

## **CEMC Expands Mathematics Outreach to The Gambia in West Africa**

WATERLOO, Ont. (Monday, January 25, 2010) - The Centre for Education in Mathematics and Computing (CEMC) has signed an agreement to expand their activities in mathematics to The Gambia in West Africa.

The agreement with the Youth Care Foundation (YCF) includes five years of support to help facilitate math teacher training programs, assist with mathematics contests like the Great Olympiad Mathematics Competition (GOMC), and encourage the formation of clubs and summer projects in mathematics.



*Left to Right: Emmanuel Babatunde (Development Officer YCF), Kolapo Abdul (Founder and Chair YCF) and Steve Furino (CEMC).*

"This is an outstanding step forward," said Ian VanderBurgh, Director of the CEMC. "Plans are well underway with the YCF. We are very excited about the new ways in which we can make a positive contribution to mathematics education in Africa."

Africa has an acute shortage of skilled labour and mathematically skilled workers. CEMC outreach activities will encourage participation in mathematics and provide opportunities in skills development for students and teachers in The Gambia. Abraham A. Joof (Acting Head of the National Office), West Africa Examination

Council, Banjul believes The Gambia will greatly benefit from the partnership between the YCF and the CEMC.

“Mathematics contests will enhance the interest of students in the subject and improve performance at large,” said Joof. “It will also increase comradeship in competing schools and students. It will help the school administrators, teachers and parents to step up their inputs into the system. The standard will surely be improved.”

CEMC staff have gone on two site visits to the region where they met with Kolapo Abdul (YCF Founder and Chair), Emmanuel Babatunde (YCF Development Officer), local educators, examiners, education officials and embassy staff. Their next visit is expected in April for math teacher training workshops.

**About the YCF:**

The Youth Care Foundation (YCF), The Gambia is a charitable non-governmental youth-oriented organization. It has been actively working since 2004 to enhance the participation and leadership development of young people in the promotion of science and mathematics education.

**About the CEMC:**

Founded in 1995, the CEMC has become Canada’s largest and most recognized outreach organization for promoting and creating activities and materials in mathematics and computer science. Initially, the Centre operated as the Canadian Mathematics Competition running math contests since the 1960s within the University of Waterloo's Faculty of Mathematics. Today, the CEMC has expanded its activities to include additional highly acclaimed contests, web resources, a large series of publications, and face-to-face workshops for students and teachers in elementary and secondary schools across Canada and around the globe.