



BC Achievement Foundation

****EMBARGOED UNTIL 12:00pm PST, Monday, April 27, 2020****

2020 BC Achievement Community Awardees Announced

VANCOUVER – Premier John Horgan and Anne Giardini, OC, OBC, QC, Chair of the BC Achievement Foundation, today named this year’s recipients of the BC Achievement Community Award, marking the 17th offering of these awards.

“These days more than ever, our communities are made stronger by British Columbians who go above and beyond,” said Premier John Horgan. “Thanks go to all of the BC Achievement 2020 Community Award recipients for helping build a better province for everyone.”

“It is an honour to celebrate the excellence and dedication of these twenty-five outstanding British Columbians,” added Giardini. “On behalf of all of us at the BC Achievement Foundation, I thank each of them for strengthening their communities and inspiring others to community action.”

The recipients of the 2020 Community Award are:

Aisha Amijee, Surrey
Dr. Paige Axelrod, Vancouver
Domingo (Dom) Bautista, Richmond
Duncan Bernardo, Vancouver
Morgan Churchill, Fort St. John
Dr. Mary Anne Cooper, Port Moody
Carolyn Duerksen, Prince George
Lorrie Fleming, 70 Mile House
Julie Fowler, Wells
Bonnie Harvey, Cranbrook
Gloria Kravac, Burnaby
Larissa Lapierre, Port Coquitlam
Steve Little, Terrace
Jacqueline Macgregor, Chilliwack
Myles Mattila, Kelowna
Valerie Murray, Victoria
Leigh Pearson, Coldstream
Sarjeet Purewal, Surrey



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John Ranta, Cache Creek
Ivan Sayers, Vancouver
Steven (Steve) Sorensen, Sooke
Carolina Tatoosh, Port Alberni
Jim Terrion, Prince George
Dr. Andrea Walsh, Victoria
Shayne Williams, New Westminster

An independent committee selects the recipients of the BC Achievement Community Award. The 2020 selection committee members are Mayor Lee Brain of Prince Rupert, Mayor Michelle Staples of Duncan, and past recipients, Lolly Bennett, Aart Schuurman Hess and Andy Yu.

The recipients of the 2020 Community Award will be recognized in a formal presentation ceremony in Victoria, in the presence of the Honourable Janet Austin, OBC, Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia. Each recipient will receive a certificate and a medallion designed by BC artist Robert Davidson, OC. Due to COVID-19, the ceremony planned for the end of April has been postponed to a future date to be announced.

The BC Achievement Foundation is an independent foundation established in 2003 whose mission is to honour excellence and inspire achievement. The BC Achievement Community Award was the first initiative of the foundation, followed by the Carter Wosk Award in Applied Art and Design, BC's National Award in Canadian Non-Fiction (2005-2018), the Fulmer Award in First Nations Art, and the Indigenous Business Award.

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Learn more about the BC Achievement at: www.bcachievement.com



2020 Community Award – Backgrounders

Aisha Amijee, Surrey

Aisha Amijee is an advocate for women’s empowerment, social justice and reformative community-based education. As executive director of Voices of Muslim Women, Aisha’s leadership has provided women with the tools to lead effectively and feel empowered from within their communities. Her initiatives have addressed gaps in education for marginalized youth of colour, and Muslim girls and women, while challenging existing stereotypes.

Dr. Paige Axelrood, Vancouver

As the founder of the Scientist in Residence Program, Dr. Paige Axelrood developed and built an educational program to support teachers and help students discover their inner scientist. Elementary students across the Vancouver School District have experienced real science and discovered the natural world through the Scientist in Residence Program. Paige’s vision to partner teachers with scientists to facilitate hands-on, inquiry-based lessons has helped change the delivery of science education.

Domingo (Dom) Bautista, Richmond

For 25 years, Domingo (Dom) Bautista has trained members of the legal profession in litigation procedures. In 2010, Dom launched Amici Curiae Friendship Society to provide legal services to help vulnerable individuals, including Indigenous neighbours and victims of gendered violence, obtain access to the justice system regardless of their means. Dom leads a formidable team of paralegals, lawyers, law students and others, all working on a pro bono basis to deliver access to justice throughout BC communities.

