

## About Past Deryck Thomson Award Recipients

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The **Deryck Thomson Award** is awarded to an individual or organization that has made a significant contribution to social planning and that has helped to advance social justice in BC. The presentation of the Deryck Thomson Award represents a way to recognize and acknowledge the tireless work and commitment of individuals and organizations across BC who are committed to working together to build a just and healthy society for all.

### **2024/2025 Debora DeLyzer, People in Motion – Memories in Motion Program**

Debora DeLyzer is the Executive Director for People in Motion Kamloops and is nominated for her vision of working to build a more inclusive world through her efforts to bring ‘non-traditional partners’ together to support the development of her Memories in Motion Program – a community-based, people-centered transportation service designed to ensure that people with disabilities and those with health and activity limitations can participate in the little things that bring joy in life or get the support that they need when dealing with a health crisis and where they do not have to worry about transportation.

### **Elder Lorelei Hawkins**

Elder Lorelei Hawkins is an Indigenous Elder who works in Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside and who is nominated for her wisdom and commitment to addressing the issues of poverty and homelessness in BC and for the way in which she helps to continue to build bridges between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people and communities in a good way. Lorelei’s story starts with her being taken away from her family just as she was turning five years old and then describes her experience as she cycled through twenty-two different foster homes, was forced into the residential school system, and experienced domestic violence as a young woman in her first marriage which resulted in her becoming homeless. Lorelei is passionate about ensuring that people have a place where they can live, a door that they can close, and a place that they can truly call their home.

### **Marla Reed, Dawson Creek Community Living Society**

Marla Reed is known across the Peace River Regional District for her belief in ‘radical inclusion’, and her commitment to working to ensure that all citizens have their basic needs met. In addition to her longtime commitment to inclusion for people with intellectual and development disabilities through her role as the Executive Director for the Dawson Creek Society for Community Living, Marla has also become actively engaged in working to ensure that seniors living in the Peace River Regional District are able to get access to the services and supports they need to successfully age in place. This included the development of a trial program which was launched in 2020 with the support of the regional district and was designed to deliver home cooked meals to seniors living in the Peace River region. Covering 12,000 square kilometers and 168 locations, the program was recognized for its innovation, creativity and caring.

### **Mike Stiles, Accessibility Advocate and Paralympian**

It does not take long when visiting the Town of Osoyoos before the name of Mike Stiles comes up when talking about accessibility. Mike Stiles is a long-time advocate for accessibility and inclusion and is nominated for the innovative ways that he has helped to create a more inclusive world through his commitment to creating social and recreational opportunities for

everyone both within the context of his role on the Town's Accessibility and Age Friendly Committee and as a private citizen.

#### **Gary Thandi, Moving Forward Family Services**

Moving Forward Family Services is a non-profit society and charitable organization that offers free short-term and affordable longer-term counselling options for people across British Columbia who are unable to access affordable local support. Gary Thandi is the principle and founder of Moving Forward Family Services and oversees an innovative low-barrier approach to the provision of counselling services and his commitment to ensuring that cost is never a barrier and that anyone who needs access to counselling. Over the past year, 22,000 people were assisted through Gary's program entitled Moving Families Forward, including 15,000 individuals who received services for free while others paid an average of \$5 dollars to \$7 dollars per session.

#### **Jesse Veal, Lived Expertise**

Jesse Veal first started working on addressing issues of addiction through *One Stop Shop* – a peer-led and peer-designed program that was established to remove barriers to services and supports to housing, treatment and other resources through the provision of outreach and navigation supports. This includes working with individuals to secure ID, as well as working to help to ensure that people who need assistance accessing detox and other treatment services have the support that they need. Jesse has now moved on to *Helping Hands Universal Services* where he continues provide peer-based education and support in a caring and non-stigmatizing way for people struggling with addictions.

