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UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA
French Common Law Program

Statement by:

The Honourable Claudette Tardif

Thursday, November 8, 2012

THE SENATE

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[*Translation*]

UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA

FRENCH COMMON LAW PROGRAM

Hon. Claudette Tardif (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, on Friday, November 2, 2012, I had the honour of being invited to speak at the annual dinner for the French common law program and the Canadian law program.

This French dinner is an important annual event for the University of Ottawa's common law section. It serves to promote access to justice in French and brings together professors, students and friends of the two programs. The French dinner is also a good opportunity to recognize the accomplishments of lawyers and the academic achievements of the students enrolled in the program.

This year, Nathalie Des Rosiers, a full professor of civil law at the University of Ottawa, won the Bastarache-Charron award in recognition of her outstanding contribution in the area of civil liberties.

The French common law program welcomes 60 new students every year. It is designed to respond to the needs of Franco-Ontarians for both French legal education and legal services and also to train francophones from other provinces.

Students in the French program must take all of their compulsory courses and at least 75 per cent of their upper year courses in French, with French being the language of instruction and evaluation. Lawyers able to practise law in both official languages have a distinct advantage in Canada's national market and in the international market.

The French common law program plays a crucial role in training lawyers in French for the entire country. The needs of francophones when it comes to accessing justice in French are significant. Thanks to this program, we can count on lawyers who can communicate in French and who can meet those needs, while also playing a leadership role in offering judicial and legal services in French in all regions of the country.

Our expectations regarding the next generation of French-speaking, qualified legal experts are high and are justified. Thanks to these students, we can look forward to a society in which everyone's rights are respected.
