



The Apathy is Boring Project Annual Report 2006 Prepared by Ilona Dougherty

1.0 Introduction

Writing this report marks the end of Apathy is Boring's third year. It is amazing that time goes by so quickly and that so much can happen in three years! Our third year marked the fruition of many of our plans, growth from one paid staff to five, and a move to an office to accommodate this growth. It also marked a changing of the guard, Paul Shore one of the three co-founders has left Apathy is Boring to pursue his career in media & film. This report is a brief snapshot of the tremendous year it has been and a look at the phenomenal opportunities that lay ahead.

2.0 Youth in Democracy Goals

In 2006 as part of our evaluation plan for the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation we established four strategic 'Youth in Democracy Goals'. These goals allow us to qualitatively establish our impact in four areas; increasing the youth vote, increasing youth volunteerism, increasing the number of youth issues being raised by the federal government, as well as increasing the number of youth elected to political office. In 2006 and over the course of 2007 we will be establishing benchmarks in these four areas in order to effectively measure our progress. The establishment of these four goals, and as a result a more clear definition of our Mission Statement, marks a big step forward for Apathy is Boring. This will lead to a much clearer picture of the impact our program areas have, and an increase in the effectiveness of our work over the coming years.

3.0 Program Areas

3.1 Website

The brand new Apathy is Boring website went live on October 13th 2006, and it just keeps getting better! With over 4 times our average number of visits in the last two weeks of October alone, and over 10 000 unique visitors in the last three months of 2006, the Apathy is Boring website soft launch has been already been a huge success and we have only just begun.

Number of Unique Visitors to apathyisboring.com:

October 2006:	3857
November 2006:	5296
December 2006:	1816

TOTAL: 10 969

Number of Visitors who participated in our online polls since Oct. 13th: 165

Number of Visitors who created a user profile on our website since Oct. 13th: 88

Total Number of members of Apathy is Boring list serve: 6000

We received a three year grant from the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation in December 2005 and were able to match that (for the first year) with a grant from Telefilm Canada which also went towards the production of our website. The Cultural Human Resources Council grant which we received in June ensured that we would be able to hire a full time website coordinator Rachel Dhawan, who has been instrumental to the development of the site. Plank Design has been an Apathy is Boring partner since the beginning, but this past year has seen their involvement become invaluable as we put the design and technological implementation of the site in their very capable hands. The website now features both informative and interactive features; users can read about our political system, play songs by artists who support Apathy is Boring, post their own action alerts, and vote in our online polls all in English and French.

Features to come include:

- User generated petitions (To be launched in December 2006)
- A photo and video gallery (2007)
- MP Bill Tracking Database (2007-2008)
- User Profiles / User Generated Content (TBA)
- Flash games & videos (2007)
- Email Newsletters (January 2007)
- Celebrity Interviews (John Raulston Saul, Hannah Simone Muchmusic VJ)
- RSS Feeds
- Website translated into Cree & Inuktitut

Our website will continue to grow over the next year, and be the main focus of our viral marketing strategy. We will use techniques pioneered by the music & entertainment industry such as: Street Teams, myspace advertising, and concerts to promote the website. We also hope to continue to work with a variety of NGO partners to share these techniques and offer resources outlining new and cheap ways for NGOs to outreach to young people.

3.2 Youth Friendly Guide

The Youth Friendly website continues to operate, and the Youth Friendly Guide continues to be a useful resource. Sales of the guide have been steady and growing mostly through events and workshops. The most activity in this program area has been presenting workshops throughout Canada most recently in Toronto, Whitehorse, & Montreal. Organizations who have invited us to present include:

Power Camp National

Youth Action Network - Ruckus

Table de concertation des Forums Jeunesse régionaux du Québec

Vanier Catholic Secondary School
Canadian Environmental Network
Development and Peace
Edmonton Chamber of Voluntary Organizations

Participant Comments:

“The talk was worthwhile, I will take away more knowledge than if some old bald guy came in and preached his ideas!”