Duncan Bernardo, Vancouver

Duncan Bernardo is the co-founder and president of BC Newcomer Camp – a free annual summer camp program for refugee children. His efforts provide a fun and engaging environment enabling refugee children to feel more welcome in their new city while building their confidence. As a youth leader, Duncan’s vision has helped change and direct the lives of the camp participants.

Morgan Churchill, Fort St. John

Morgan Churchill is the Children’s Services and Program Coordinator for the Fort St. John Public Library. A mentor to colleagues and parents, Morgan inspires achievement in early childhood education and has successfully built relationships with other organizations, newcomers, and the School District while working diligently to ensure the library and community at large is a safe and educational space.



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Dr. Mary Anne Cooper, Port Moody

At the age of 105, Dr. Mary Anne Cooper is a champion of heritage preservation and celebration. Mary Anne works to ensure that her community maintains a deep appreciation for its public green spaces and supports the loco Townsite revitalization project. Mary Anne is a regular participant at city council meetings and actively advocates for the challenges seniors face today.

Carolyn Duerksen, Prince George

Carolyn Duerksen has been a leader in the musical community of Prince George for over 25 years. As founder of the PRINCE GEORGE Tapestry Singers, Carolyn has built a community-based chorale ensemble that ranks among the top youth choruses in BC. Her collaborations with other organizations and local groups reflect her dedication to community engagement through music and song.

Lorrie Fleming, 70 Mile House

As founder of the Canadian Route 66 Association in 1996, Lorrie Fleming has generated a harmonious legacy to connect the corridor between the famed Route 66 (USA) collectively with Route 97 and 99 (BC Heritage Highways). A champion for rural communities, Lorrie's cross border initiatives in popular culture and arising economic strategies have given a voice to the stories of those who live and work in her region.

Julie Fowler, Wells

For two decades, Julie Fowler has provided leadership in the arts, not only in her home community of Wells, but throughout the province. As executive and artistic director of Island Mountain Arts and founder of the ArtsWells Festival, Julie has worked to establish her community as a nationally recognized centre of artistic excellence while committing resources and time to empowering contemporary Indigenous artists.

Bonnie Harvey, Cranbrook

A champion for the Ktunaxa First Nation, Bonnie Harvey is committed to ensuring its language and culture live on. Serving as its Education Ambassador, Bonnie also has supported governance, community and cultural programs as an active volunteer for the past 20 years. An advocate within the school system, Bonnie shares her knowledge, allowing others to learn more about the Ktunaxa people.



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Gloria Kravac, Burnaby

At 91 years, Gloria Kravac inspires seniors to connect with others and enjoy life as a Citizen Support Services volunteer. Gloria served as the first Chair of the Voices of Burnaby Seniors Task Force and later as Co-Chair of its Seniors' Transportation Committee. Gloria's volunteer commitment stems from her past service as a member of the Better at Home Advisory Committee and Dementia Friendly Communities for the City of Burnaby.

Larissa Lapierre, Port Coquitlam

As the President of the Tri Cities Female Ice Hockey Association since 2015, Larissa Lapierre elevates female hockey. Her leadership has improved opportunities for female hockey players while addressing the needs of individual players and their families. Thanks to Larissa's vision, the association continues to grow in all aspects of its program delivery, offering enriched sport experiences for hundreds of youth.

Steve Little, Terrace

Steve Little is well known as a DJ at CFNR-FM. He has donated his time and talents to support and raise funds for the Terrace and District Community Services Society, the Salvation Army and the Kidney Foundation to name a few. A guitar teacher, musician and mentor to many, Steve's leadership inspires his fellow community members to give back and make their local community better.

Jacqueline Macgregor, Chilliwack

An admired palliative care nurse, Jacqueline Macgregor has provided great comfort during life's most difficult moments for many families. From her storied career as a nurse and team lead at Cascade Hospice to her ongoing involvement with Chilliwack Society for Community Living and weekend care of a girl with disabilities, Jacqueline is constantly providing supportive care to those who profoundly need it.

Myles Mattila, Kelowna

Myles Mattila is a youth advocate for mental health, concussion awareness and civic engagement. As founder of MindRight for Athletes Society, Myles developed a referral network program for players, coaches and referees to help reduce the stigma and isolation associated with mental health issues. He spearheads numerous efforts to transform young player care by focusing on early intervention and peer-to-peer outreach efforts.



