Merivale High School in Ottawa captured first place and a \$3,000 HSBC Bank Canada scholarship; Marky Freeman, a 13-year-old student in grade 9 at the Associated Hebrew School in Thornhill, Ontario took second place and a \$2,000 scholarship; and Jonathan Whyte, 13, a grade 8 student at Humber Valley Village Junior Middle School in Toronto placed third and won a \$1,000 scholarship.

The Great Canadian Geography Challenge is presented by HSBC Bank Canada and organized nationally by the Canadian Council for Geographic Education (CCGE) with the help of The Royal Canadian Geographical Society and local teachers and volunteers. The program is also supported by Official Sponsors: Imperial Oil Foundation, The Atlas of Canada and *Canadian Geographic* magazine.

The Royal Canadian Geographical Society is Canada's most trusted source for geographic information and insight. With more than 210,000 members, the non-profit Society is dedicated to broadening public knowledge of geography through research and education. It publishes the award winning *Canadian Geographic* and *géographica* magazines. Other programs include a popular lecture series featuring today's leading scientists and explorers, grants for research and expeditions, scholarships and the *Great Canadian Geography Challenge*.

For more information, please call Tanya Manoryk at 1-888-201-5022, or e-mail at geochallenge@ccge.org. You can also visit the media section of the Geography Challenge website at www.geochallenge.ca/media