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**ASHOKA AND STAPLES BUSINESS DEPOT CANADA ANNOUNCE PARTNERSHIP  
TO INVEST IN YOUNG CANADIAN LEADERS**

**100,000\$CAD Grant from Staples Foundation for Learning and STAPLES Business  
Depot to Launch Ashoka's *Youth Venture- GenV* in Canada**

**Toronto, Canada — June 14, 2007**—Ashoka, a global organization with a 26-year history and network of more than 1,800 social entrepreneurs serving 70 countries, announced today it has received a grant from Staples Foundation for Learning (SFFL), the charitable arm of Staples, Inc, and STAPLES Business Depot's community@work corporate giving program. The 100,000\$CAD grant will support Youth Venture – GenV in Canada, an Ashoka-originated initiative that is investing in and catalyzing a movement of young changemakers. This year's global 500,000\$USD grant will enable Ashoka to expand Youth Venture – GenV to Canada and Belgium and continue the program in the five countries Staples Foundation for Learning supported in 2006: France, Germany, Spain, Argentina and Brazil.

Steve Matyas, president of STAPLES Business Depot Canada, will be presenting the grant today to Ashoka Canada at a ceremony at their headquarters in Richmond Hill, Toronto, Ontario. Marc Kielburger, an Ashoka Fellow from Canada, will be addressing a group of STAPLES Business Depot associates at the ceremony. Marc started Volunteer Now! to make social advocacy "cool" in Toronto high schools. His international

organization, founded on the principal that young people have the power to change the world, seeks to motivate young people to become active in their communities and around the globe.

The global alliance marks the first time Youth Venture – GenV is working together with a leading corporation to deliver Youth Venture's program to Canadian youth and reflects STAPLES Business Depot's commitment to philanthropic investment in entrepreneurship. With Staples' support, Youth Venture is able to increase its presence and create more opportunities for young people to have the transformative experience of taking initiative and launching their own community-benefiting ventures.

"Ashoka's commitment to enabling social entrepreneurs to realize their dreams while benefiting the local community is very much in line with our company's entrepreneurial roots and spirit," said Steve Matyas, president of STAPLES Business Depot Canada. "Investing in youth and their entrepreneurial ventures is an essential component of our community@work corporate giving program at STAPLES Business Depot."

"This exciting and growing partnership highlights the power of entrepreneurship," said Bill Drayton, Founder and CEO of Ashoka. "Together, STAPLES Business Depot and Youth Venture are showing how powerful organizations and societies are built and run by changemakers. Youth Venture, with Staples Foundation for Learning's support, aims to inspire all young people around the world to become changemakers and thus dramatically increase our ability as a global society to solve problems and thrive."

#### **About Ashoka**

Ashoka is the world's community of leading social entrepreneurs—individuals with innovative and practical ideas for addressing social needs. Working with these social entrepreneurs, Ashoka builds communities of innovators who work collectively to transform society and design new ways for the social sector to become more productive, entrepreneurial and globally integrated. For more information, please visit [www.ashoka.org](http://www.ashoka.org).

#### **About Youth Venture – GenV**

Youth Venture inspires and invests in teams of young people to start their own sustainable social ventures and connects them into a powerful global network. These youth are coming together through the Youth Venture movement-GenV and are redefining the youth years as a time of initiative and positive change. For more information, please visit [www.youthventure.org](http://www.youthventure.org) and [www.genv.net](http://www.genv.net).

#### **About STAPLES Business Depot**

The Business Depot Ltd. was founded in Toronto in 1991. It is Canada's largest supplier of office supplies, business machines, office furniture and business services for the small business and home office customer. The company is an everyday low price retailer. The chain operates stores in all provinces across Canada under the banners STAPLES® Business Depot™ and BUREAU EN GROS™. The company has over 13,000 employees serving customers through more than 270 office superstores, catalogue, and e-commerce. STAPLES® Business Depot™/BUREAU EN GROS™ is committed to making shopping easy by offering customers three ways to shop - on-line, by catalogue and in-store. More information is available at [www.staples.ca](http://www.staples.ca).

**About community@work**

Through its new corporate giving program – **community@work** – STAPLES Business Depot is proud to partner with local community leaders to identify and support programs and initiatives focusing on three core areas: environment, education and entrepreneurship. For more information please visit [www.staples.ca/community](http://www.staples.ca/community).

**About Staples Foundation for Learning**

The mission of Staples Foundation for Learning, Inc. is to teach, train and inspire. Founded in 2002, the foundation has contributed nearly \$10 million to national and local charities that provide educational opportunities and job skills for all people, with a special emphasis on disadvantaged youth. Staples Foundation for Learning has also developed lasting relationships with Boys & Girls Clubs of America, Earth Force, Hispanic Heritage Foundation and the Initiative for a Competitive Inner City. In addition, Staples Foundation for Learning supports Ashoka, an organization that develops and supports social entrepreneurs around the world, in eight countries: Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, Spain and the United States. For more information about the foundation or how to apply for a grant, please visit [www.staplesfoundation.org](http://www.staplesfoundation.org).