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***Local University Student Volunteers for Huntington Society of Canada on her Study Breaks***

(Kitchener, ON) April 4, 2014 – Volunteers are at the heart of the Huntington Society of Canada (HSC) community. Our volunteers tell a powerful story of caring people who pull together to improve the quality of life for Canadians impacted by Huntington disease (HD). To celebrate National Volunteer Week the Huntington Society of Canada is honouring Ally Hurst’s volunteer work in her community of Halifax, Nova Scotia and the impact she has across Canada.

Growing up in a family affected by HD, Ally Hurst got to know the Huntington Society at an early age. She remembers all the encouragement and support her family received from the local HSC Resource Centre Director, who would take her out for regular one-on-one chats. The local chapter was always there for her by helping her families navigate through the tricky waters of Huntington disease. As time went on, she has gotten more involved with the organization, participating in conferences and helping to start YPAHD, the national youth chapter of the Huntington Society of Canada.

Ally will be graduating this year and starting her career as a pharmacist. Wedding bells are also in her immediate future as she plans to move out west with her fianc  Justin and continue volunteering for HSC. “The Huntington Society of Canada is something that is really close to my heart, I would rather spend my time and money on that than on anything else,” Ally says.

“HSC’s volunteers are the heart and soul of this organization. It is our volunteer core that makes real differences in the lives of individuals and families affected by Huntington disease. Actively raising awareness in their communities, advocating for the rights of those affected by HD, and raising funds that contribute to groundbreaking research triumphs, are just some of the inspiration that our volunteers provide us to continue to aspire toward a reliable treatment for HD.” says Devin Bonner, National Chapter Development Manager of the Huntington Society of Canada.

The Huntington Society of Canada would like to thank each and every one of the volunteers across the country. The hard work and dedication of the many HSC volunteers is deeply appreciated by the Society.

Help celebrate National Volunteer Week in Canada, now in its 72<sup>nd</sup> year. This week is all about recognizing the hard-working volunteers that make a difference in Canada. National Volunteer Week originated to thank the women for the contribution they made to the war effort on the home front. It has now grown to be the largest celebration of civic participation in Canada.

Huntington disease is a debilitating brain disorder that is fatal and incurable. About one in every 7,000 Canadians has HD and approximately one in every 5,500 are at-risk of developing the disease. Many more are touched by HD whether as a caregiver, a family member, or a friend. Huntington disease is devastating for both the body and the mind. The symptoms, which may include uncontrollable jerking movements and relentless cognitive and emotional impairment,

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usually present between the ages of 30 and 45, and gradually worsen over the 10-25 year course of the disease. Eventually they lead to total incapacitation and death.

The Huntington Society of Canada is a respected leader in the worldwide effort to end Huntington disease. HSC is the only national health charity dedicated to providing help and hope for families dealing with Huntington disease across Canada.

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