“I learned a lot about youth awareness, and how I can get involved. Having my opinions heard is very important to me and now I know how I can do this.”

“Merci beaucoup pour l’atelier it was wonderfully interesting! I’ve learnt so many things in just 1 hour and a half, inspiring!”

3.3 Concerts & Events

Apathy is Boring celebrated the launch of our website with an office warming party in our Montreal offices on October 13th 2006. Scratch Bastid & Wilson Heart provided the music while Apathy is Boring staff, partners, friends, and family celebrated the launch of the website.

We also held four concerts over the course of 2006 in Montreal.

Action Through Art Fundraiser

Date: May 24th 2006

Featuring: Free Oxygen, The Irishlys, The Carps & more...

Venue: Green Room / The Main Hall

Artist: Jason Sharp & Mobius

Date: June 11th 2006

Venue: Suoni Del Popolo Festival - Sala Rosa

Artist: Gavin Bradley & Sunshine State (featuring James Bryan)

Date: June 17th 2006

Venue: The Green Room

Artist: Tumi & the Volume, Zaki Ibrahim & Isis (District Six Music)

Date: July 6th 2006

Venue: Main Hall

Over the last year several projects have been in development including Compilation CD “Apathy is Boring: Le Remix” to be released in 2007. Cassin Elliot was hired on a six-month contract to support the development of our concerts & events program area and also support project coordinator Raphael Ettore in the development of the compilation CD.

Apathy is Boring was also able to spread our message in 2006 by tabling at half a dozen concerts & festivals including Our Lady Peace, and Osheaga where we

were able to add many names to our list serve, and more than 100 people to our list of volunteers. A brand new partnership with Gillett Entertainment Group will see Apathy is Boring tabling at an increasing number of concerts, and also holding bigger and better events of our own including a website launch concert in February 2007. Some NGO partners who have come on board to be involved in this concert include: Table de concertation des Forums Jeunesse régionaux du Québec, Institute for Canadian Citizenship, & Rights & Democracy.

3.4 Gear

Following the November 2005 launch of our online store our focus in 2006 was sales at events, festivals & concerts have helped us get the Apathy is Boring word out there and on to bodies.

Events we have sold our clothing included: Expozine, Souk, Osheaga Music Festival, Our Lady Peace concert, Power Camp National Retreat and many more.

Some celebrities who wear our clothes are Raine Maida, John Ralston Saul, Melissa Auf Der Maur, and Nelly Furtado.

3.5 Election Campaign

So far this year there has been no federal election campaign, this is the first non election year in our history! However this program area was not without activity Apathy is Boring continues to receive requests for media interviews during municipal, and provincial elections even though we don't actively promote our work at the municipal or provincial level. This is likely because Apathy is Boring is the ONLY National organization that focuses on engaging youth in the democratic process all year round regardless of the election cycle.

Apathy is Boring was the subject of interviews with Ontario media during the Ontario municipal elections, there was clearly a need that Apathy is Boring filled giving interviews on voter participation, and tips for parents about how to talk to their kids about politics.

Apathy is Boring also continued to prep our election strategy for the next federal election. We continue to develop tools such as such as a Candidates Kit, and materials aimed at encouraging young people to vote. And we also continue to work to establish benchmarks in this program area.

4.0 Capacity Building & Marketing

Capacity building highlights from 2006:

Human Resources

- Development of volunteer list & program.
- Silviu Mahili, intern from Concordia's School of Community & Public Affairs.
- Amelia Clarke hired to develop an evaluation plan for Apathy is Boring.

- Hosting Nelly Desrosiers, CLC Francophone Coordinator from Taking It Global
- Web Insight (Peter & Don) & Tad Hargrave facilitated training days with staff.
- First Executive Director Evaluation + Establishing Evaluation Benchmarks

Fundraising and Financial Stability

- Development of Sponsorship Kit
- Grants from Telefilm Canada & CHRC.
- The addition of Bookkeeper Timothy White to our team & Pro Bono Accountant Danny Rosenfeld.
- Donations page on our website has already resulted in three donations of Furniture!

