



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Wednesday, June 26, 2013

## MEDIA ADVISORY

### High school essay contest winners announced in "Alternative to Warships?" challenge

(Halifax) – High school students were challenged to write an essay examining the alternatives to spending \$25 billion on new warships at the Irving Shipyard for the Canadian navy. The question they were to answer was “How could the Canadian government instead invest our tax dollars to make our society and our economy greener, more equitable, and more peaceful?”

The essay contest was launched on May 1 and every high school in Nova Scotia received information by mail and by email. The essay contest was organized by Tamara Lorincz of *Demilitarize.ca* and funded by the *Nova Scotia Public Research Interest Group*. Essays were received from high school students across the province.

The first place winner is Grade 11 student Rebecca MacNeil of Rankin School of the Narrows. She won \$150 plus a peace prize pack. MacNeil argued that the federal government should be spending tax dollars on agriculture and food security not warships. Second place winner is Grade 10 student Harrison Souchereau of Halifax West High School. He won \$100 plus a prize pack for his appeal for more renewable energy, peacekeeping, and education instead of warships. The third place winner is Emma Purdy, a Grade 11 student at Sir John A. MacDonald High School, who wrote that the federal government should invest in wind and solar power instead of warships and the oilsands. She won \$50 plus prize pack.

“I wanted high school students to think critically about the implications of the warship contract and to challenge them to think about the alternatives,” Lorincz explained. She was also troubled by the fact that the Nova Scotia Department of Education re-oriented high school curriculum under the *2012 Kids & Learning First Policy* so that students would have trade skills to work at the shipyard.

“The provincial government has not been direct and honest with students and the schools about what the shipbuilding contract entails – the NDP wants young Nova Scotians to be building armed combat vessels. The government should be investing in post-secondary education and a green economy for the youth of this province and creating a sustainable future for them,” Lorincz said.

The high school essay contest is part of Lorincz’s ongoing struggle against the federal government’s planned construction of warships and the provincial government’s *Kids & Learning First Policy*. The high school essays can be found on her web site: [www.demilitarize.ca](http://www.demilitarize.ca)

#### **Background:**

- Demilitarize: [www.demilitarize.ca](http://www.demilitarize.ca) and “Wednesdays against Warships” Blog: <http://demilitarize.ca/wp/>
- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/tamaralorincz>

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