



Fair Trade Ottawa Équitable endorses uOttawa Fair Trade Campus campaign

OTTAWA, December 15, 2011 – A group of volunteers in Ottawa that is seeking Fair Trade Town status for the nation’s capital is encouraged by a student-led campaign at the University of Ottawa to work toward the equivalent designation for the campus.

“Universities and colleges are an important part of the city's fabric and community,” says Michael Creighton, Chair of [Fair Trade Ottawa Équitable](#) (FTOÉ). “The University of Ottawa’s achievement of Fair Trade status would be a significant step toward getting Fair Trade status for the city.”

FTOÉ has been collaborating with a number of organizations, businesses and community groups to get Fair Trade Town designation for the City of Ottawa by [Fairtrade Canada](#). This would mean greater availability of Fair Trade products city-wide, as well as an official declaration of support from the university administration and municipal leaders.

Ryan Ward, in collaboration with [uOttawa’s Engineers Without Borders chapter](#), is leading the campaign on campus. It has received support from the University administration, including President Allan Rock and the Office of Campus Sustainability.

“Our administration has already been convinced. Now it teeters on the point of student acceptance. I want them to be aware of it and buy into it,” says Ward.

At just under 40,000 students, the University of Ottawa is the largest campus in Ottawa and welcomes students from all corners of the globe. As such, the university is one of Ottawa’s leading ambassadors to the world and is often looked to for leadership on important issues.

Achieving Fair Trade Status would make uOttawa only the second in Canada to do so, after the University of British Columbia.

“Fair Trade is a standard that says that the producer who has made this product has received a minimum wage for their work,” says Ward. “Students are transitioning into independent consumers and should know that Fair Trade is an available ethical option.”

“The campaign has grown exponentially since we realized this spring that Ottawa is ready to become a Fair Trade Town,” adds Creighton. “The support for a Fair Trade Campus at uOttawa is encouraging.”

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Background Information

About Fair Trade: Fair Trade is an alternative and ethical way of doing business with the developing world. Unlike conventional trade which seeks to obtain the lowest possible prices for imported products – no matter what this means for the quality of life of farmers and producers – Fair Trade seeks to ensure that farmers are able to live a life of dignity.

About Fair Trade Ottawa Équitable: Fair Trade Ottawa Équitable is a group of community

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members focused on promoting the availability of fair trade products while at the same time raising awareness about fair trade issues. Our goal is to collaborate with all members of the community from the municipality, students, government leaders, local business, and the general public. <http://www.fairtradeottawa.ca>

About EWB uOttawa:

EWB uOttawa is the official chapter of EWB at the University of Ottawa. It brings together students who are passionate about international development to focus on challenges to human development and connecting Canadians to Africa, including via Fair Trade. EWB uOttawa also works with the chapters at Carleton University and the Ottawa City Network. <http://www.uottawa.ewb.ca/>

About Fairtrade Canada: Fairtrade Canada is a national, non-profit Fair Trade certification organization, and the only Canadian member of Fairtrade International (formerly the Fairtrade Labelling Organization). The Fair Trade Towns campaign is an exciting initiative that encourages communities to support Fair Trade at the local level and seeks to increase availability and awareness of Fair Trade Certified products. <http://fairtrade.ca/en/get-involved/fair-trade-towns>