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For more information and interview requests contact:
Kendall Anderson, 416.960.7926, kendall.anderson@samaracanada.com

Rick Mercer, Kirstine Stewart and Preston Manning join a panel of Canadians to champion Everyday Political Citizens.

Toronto, November 11th 2013—At a time when many high-profile political leaders are acting in ways they shouldn't—potentially adding to the cynicism Canadians already feel towards politics—the non-profit think tank Samara launches the next phase of the **Everyday Political Citizen** project, profiling unheralded Canadians committed to democratic vibrancy.

Across Canada, campaigners, community organizers, and members of local riding associations work through challenging and downright confusing political systems with the hope of changing policies to build a better country.

“Everyday Political Citizens play a fundamental role in making politics work. And unlike volunteers in other sectors, these individuals too often go unrecognized, as politics is not seen to be a worthwhile place for good, honest people to invest time,” says Samara co-founder Michael MacMillan. “These people are the antidote to today’s cynical views on politics.”

Samara has already received many nominations from coast to coast to coast and, with a panel of Canadians, will name an Everyday Political Citizen of 2013 in January.

With voter turnout on a steady decline and Canadians’ satisfaction with democracy at an all-time low of 55%, Everyday Political Citizens are more necessary than ever— these individuals prove that politics can be done in a positive way.

Samara’s **recent research** has shown that Canadians don’t self-identify as political, can’t identify political role models and don’t know how to get politically active.

The latest participation numbers show that political life is not valued:

- While 55% of us volunteer our time, only 10% volunteer in an election.
- While 84% donate money to a charity or non-profit, only 10% donate to political candidates or parties.
- While 58% are active in a group or association, only 10% are members of political parties.

The Everyday Political Citizen project demystifies political involvement and shows, through profiling positive role models that politics can be an important way to contribute to your country.

Who will select Canada's Everyday Political Citizen of 2013?

Nominations for this cross-country competition can come from anyone. It only takes a few minutes to give a colleague or friend the recognition they deserve. Over 100 nominations have been submitted already. To see which ridings have already been represented, check this [interactive map](#).

In January 2014, the following 14 Canadians, who are dedicated to improving politics in this country, will come together to review Canada's top political citizens and ultimately **award the best Everyday Political Citizen of 2013 (adult category and under-18 category)**:

- **Max Cameron** is the Director for the Centre for the Study of Democratic Institutions at UBC.
- **Danny Graham** was the leader of the Nova Scotia Liberal Party and the MLA for Halifax Citadel.
- **Mark Heyck** is the Mayor of Yellowknife.
- **Michael MacMillan** is a co-founder of Samara and the CEO of Blue Ant Media.
- **Preston Manning** is the Founder of the Manning Centre for Building Democracy.
- **Akosua Matthews** is a Winnipegger, former reservist, Rhodes Scholar and an Articling Student in Toronto.
- **Hugh MacKinnon** is the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the law firm Bennett Jones.
- **Rick Mercer** is a Canadian comedian, television personality and political satirist.
- **Kathleen Monk** is the Senior Advisor at the Broadbent Institute.
- **Chima Nkemdirim** is the Chief of Staff to Calgary Mayor Naheed Nenshi.
- **Miriam Lapp** is the Assistant Director at Elections Canada.
- **Deon Ramgoolam** is a Quebec business leader who serves on the board of Historica Canada.
- **Kirstine Stewart** is the Managing Director of Twitter Canada.
- **Shauna Sylvester** is the Executive Director of SFU's Public Square.

"I've ranted a lot about youth voter turnout and garnered some attention just because I lead a public life. There are so many people who keep our democracy moving in private and never get recognized. How and why someone gets involved shouldn't be a state secret—it should be a state celebration."—**Rick Mercer, juror**

All nominations can be seen on this interactive map of the country:
<http://www.samaracanada.com/fun-stuff/everyday-political-citizen-map>

The contest closes DECEMBER 31ST. Prizes will be awarded to youth and adult winners.

Media requests

If you would like more information from Alison Loat about the Everyday Political Citizen project, please contact Kendall Anderson 416.960.7926 or kendall.anderson@samaracanada.com. As well, you can search on <http://everydaypoliticalcitizen.tumblr.com/> to find nominees from your province, riding or city.

With nominations flowing in from across the country, Executive Director Alison Loat can highlight individuals from your city, province or territory for your article. And in many circumstances we connect you with nominees from your area to learn why and how they contribute to politics.

About Samara

Samara is a charitable organization dedicated to improving political participation in Canada. Through research and educational programs, Samara reconnects citizens to politics.

Samara's areas of research include:

- Members of Parliament
- Political parties
- Citizens' attitudes towards politics
- Citizen participation and voting behaviour
- Political journalism and writing

Our research and information on our programs can be found at www.samaracanada.com. **We are always available to comment on our areas of research.** You can also follow Samara on [Twitter](#) or join our [Facebook](#) group.