

Simple Plan Foundation: a rock group's commitment to community action

\$100,000 distributed to organizations working with young people in need

par **Benoit LeBlanc**

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For the first grants to be issued in its history, the Simple Plan Foundation distributed \$100,000 among 17 organizations functioning at a local, provincial, national and international level. The idea of a foundation was conceived in July of 2005 when Simple Plan gave its first benefit concert in Quebec, for the Cité de la Santé Foundation. "The notion surfaced at that time. We asked ourselves why not come to the aid of our fans? We want to tell them it's important to do something with their lives, to have a job, to actualize their passions," recounts Laval's Sébastien Lefebvre, the group's guitarist.

Prior to setting off on their Canadian tour, the five members of Simple Plan dished out the good news about the grants. Notably, a Laval group (OASIS) was on the receiving end of this first wave of generosity from the group's Foundation.

To help the young

"From the start our clear intention was for the Foundation to help young people troubled by drugs, depression, or delinquency, to stay in school. We receive countless emails from fans who tell us of their distress, so we're aware of what they're going through," says drummer Chuck Comeau, the other member of Simple Plan who's from Laval. "We also want to encourage music programs in schools by helping to buy instruments. For sure, music has been a great help in our lives," adds singer Pierre Bouvier, from the North Shore. Members of the band recently gave a nice financial boost to their Collège Beaubois teacher, Robert Montpetit, in recognition of his work in the teaching of music.

An inspiration

Pierre Bouvier and Jeff Stinco (the group's other guitarist), who have particular empathy for those suffering from cancer, help direct some of the Foundation's support in this area, specifically towards the Children's Wish Foundation and Leucan. "We're truly inspired by these people who have a passion and desire to change things," emphasize Jeff Stinco and David Desrosiers (bass player from Matane).

Fund-raising event

Following its first wave of success, the Foundation's new fundraising campaign gets underway August 17, with a brunch that will feature an acoustic concert by Simple Plan, as well as silent and regular auctions.



**Guitarist Sébastien Lefebvre of Laval, a member of the Simple Plan punk-rock group giving back to the community through the Simple Plan Foundation. (Photo: Martin Alarie)
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