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Valerie Murray, Victoria

Valerie Murray's leadership has enhanced the Victoria community, as Head Gardener for Friends of Government House Garden Society and through her volunteer efforts as one of the founding members of Breakfast2Music (B2M). Valerie's vision for B2M developed breakfast and music programs in School District 61 and raised substantial funding to support them. At Government House, Valerie inspires her team to bring both unity and innovation to the grounds, providing an engaging visitor experience.

Leigh Pearson, Coldstream

For over 35 years, Leigh Pearson has served as a volunteer member of Vernon Search and Rescue (SAR). Known for its natural beauty, Vernon is popular with outdoor enthusiasts and dependent upon the expertise of its SAR team. Leigh has personally managed more than 600 searches and helped to establish the Vernon SAR Helicopter Winch Program, the first one in Canada, which has improved patient outcomes and saved lives.

Sarjeet Purewal, Surrey

Sarjeet Purewal works with the Surrey Anti-Gang Family Empowerment Program as a Family Counsellor with the Pacific Community Resources Society and Options SAFE Team. Throughout her committed career as a community leader, Sarjeet has helped South Asian parents build family relationships with their vulnerable youth who are involved in high-risk activities. She ensures families are connected to the services they need to increase family strengths and reduce isolation.

John Ranta, Cache Creek

As Mayor of the Village of Cache Creek for 28 consecutive years, John Ranta made his community more appealing, accessible, and safer for residents while ensuring taxes remained low and the Village became 100% debt free. He helped to create the Landfill Legacy Fund providing ongoing funds for major projects. Known for his leadership, John also served as President of the Union of BC Municipalities and Chair of the Thompson Nicola Regional District where he united a 26-member board. John's calm strength and steady voice guided communities through BC's largest wildfires and devastating floods.

Ivan Sayers, Vancouver

Ivan Sayers is the Honorary Curator of the BC Society for Museum of Original Costume and Curator Emeritus, Museum of Vancouver. Specializing in the study of women's, men's, and children's fashions from 1700 to the present, Ivan has produced historical fashion shows and museum exhibitions all over western North America. A lecturer and mentor, his fashion shows have supported countless non-profits over the years.



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Steven (Steve) Sorensen, Sooke

Steven (Steve) Sorensen served 36 years with the Sooke Fire Department leading initiatives to improve emergency services in his region and beyond. Steve built strategic relationships and developed programs to address the lack of resources for those affected by fires and facilitate training opportunities for first responders. His vision of cooperation and resource sharing resulted in strengthened mutual aid agreements with neighbouring municipalities.

Carolina Tatoosh, Port Alberni

Carolina Tatoosh is member of the Hupačasath, Nuuchahnulth and Alberni Valley communities. For over 20 years Carolina has served the community in the role of youth/elder worker for the Hupačasath First Nation and developed relationships with schools, youth, elders, families, RCMP, other nations and service providers. Using her sense of creativity, Carolina facilitates opportunities for youth and elders to share Hupačasath language and culture.

Jim Terrion, Prince George

Since 1990, Jim Terrion has single-handedly raised close to \$800,000 for the Terry Fox Foundation with a goal to reach one million dollars by 2024! Jim, who was born deaf, goes door-to-door, visiting communities throughout Northern British Columbia in an effort to keep Terry's dream alive by raising funds to support cancer research.

Dr. Andrea Walsh, Victoria

A visual anthropologist at the University of Victoria, Dr. Andrea Walsh has worked to identify and, in many cases, return children's art to Survivors of Indian Residential and Day Schools in Canada. Working closely with Survivors and their families, regional museums, and public galleries in British Columbia, she has curated exhibitions of the children's artworks as part of her work as an Honourary Witness to Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Shayne Williams, New Westminster

Shayne Williams is a 'community development change leader' and a champion for services that address homelessness, mental health and community outreach. As CEO of the Lookout group of charities, Shayne's dedication and vision have saved the lives of many in the province of BC. His focus on innovation and creativity have brought services and communities together, making them better, stronger and more resilient.