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**SUSAN HRELJAC BECOMES 2009 'Y WOMEN OF DISTINCTION'**

OTTAWA (JUNE 6) – The Ryan's Well Foundation congratulates board member Susan Hreljac on becoming the recipient of the 2009 YMCA-YWCA Women of Distinction award for global humanitarian outreach.

The award ceremony, which took place at the National Arts Centre on June 1, marked the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the program which recognizes women who inspire others through their work and in their communities.

The award celebrates Susan Hreljac's inspirational journey as a mother of four boys and full-time employee with the Government of Ontario, while also supporting her son's, Ryan Hreljac, goal of providing access to clean water in developing countries. The result of those efforts was the formation of the Ryan's Well Foundation.

In addition to her full-time position with the Ontario government, Hreljac served passionately as the Foundation's Executive Director since its inception in 2001 until 2008. The Foundation began with Ryan's quest at just six years old to build a well in Uganda for children without access to clean water. It has since completed over 500 water projects in 16 countries, bringing clean water and improved sanitation to over 620,000 people. Hreljac continues to serve as a board member for the Foundation – where her dedication and commitment are evident.

"My heart has always been with the Foundation," says Hreljac. "Juggling a family of six, a full-time career, and doing what I can for the Foundation hasn't always been easy, but I wouldn't change it for anything."

The Ryan's Well Foundation is a registered Canadian charity with a mission to provide clean water, improved sanitation and related hygiene education to citizens of developing countries impacted by the global water crisis. Ryan's Well supports activities to BUILD safe water sources, EDUCATE individuals, schools, corporations and other service organizations to create awareness of water-related issues and MOTIVATE present and future leaders to realize their own global citizenship.

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