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**Young Yukon Artists to Perform at Canada Summer Games**

WHITEHORSE – Yukon is sending three young artists to the 2009 Canada Summer Games in Prince Edward Island. Funding and support are provided by the Yukon Culture Quest Program and the National Artist Program.

“We are very proud of the Yukon contingent and congratulate them as members of Team Yukon,” Tourism and Culture Minister Elaine Taylor said. “The opportunity to travel to Atlantic Canada, to interact with fellow artists and athletes, to experience other cultures and make new friendships will contribute to their own artistic development and the success of the games.”

Team Yukon artists Kayla Ware Dewdney, Kirsty Marie Wells and Ben Barrett-Forrest from Whitehorse will travel with Mission Staff for Culture Tracey Bilsky, Yukon National Artist Program Manager Sunny Patch, and Chef de Mission Vern Haggard.

The National Artists Program (NAP) is the cultural component of the Canada Games and is held every second year, alternating summer and winter. The NAP brings together talented youth from across Canada as members of a collective athletic and artistic team. The young artists represent disciplines that include literary, visual, dance/movement, theatre and music.

During the games, the artists will present their skills at various venues across PEI, including the closing ceremonies, which will bring all participants together in one gala collaborative performance to be televised live across Canada. Members of Team Yukon will also attend workshops and master classes related to their particular artistic discipline.

The NAP complements the athletic aspect of the Canada Games, offering artists and performers the opportunity to interpret the games and to share their artistic interpretations with fellow athletes, performers and the public.

“We were very happy with the number of talented young artists who applied to showcase themselves and represent Yukon at the 2009 Canada Summer Games,” Haggard said. “Kayla, Kirsty and Ben came with glowing recommendations and great enthusiasm to soak up the experience in PEI, and prove that some of the best artists in Canada come from Yukon.”

The Canada Summer Games takes place in Prince Edward Island August 15 to 29.

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Contact:

Emily Younker  
Cabinet Communications  
867-633-7961  
[emily.younker@gov.yk.ca](mailto:emily.younker@gov.yk.ca)

Karen Keeley  
Communications, Tourism & Culture  
867-667-8304  
[karen.keeley@gov.yk.ca](mailto:karen.keeley@gov.yk.ca)