

Right To Play Wins OTF's Greer Award

TORONTO, April 2, 2009 — Right To Play, the child-focused international charity, is this year's winner of the Ontario Teachers' Federation's prestigious Greer Award.

The award is named for Dr. V. K. Greer, a distinguished Ontario educator who rose from classroom teacher to become Superintendent of Elementary Education for Ontario.

The Greer Award, administered by the Ontario Teachers' Federation, is presented yearly to an individual or an organization for distinguished service to publicly funded education.

Hockey Great and Right to Play Ambassador Wayne Gretsky said about the Right To Play "This is one of the greatest causes I have ever seen! Right To Play is using the incredible power of sport and play to help children who are affected in refugee camps, affected by war and orphaned by HIV/AIDS."

It began at the Lillehammer Winter Olympics as Olympic Aid. Right To Play's founder and Chief Executive Officer is Johann Olav Koss, the phenomenal Norwegian speed skater who dominated that sport throughout the 1990s. In Lillehammer, he announced that he would donate his winnings to charity and issued a challenge to other world athletes to do the same.

From that modest beginning, Koss has built Right To Play into an organization working in two dozen countries and touching the lives of hundreds of thousands of children. With its headquarters now in Toronto, Right To Play has fund-raising offices in China, Norway, the Netherlands, Switzerland, the UK, the US, and the United Arab Emirates.

More than one hundred Canadian athletes, many of them household names in virtually every sport from aerials to wrestling, have endorsed the work of Right to Play and work actively on its behalf as athlete ambassadors.

"Never underestimate the power of play to change the world," says OTF President Joe Lamoureux. "When children learn to understand each other through games, anything is possible."

"In Canada, kids go off to the hockey rink or the swimming pool. In Africa, kids go off to war," Lamoureux said. "Tens of thousands more become its blameless victims, banished from their own homelands. Right To Play works tirelessly to put an end to that tragedy."

The Ontario Teachers' Federation is the advocate for the teaching profession in Ontario and for its 155,000 teachers. OTF members are full-time, part-time and occasional teachers in all the publicly funded schools in the province—elementary, secondary, public, Catholic and francophone.