

## MEDIA RELEASE

*For Immediate Release*

### **CANADIAN DIABETES ASSOCIATION CELEBRATES 90<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF CANADA'S GREATEST GIFT TO THE WORLD**

*Twenty-five words changed the fate of millions*

**LONDON, ONTARIO (Oct. 29, 2010)** – One of the greatest gifts Canada has given the world will be celebrated this Sunday at Banting House National Historic Site of Canada located in London, Ont. with the unveiling of a three-metre high sculpture to commemorate the birth of Sir Frederick Banting's brilliant idea that led to the discovery of insulin. Banting House National Historic Site of Canada is a public site dedicated to the historic significance of Sir Frederick Banting.

“The Canadian Diabetes Association is at the forefront of the effort to improve the quality of life for the millions of Canadians and people around the world living with diabetes, and to ultimately find a cure,” said Michael Cloutier, president and CEO of the Canadian Diabetes Association. “We wouldn't be where we're at had it not been for Banting's miraculous idea and one of the greatest gifts Canada has given the world.”

Designed by local artist Daniel Castillo, the sculpture will be unveiled in Sir Frederick G. Banting Square at Banting House National Historic Site of Canada.

“The sculpture will serve as a symbol of the ongoing research conducted around the world in search of a cure for diabetes, and how the world continues to look to Canada and the Canadian Diabetes Association as world class experts in the field of diabetes management and research,” added Cloutier.

Banting's idea came to him in the middle of the night on Oct. 31, 1920. At that time, diabetes was a slow but sure death sentence that generally affected people under the age of 30 and resulted in very high levels of glucose in the bloodstream.

Banting had been reading up on the pancreas – something about which he admittedly knew very little – in preparation for a lecture he had been asked to deliver. He had also recently reviewed literature which proved that diabetes could be artificially caused in dogs by removing the pancreas. Contemplating these thoughts while on the verge of sleep, Banting suddenly sat bolt upright in bed with an idea. In his bedside notebook, he wrote down words that suggested a connection between the hormone produced by the pancreas and the body's ability to process sugar. Those 25 words changed the world, leading to the most important medical discovery of the 20<sup>th</sup> century – the discovery of insulin.

This Sunday's historic milestone celebration also marks the beginning of Diabetes Awareness Month, held every November internationally. Visit [diabetes.ca](http://diabetes.ca) to see the stories of incredible supporters across Canada – who are living healthy with diabetes, advocating for the cause and breaking ground towards a cure.

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### **Interesting facts about Sir Frederick Banting**

- Sir Frederick Banting and Dr. Charles Best recently received Maclean's magazine's prestigious title of greatest Canadian innovators for discovering insulin – delivering hope to millions.
- Recently voted the fourth greatest Canadian of all time in CBC's The Greatest Canadian Contest.
- Was the youngest person in the history of the world to receive the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in 1923.
- An accomplished artist, Banting was best friends with the Group of Seven's A.Y. Jackson.
- Was a decorated hero in World War I.
- Had Canada's first man-rated centrifuge built in Ontario.
- Had first decompression chamber built in Toronto, second one in London – this is the technology that to this day allows for the pressurization of cockpits in airplanes.

### **About the Canadian Diabetes Association**

Today, more than nine million Canadians live with diabetes or prediabetes. Across the country, the Canadian Diabetes Association is leading the fight against diabetes by helping people with diabetes live healthy lives while we work to find a cure. Our community-based network of supporters help us provide education and services to people living with diabetes, advocate for our cause, break ground towards a cure and translate research into practical applications. For more information, please visit [diabetes.ca](http://diabetes.ca) or call 1-800-BANTING (226-8464).

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