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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HTCO TO CELEBRATE THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE HARRIET TUBMAN GAMES

FROM THE BLACK HERITAGE TRACK MEET TO 25 YEARS OF THE
HARRIET TUBMAN GAMES

Toronto, ON: Harriet Tubman Community Organization in partnership with the Jane-Finch Pan Am & Parapan Am Games Host Committee will be hosting the 25th Harriet Tubman Games on June 28, 2015 from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m at Esther Shiner Stadium. The event is an outdoor track & field community event promoting wellness, fitness, community spirit, and family fun with races, entertainment, and local vendors. Special guests include reigning Canadian High Jump Champion and Pan Am Representative Nicole Forrester, along with Ben Johnson, former Canadian Olympic sprinter.

This event is sanctioned by Athletics Ontario. There will be sprints, relays, long jump, triple jump, community "Back in de day Funky race" 50m dash, and other fun activities. Advanced registration for competitors is required before June 24th. Register at www.tubmancommunity.org. Late applications accepted to the discretion of the event coordinator. Late fees do apply. Administrative registration fees are non-refundable. Free for spectators.

The Opening Ceremony is sponsored by the City of Toronto Pan Am Festival Grant and will feature a flag parade, performances by the Blue Saints Marching Band and the York Lions Steel Pan, and an awards ceremony that recognizes community leaders who have made invaluable contributions over the years. To be a part of the parade you are asked to wear only soft shoes as the field is of synthetic material.

"In celebration of the "International Decade For People Of African Descent", we claim health, fitness and a right to happiness and success as our birthright and we ask you to join us in promoting and expanding consciousness around this decade that affords us Recognition, Justice and Development. We strive to make the idea of fitness and health synonymous with the African-Canadian community. 'What does a healthy African-Canadian community look like?' The Games is one of the steps in conjunction with the Pan Am Games to promote a positive image of the community." - Ekua Andria C. Walcott, Executive Director of H.T.C.O.

History of the Games: In a period of time where athletes of African descent were denied a fair opportunity to qualify and compete in the Olympic Games, a group of Black community members made it their mission to create that opportunity. In 1971, the first annual Black Track Meet was held in Toronto and has since given athletes such as Ben Johnson and Donovan Bailey the chance to participate in the Olympics. Eventually, the Black Track Meet evolved into the Harriet Tubman Games, a general community track and field event for all ages, overseen since 1986 by the Harriet Tubman Community Organization.

About Harriet Tubman Community Organization

Harriet Tubman Community Organization (HTCO), named after the fearless former enslaved woman who led hundreds of other enslaved people to freedom in North America on the Underground Railroad, is a non-profit agency committed to working with young people, particularly those of African descent. Its purpose of uniting African-Canadian youth and their families in a spirit of pride and self-reliance is a continuing tribute to this great historical figure. For over 43 years, HTCO has embraced collaboration, authentic practice, and community engagement within the Greater Toronto Area. The mission of HTCO is ***“to positively strengthen the capacity and well-being of humanity.”*** To learn more visit www.tubmancommunity.org.

Key people who will be recognized and acknowledged in the event:

Henry Hank Clarke, Oswald Edwards, Lirlyn and Calvin Herbert, Winston Klass, Jay Jackson, Denham Jolly, Bob Ellis, Wendy St. Cyr, Raymond St. Cyr, Camille Cato, David McFarlane, Simone Lashley, Esha Herbert Davis, Frano, Barrington Hibbert, Kirk Mark, Ken Jeffers among others from HTCO. Amma Ofori, sipho kwaku, Ginelle Skerritt, Nicole Osbourne James and Paul Osborne, Angela Thomas, Desai Williams, Raymond Daley, Michael Collymore, Colin Vernon, Val Grose, Edward and Ben Johnson, Percy Duncan and many more... from the Black Heritage Track Meet.

We Run Tings

This year, there is a new race in town: the We Run 4 Harriet 5K. Organized in partnership with the We RUN Tings run club, our fundraising event is to support HTCO and promote the values of healthy self, family, community, world.

Registration 5K: \$20 (Youth \$10)

Kids Fun Run 1K: \$5

Find out more at www.werun4.com.

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