Office and Infrastructure

- Our new office at 10 Pins West with work spaces for 7 of us, including interns & volunteers, as well as a dance studio and meeting area.

Board and Advisory Board

- Development of an active Board of Directors
- Continued development of our Advisory Board

Marketing Highlights from 2006:

- Development of a myspace profile
- Development of a Taking IT Global profile
- Media who took notice of us this last year included: Toronto Star, CBC Radio, CBC Television (Make Some Noise), Much Music, Now Toronto...
- Continued additions to our list serve and volunteer list.
- The Shadow Reports (produced by Paul Shore) aired on CBC TV.

6.0 Lessons Learned

This year Apathy is Boring grew an enormous amount. The primary lessons learned centered around building an organization that has the appropriate infrastructure and capacity to be sustainable. It was also a challenge to integrate new staff and volunteers into the already existing organizational culture. To cope with this challenge Apathy is Boring has created alliances with mentors who have experience in management, and organizational development. We have also begun holding a monthly brainstorming / training day for all staff, volunteers & board members of Apathy is Boring. This has been extremely helpful in integrating new people into our organizational culture, and dealing with the growth and change at Apathy is Boring.

Another major lesson this year was learning that developing sustainable self-financing takes much longer, and much more resources than anticipated. It will be an ongoing process over the foreseeable future to make this part of our operations effective, and profitable.

7.0 Looking Forward

Apathy is Boring looks forward to another full year in 2007. Our aim is to maintain our current capacity and continue building our infrastructure in order to increase

our effectiveness. We hope to find resources to further develop our youth friendly, gear, and election program areas, and we will continue to see our website develop with a growing focus on marketing. The future as always is exciting and full of challenges, and we look forward to tackling them.

8.0 Our Team

Board of Directors: Victor Shiffman, Hannah Wizman, Cynthia Gervais, David Prodan Michael Lenczner, Jonathan F. Lebensold, & Yassin

Advisory Board: Stephen Toope & Alexandre Trudeau.

Full Time Staff:

Ilona Dougherty, Executive Director (January 2004 – present)
Mackenzie Duncan, Creative Director (January 2004 – present)
Raphael Ettore, Compilation CD Project Coordinator (January 2005 – present)
Cass Elliot, Outreach & Promotions Coordinator (April 2006 – December 2006)
Rachel Dhawan, Website & Fundraising Coordinator (July 2006 – present)
Paul Shore, Media & Fundraising Director (January 2004 – July 2006)

Part Time, Contract Staff & Interns:

Tim White, Bookkeeper (September 2006 – present)
Amelia Clarke, Evaluation Consultant (May 2006 – present)
Paul Guelpa, Online Store Development (August 2005 – February 2006)
Justin Clemont, SCPA Concordia University (October 2005 – April 2006)
Silviu Mihali, SCPA Concordia University (Summer 2006)

Our Star Volunteers:

Claire Elissalde, Jessica Gilbert, Wilson Heart, Brooke Miechkota, Kimberly Senf, Brooke Van Moosel Forester, Kimmie Fuller, Claudette Lauvencin, Kristen Brewer, Aaron Reaume, Terra Findley.

9.0 Special Thanks to:

Outgoing president of our Board of Directors Yassin for all his work, and artistic inspiration, co-Founder Paul Shore for his tireless work and ongoing support, the artists we work with especially Chris Brown, K'naan, Tumi & the Volume & Melissa Auf Der Maur and our sponsors & partners; Plank Design, QA Productions Inc., Table de concertation des Forums Jeunesse régionaux du Québec, Taking It Global, Mercury Sun, Go Vote Coalition, District Six Music, The Dept. of Canadian Heritage, & The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation, Telefilm Canada, and Cultural Human Resources Council.