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**RYAN HRELJAC, FOUNDER OF RYAN'S WELL, AND JUNO-AWARD WINNER KELLYLEE EVANS TO KICK OFF HOLIDAY CAMPAIGN: "WATER FOR KENYA" AT NATIONAL ARTS CENTRE**

Charismatic Canadian Vocalist Becomes Ambassador for Noted Worldwide Charitable Foundation

Ottawa, ON – December 12, 2013

Ryan Hreljac is pleased to announce today that Juno Award-winning Canadian vocalist Kellylee Evans will serve as the first musical artist ambassador for the [Ryan's Well Foundation](#) to help raise awareness of the urgent worldwide need for clean water and sanitation. The charitable foundation grew out of Ryan's internationally acclaimed effort – first begun when he was six years old – to raise funds to build a well in Africa.

Ms. Evans is sharing her energy to a cause close to her heart. With Ryan Hreljac as special guest, she'll kick off her ambassadorship and the annual holiday campaign, "[Water for Kenya](#)", at a sold-out concert at Canada's [National Arts Centre](#) on December 18.

"I wanted to be a part of something tangible and positive that provides for the daily, basic needs of people. I can understand the desire for clean water. It's simple and easy to grasp. And I felt the passion and pull behind Ryan's Well, and the foundation's efforts to help people survive and live better lives," says Kellylee. "As a mother to little people, it always amazes me how they make their dreams and goals come true by believing it's possible and going for it. I'm personally inspired by Ryan's incredible story and wanted to help inspire that in others."

The Water for Kenya holiday campaign is raising \$37,000 to build **32 rainwater harvesting tanks** for families in the Kajiado region of Kenya. With clean water, children are healthier and school attendance goes up. Women no longer spend hours collecting dirty water, and have time for income-generating activities. Sanitation and hygiene awareness training are an important part of this project; and funds generated will make a significant and lasting impact in the **lives and livelihoods** of the Maasai. Since 2001, Ryan's Well has helped build over 803 water projects and 1,012 latrines bringing safe water and improved sanitation to nearly 800,000 people.

"The need for clean water in this area of Kenya is reaching critical levels," Hreljac, now 22, stated. "We chose Kenya as this year's holiday project to drastically lessen the hardships faced by these families, who are repeatedly sick with water-borne diseases such as typhoid. We couldn't be more thrilled that a Canadian artist of the caliber of Kellylee Evans is joining us to launch this campaign in an outstanding venue like the National Arts Centre."

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**About the Ryan's Well Foundation:** The Ryan's Well Foundation grew out of the commitment of six-year-old Ryan Hreljac, who learned of the great need for safe water in developing countries. The Ryan's Well Foundation is a family of people committed to delivering access to safe water and sanitation as an essential way to improve the lives of people in the developing world. We empower citizens of all ages to take action and effect change in the world. Founded in 2001, Ryan's Well is a registered Canadian charity ([www.ryanswell.ca](http://www.ryanswell.ca)).

**Ryan Hreljac** is a graduate of King's College University (Nova Scotia) in International Development and Political Science. He has received many international [awards of distinction](#). He has been featured on international media such as the Oprah Winfrey Show and CNN, and his Foundation has received support from prominent individuals including the Prince of Wales, Matt Damon and Dr. Jane Goodall.

#### **About Kellylee Evans**

The charismatic Kellylee Evans has become one of Canada's premier jazz vocalists. She launched her recording career independently in Canada with two notable albums, *Fight Or Flight?* and *The Good Girl*, before being invited to record a tribute CD to Nina Simone entitled *NINA (Plus Loin Records)* in Paris, which created a thriving fan base for her in France, and earned her a 2011 Juno Award. Her most recent CD, *I REMEMBER WHEN*, (Universal Music France & Canada) has continued to enhance her popularity at home and in France. She has been hailed by *JazzTimes Magazine* for her "stunning crystalline voice, both powerful and emotive, a quality that is magnified and multiplied exponentially when you see and hear the magic of her performance".

#### **About the NAC Presents series**

Showcasing the country's established artists and those at the forefront of the next generation, NAC Presents in partnership with BMO Financial Group promises a dynamic range of incredible performers who represent the best in Canadian contemporary music. NAC Presents is the place to be if you want to experience a concert by a Canadian icon, or be right up close with the icons of the future.

That ear-to-the ground music lover is Producer Simone Deneau, whose musical taste and keen sense of what's hot in the Canadian music scene have shaped the fifth NAC's programming stream into one of the most important music series in the country.

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### **Clean Water – Brighter Futures!**

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