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**TD Bank Financial Group Commits a Further \$36,000 to The Health Foundation's Scholarship Fund**

**Yorkton, Monday, May 31 – Jonas Haywood**, Area Manager for TD Canada Trust today announced that the TD Bank Financial Group is renewing and increasing its commitment to The Health Foundation's Scholarship fund for another three years. This brings TD Bank Financial Group's total commitment to the scholarship program to \$116,000 over 11 years.

“TD Bank has always believed in investing back into the communities where we work, and where our customers and our employees live and work. The challenge is to make sure our donations are productive, and will create a lasting benefit to the community. We believe this education program does that, and does it very well,” said Jonas Haywood.

“That is why TD Bank Financial group is announcing a further commitment to The Health Foundation's Education and Scholarship Program. It is virtually unprecedented for the bank to undertake a commitment of 11 consecutive years, but that is what we are doing today with this announcement,” continued Mr. Haywood.

“This is a good program; it helps our practicing caregivers to increase their clinical skill which improves their ability look after their patients. It helps to train nurses and other care givers with skills they need to do the best job they can. With The Health Foundation we have funded programs like: helping nurses take masters programs; take training to become operating room nurses, and, we have funded workshops which train 20 and 30 nurses and therapists at a time in the latest skills for working with people suffering from the after effects of heart attack or stroke. This is a practical program that does good things in our communities and we are proud to be a part of it,” said Mr. Haywood.

“Eight years ago the TD Bank Financial Group joined with The Health Foundation to set up an education program to provide educational opportunities to the employees of Sunrise Health Region. We have been very pleased with the results of this program, which is why we are committing to an additional three years at this time. Since the program started in 2002, there have been 176 awards totaling \$170,623. Some of those individuals continue to live and work in our area because of these awards,” concluded Mr. Haywood.

“The Health Foundation is pleased to be able to announce the continuation of the Scholarship Fund that awards \$22,000 a year to further the training and education of the staff of Sunrise Health Region,” said Ross Fisher, Executive Director of The Health Foundation.

“We are very pleased the TD Bank Financial Group decided to continue their support for this program. Without a major sponsor like the TD Bank Financial Group to fund this program it could not continue,” said Mr. Fisher. “Our goals in continuing this education program are twofold: to contribute to an improved quality of healthcare for the residents of east central Saskatchewan; and, to provide access to education for individuals who otherwise might not be able to further their education.”

“We are really pleased to have learned that an added benefit of this program is that in a few cases it has made it a little easier to recruit healthcare staff to work here. Most health regions do not have an education program like this one. This education program is a supplement to everything the province and health regions ordinarily do. This program is one of those little things some people take notice of when they decide where they want to work,” said Mr. Fisher.

“But in addition to that, this program has truly been a regional program. Over the last eight years about half the individuals who have received awards or participated in the skills development workshops come from communities outside of Yorkton. We are pleased that healthcare staff throughout the region have embraced these education awards,” he continued.

“The Health Foundation matches the TD Bank Financial Group contribution for a total of \$22,000 that is provided through the Scholarship Fund annually. All awards are supplemental to anything the health region does, thus expanding the opportunities for caregivers to increase their knowledge and abilities,” said Ross Fisher, Executive Director of The Health Foundation.

A further benefit of this program is that many people apply for funding and we are able to direct them to other funding sources that they don't know about. Often those programs will provide more funding than we would be able to. Because we advertise our program strongly, we receive more applications than we can accommodate, so we have become good at identifying other education programs so we can maximize the education dollars people from our area can access,” continued Mr. Fisher.

The Health Foundation of East Central Saskatchewan is an independent, not-for-profit organization with a volunteer board of directors; they raise funds for health care equipment, facilities and education programs in east central Saskatchewan.

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