

## **QCGN Mourns the Loss of Community Advocate, Dr. Victor Goldbloom**

**For immediate release**

**Montreal – February 17, 2016** - The Quebec Community Groups Network and Quebec's English-speaking community were greatly saddened by the news of Dr. Victor Goldbloom's passing this week.

"Dr. Goldbloom was a passionate ambassador for our community and a diplomat who spoke wisely and with great authority on our behalf," commented QCGN Director General Sylvia Martin-Laforge.

For more than a decade Dr. Goldbloom was the MNA for the Montreal riding of D'Arcy-McGee. He was the first member of the Jewish community to become a provincial cabinet minister and was named by Premier Robert Bourassa to become the first ever Environment Minister in Quebec. He later served as Minister of Municipal Affairs.

Following an illustrious political career, Dr. Goldbloom resigned from provincial politics in October of 1979. He spent seven years as President and CEO of the Canadian Council of Christians and Jews and from 1991 until 1999, he was Canada's Commissioner of Official Languages

On top of his many other volunteer commitments, which includes his roles as honorary president of the Jules and Paul-Émile Léger Foundation and president of Jewish Immigrant Aid Services of Montreal, Dr. Goldbloom was chair of Quebec Jewish Congress, the Quebec Division of Canadian Jewish Congress. He also chaired the Board of the Health and Social Services Agency of the Island of Montreal for more than a decade from 2002 till 2015.

In 2012, Dr. Victor Goldbloom was recognized by the Vatican for his lifelong leadership in promoting Catholic-Jewish relations. A pioneer in interfaith dialogue locally, nationally, and internationally, he received the Pontifical Equestrian Order of St. Sylvester Pope and Martyr from Pope Benedict XVI.

In 1983, Dr. Goldbloom was made a Member of the Order of Canada and, in 2000, he became a Companion – the country's highest distinction. In 1991, he was also made an Officer of l'Ordre national du Québec. He and his wife Sheila are one of the few couples to be honoured with both the Order of Canada and l'Ordre national du Québec.

The QCGN so admired the work of Dr. and Mrs. Goldbloom, that when the Network established an award to recognize individuals who have gone 'above-and-beyond' in contributing to the vitality and understanding of English-speaking Quebec, it decided to name the Sheila and Victor Goldbloom Distinguished Community Service Award," said QCGN Board Member Irene Tschernomor, who has chaired the jury for Award for the past five years.

"For more than a half century, Dr. Goldbloom and Mrs. Goldbloom invested their talents and skills for the betterment of the community, and inspired others through their outstanding contributions to the vitality and reputation of English-speaking Quebec," said Tschernomor. "They truly represent the values of community leadership and dedication for which this recognition was created."

"Dr. Goldbloom was active and committed to Canada's official languages communities until the very end," said QCGN President Dan Lamoureux, noting that the former commissioner was scheduled to be a part of the QCGN delegation to parliamentary hearings on Bill 86 in the coming weeks.

Just before Christmas, Dr. Goldbloom led a group of community leaders decrying the provincial education reform bill and its potential impact on the right of minority language communities – both English-speaking Quebec and French-language communities outside Quebec - to control and manage their own institutions.

It was not the first time Dr. Goldbloom advised community leaders on issues that impacted English-speaking Quebec.

"Dr. Goldbloom was an active listener who understood the community and provided sage advice based on his vast experience as a politician, as the former commission and, most especially, as an engaged member of Quebec's English-speaking minority community," said Martin-Laforge. "Members of the QCGN, our Board of Directors, and our staff greatly admired him as an advocate for Quebec's English-speaking community. He will always be remembered for his contributions, and will be greatly missed."

Dr. and Mrs. Goldbloom have three children who are equally active in their communities. Michael, presently the Principal of Bishop's University, was the former Publisher of The Gazette and of The Toronto Star, and a past President of Alliance Quebec. Jonathan is the founder and president of Jonathan Goldbloom & Associates, a Montreal communications firm. Their daughter Susan Restler lives in Brooklyn, New York, and is co-founder of Knowledge in the Public Interest which offers strategic and financial consultation services to non-profit organizations.

The funeral for Dr. Goldbloom will be held at noon on Friday at Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom, 4100 Sherbrooke West. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to your charity of choice. The family has suggested the charities could include the [Fondation Notre Home Foundation](#), a newly incorporated charitable foundation that aims to support the vitality of Quebec's English-speaking community.

The Quebec Community Groups Network ([www.qcgn.ca](http://www.qcgn.ca)) is a not-for-profit organization bringing together 48 English-language community organizations across Quebec. As a centre of evidence-based expertise and collective action, it identifies, explores and addresses strategic issues affecting the development and

vitality of the English-speaking community of Quebec and encourages dialogue and collaboration among its member organizations, individuals, community groups, institutions and leaders.

**For further information:**

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