#### **2023/2024 Kitselas First Nation and the Kitselas Five Tier System Initiative (K5T)**

The Kitselas Five Tier System (K5T) which builds on Indigenous ways of being and knowing to support social and economic development and well-being. Through this initiative, the Kitselas First Nation provides a holistic set of wraparound supports and culturally relevant skills training and employment services for Indigenous peoples in Northwest BC. Initially supported by the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills, the K5T model has been successful in supporting more than 600 people, 87% of whom have gone on to employment or further education through the provision of personalized, accessible services, and wraparound supports including health, housing, childcare, nutrition and transportation.

#### **Cristina Schneider and the Gateway of Hope Yoga Initiative**

The Gateway of Hope is an emergency shelter in Langley that provides services for individuals experiencing homelessness. Fraser noted that the Gateway of Hope under the leadership of Cristina Schneider, has been doing a tremendous job of breaking down barriers while working to build a true sense of belonging and inclusion among those accessing the services of the shelter. The Gateway of Hope Yoga Program, led by Cristina Schneider, is a powerful example of how small acts of kindness and caring can make a big difference. Cristina is recognized for her tremendous leadership in the provision of supportive services and for her passion around building a truly welcoming and inclusive environment.

#### **Dr Evelyn Zeller and Norm Leech for The Restorative City Collective**

The Restorative City Collective is an unprecedented team of diverse voices offering wisdom and insights from Indigenous-led organizations, as well as service providers, the City of Vancouver's Parks and Recreation Department, the School Board, policing, courts, corrections and business associations with the goal of uplifting the humanity of all people while respecting land, water and

relations. Led by Dr. Evelyn Zeller from Peace of the Circle, an international expert on restorative justice, and working in partnership with Norm Leech, a leader in the Indigenous community, the Collective grapples with the challenges of addressing conflict, harm and crime in a large, multi-cultural city like Vancouver. Related to this are efforts to create safety, justice and peace while working towards decolonization and honouring of Indigenous laws and teachings.

#### **Grant Shilling with the Comox Valley Rainbow Warriors and the Canadian Street Soccer Association**

Grant Shilling has more than thirteen years of experience in building the street soccer program in the Comox Valley and recognizes that the need to belong and to contribute to something larger than oneself is a fundamental human need. Grant believes each of us has a role to play in working to create communities where everyone has the chance to feel connected and to be a part of something bigger. Grant works with an array of community-based partners including the Canadian Street Soccer Association to rebuild the street soccer outreach network in the Comox Valley and across British Columbia. Grant has been successful in bringing 'non-traditional' partners together, but his work in advancing and supporting the street soccer movement has been instrumental in helping to build a sense of true inclusion.

#### **2022/2023 Moms Stop the Harm**

Moms Stop the Harm (MSTH) is a network composed of Canadian family members impacted by substance use related harms and deaths. They advocate to change failed drug policies and provide peer support to grieving families and those with loved ones who use or have used substances. MSTH supports harm reduction approaches that are both compassionate and non-discriminatory. They support and advocate for people who use substances through evidence-based prevention, treatment, and policy change. What began as an advocacy initiative by three concerned mothers is now a network of several thousands of Canadian individuals and families. They believe that people who use drugs should not be criminalized. Moreover, health care providers should help facilitate a safe supply of substances and provide pathways of support for those seeking recovery.

#### **Power for All Adventure Therapy**

Power for All Adventure Therapy (PAAT) provides universal access to adventure-based activities, regardless of physical, cognitive or social abilities or financial resources. PAAT believes that through access to more adventure-based activities, individuals can be empowered with new skills and experience and develop better personal outcomes as well as challenge society's views on "ability". PAAT also provides bursaries for clients who may not have the financial resources to participate and who have been referred by community partners and practitioners, including social workers, teachers, youth/child workers, occupational therapist, counsellors, youth pastors, and others.

