

Students use lens to focus on child labour issue

East St. Paul

BY ADRIAN ALLEYNE

STAFF REPORTER

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A group of students from Robert Andrews School were recognized for their efforts at the Manitoba Council for International Cooperation's recent general meeting.

Grade 7 students from the East St. Paul-based school learned June 14 that they had won a \$500 cash prize after submitting a video to the Kaleidoscope Real World Video Challenge.

The national contest, organized by the organization's provincial and regional councils of international co-operation, challenged students to look through a lens and see the world around them in a different way.

The Manitoba chapter received 17 submissions which were reviewed by a panel of judges. The video, *Stop Child Labour*, earned the school a first place finish in the 13-and-under category.

"We thought it was a good topic because it's a big issue and a lot of people don't know about it," said Michael Brennan, 12, who was one of the students who put the video together.

The student-produced video details the plight of children who suffer from forced labour and how buying fair trade products

can make a difference.

"The more people use fair trade, the better," Brennan said. "That will slowly stop child labour."

Brennan and fellow classmate Ethan Grycko said they wanted to create a video that would help make a difference.

"It's very important because we thought it's important for everyone to know what people are going through," said Grycko, 12.

"We connected with it because we are children, and kids our age are doing labour for free."

Two of the four Robert Andrews students who produced the video will be flown to Ottawa by the MCIC for a Sept. 30 national awards gala as a result of the school's first place finish.

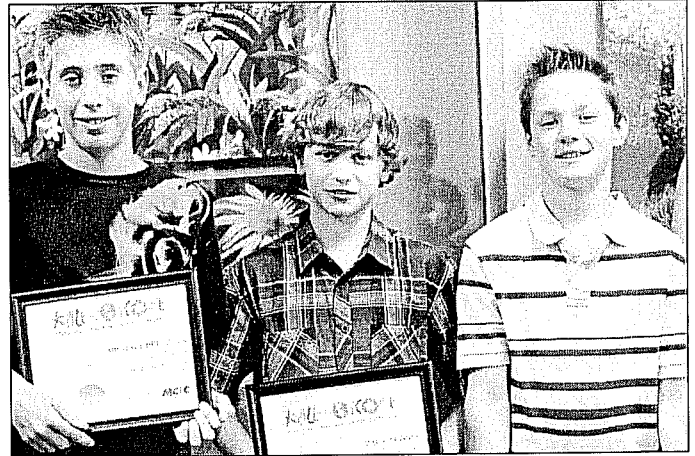
The winning videos from each province will be screened at the gala, with one being chosen the People's Choice Award winner.

Robert Andrews teacher Cathy Hrahi said the school is planning to do some fundraising in order to be able to send all four of the students to Ottawa.

"They should all get to go. They deserve to go," Hrahi said. "They could have picked any topic, and they really wanted to send a message."

Brennan's mom, Marilyn, said that she was impressed by the fact that her son and the other students tackled such a complicated issue.

"I thought it was a really great idea...It



Submitted photo

(From left) Robert Andrews students Michael Brennan, Zac Cardno, and Brandon Hein receive awards for winning the Kaleidoscope Real World Video Challenge.

was socially responsible for them to work on such a big issue," she said.

Robert Andrews wasn't the only Winnipeg school to be lauded by the organization. Students from Argyle Alternative High School were winners in the 14 to 18 year old category for their video *Water: A Global Issue*.

To view the winning videos visit www.videochallenge.ca, click on the submission tab and click on *Stop Child Labour* or *Water: A Global Issue*.

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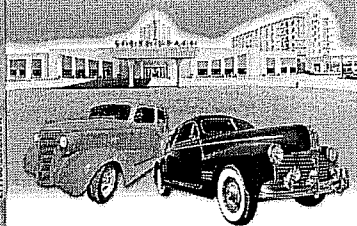
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