

Special Vancouver Kingsway citizens: young people shine!

GLADSTONE SECONDARY STUDENTS WIN CONTEST FOR IDEA TO BE PRESENTED IN PARLIAMENT

Kensington-Cedar Cottage is a neighbourhood bursting with energetic and talented people in every aspect.

Among them are two very special young people.

Maria Gladkikh and Grihalakshmi (Lakshmi) Soundarapandian are grade 11 students who attend Gladstone Secondary, the high school serving our community.

They are the 2011 winners of MP Don Davies' annual "Create Your Canada" contest.

This is a contest started by Davies in 2009 where he invites all grade 11 and 12 students in Vancouver Kingsway to enter their ideas to improve Canada.

The contest is 100% on-line. The website is interactive and allows students to learn how laws are made. Davies takes the winning idea and has it drafted into an actual federal bill. He then flies the winners to Ottawa for a tour of Parliament, where they watch as their bill gets introduced in the House of Commons.

Maria and Lakshmi jointly submitted an idea to develop more power from clean, sustainable sources.

"Listening to Canadian youth about their concerns for our country is really important," said Davies. "Parliament is well-served by these proposals and I am proud to bring the voice of youth into our debates."

This fall, Davies will escort the students around Parliament, tour them through the House of Commons Chamber and the Library of Parliament and bring them to an actual Caucus meeting.

Both students expressed great enthusiasm.

"We're really excited to go to Ottawa," said Maria. "Seeing our bill introduced in Parliament will be amazing," added Lakshmi.

"This is a great way for youth to share their vision for our country," said Davies. "I think it's also a fun and engaging introduction to Parliament and the legislative process."

Our youth are our future – and with people like Maria and Lakshmi, our country's in good hands!