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“Above and Beyond:” New Educational Initiative Commemorates Canadian Contributions to D-day Landings

Defining Moments Canada Partners with Juno Beach Centre Association

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TORONTO, Ontario – (February 1, 2018) – Defining Moments Canada/Moments Déterminants Canada, a heritage education organization, announced today its partnership with the Juno Beach Centre Association to lead the 2019 national commemorative project to share the stories of Canadians’ contributions to the D-day landings.

Juno75: Above and Beyond will spotlight the stories of 20 Canadians from across the country who were involved in the war effort in Normandy and beyond. Drawing from the extensive interview archive of Testaments of Honour, and hosted on the Defining Moments Canada website, the goal of this national commemorative project is to inspire young Canadians to discover the lives of those who participated in one of Canada’s best-known battles. Beyond the stories of those veterans who landed on Juno Beach, the project also seeks to commemorate those who continued to serve in the Battle of Normandy, and those whose contributions on the home front were essential to driving the war effort – and the country – along.

With the generous support of Veterans Affairs Canada, Juno75: Above and Beyond will offer extensive educational resources designed to guide students in the creation of commemorative projects that examine the stories of service and sacrifice of these individuals. “As the Government of Canada marks the 75th anniversary of D-Day and the Battle of Normandy this year, we are pleased to support Defining Moments Canada, through the Commemorative Partnership Program, in this meaningful project to honour the selfless servicemen and women who served during the Battle of Normandy,” says the Honourable Jody Wilson-Raybould, P.C., Q.C., M.P, Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence. “This initiative will connect Canadian youth with the faces and experiences of those who fought for our freedom during the Second World War. It is inspiring to know that these students will be able to learn about the courage, determination and sacrifice of so many brave Canadians and share it with their peers.”
The project will also be supported by extensive contextual research from the Juno Beach Centre Association. “The Juno Beach Centre Association is excited to partner with Defining Moments Canada on Juno75: Above and Beyond,” says Mike Bechthold, executive director of the Juno Beach Centre Association. “This project, with its focus on telling stories and connecting today’s youth with yesterday’s heroes, forms an integral part of the JBCA’s Juno75 educational offerings. This is an excellent opportunity for youth across the country to engage in the remembrance and commemoration of one of Canada’s great defining moments.”

"The 20 Canadians we will be profiling are just the beginning,” says Neil Orford, program leader at Defining Moments Canada. “We want students to share the stories they discover, so that we can honour these untold stories from unheard voices.”

Defining Moments Canada/Moments Déterminants Canada is the shared vision of Neil Orford and Blake Heathcote, creators of a new and innovative way to teach and commemorate Canada’s history using twenty-first century digital tools and storytelling skills. It has previously carried out a national commemoration of the 1918-1920 Spanish flu pandemic in Canada.

For more information, digital images or to set up an interview, please contact:

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