#### **Shawn Decarie – Kwesa Place Warming Centre and Shelter Manager**

Shawn Decarie was formerly unhoused and has been actively working at the community and grassroots level within Campbell River to try to establish a warming centre as well as drop-in laundry and other services for individuals who have nowhere else to go. Shawn continues to try to work to support the unhoused community in Campbell River while at the same time hoping to build greater public acceptance for those who are struggling on the streets. "Through truth and reconciliation and through historical family trauma or anything like that, these people need a little understanding and support," he says. Shawn continues, "Don't be so closed-minded. We get it, economic development is important, but humanity still needs to come first and as troubled as

some humanity is, they're still humans."

#### **Cory Cliff – 7 Generation Steward Society**

A member of the Lekwiltok First Nation and Steward of the Land. My current position as President of the 7 Generation Stewards Society has been years in the making. I later moved into Forestry Engineering with a few different consulting firms in the Campbell River area working in different regions of the coast and tuning my knowledge of the coastal rainforest. Seeing and learning first-hand about the ups and downs of the industry, my concerns quickly became the sustainability of old growth for future generations. Struggling to move up in the industry or find my true path, I decided to take some time away from environmental work and begin an apprenticeship in scaffolding. One day my phone rang and it was another one of my cousins from the Wei Was Kum Nation informing me about a university level course that was being designed to facilitate First Nations environmental training. I began the Coastal Guardian Watchman training and could see my path forming. I finally had a voice and a way to make an impact in my people's traditional territory. Through my training and role as a Wei Was Kum Guardian Watchman, I see the important work that needs to continue. I also learned about First Nations true role as stewards of the land and sea.

#### **The Campbell River Art Gallery – The Art Hive**

The Art Hive at the Campbell River Art Gallery is a space where people can come together and create. While it is a supportive space for art, it also serves as a place of connection for the unhoused community in Campbell River. Once a week an artist facilitates an open studio at the Campbell River Art Gallery, focused on art-making workshops for people who have experiences with mental illness and substance use, as well as people experiencing or at-risk of homelessness. All supplies are provided for folks that want to come in and create with peers in the space. Participants can work on existing projects or start up new collaborations. In partnership with the Salvation Army Centre of Hope, food is donated each week so that participants are nourished and ready to create. The participants of the Art Hive have opportunities to learn new skills (screen printing, design, beading etc.) from peers and guest artist facilitators while working in collaboration with other artists.

#### **Linda Locke - Upper Skeena Community Legal Assistance Society**

Linda has been a lawyer for 13 years and has 10 years experience in legal practice, public legal education, supervision and training of paralegals and support staff. As part of her articling, Linda has interned with a human rights centre in Geneva, working with indigenous people from around the world. Linda has served as an observer for South Africa's first Democratic Election after years of apartheid. Linda currently focuses on increasing access to justice for the residence of Northern B.C. Her work relates to remote aboriginal communities using mediation, collaboration, and healing with family and civil matters; linkage of the above matters with the courts; community development regarding access to justice; and seeking a more integrated approach regarding services to the northern populations in terms of psychological, legal, social assistance and other services. Linda has also worked as a consultant, analyst and research writer for a variety of Indigenous communities and Aboriginal organizations. Linda was honored to receive the CBA Community Service Award in 2003.

#### **Judy Graves – Street Outreach Worker/Innovator**

Throughout her 33-year career with the City of Vancouver, Judy Graves cultivated caring connections with people living on the streets and in shelters. She has served as a tireless advocate

on behalf of those marginalized by homelessness. Judy approached her work in a deeply personal way, walking the streets of Vancouver in all kinds of weather and at all hours of the night, reaching out to people living on the streets and listening to their stories, while helping them navigate the delicate process of rebuilding their lives. At City Hall, her passion for helping people affected by homelessness brought together diverse communities and organizations with a shared vision to create long-term solutions. When Graves retired in the spring of 2013, Vancouver's streets had fewer people sleeping outside because of her unwavering belief that the number of homeless in our city could – and should – be zero.

## 2021/2022 Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc First Nations

Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc First Nations demonstrated exceptional leadership in turning their grief around the discovery of the 215 unmarked burial sites on May 27, 2021 into a way of raising awareness about the need to bring to light the truth about the residential school system in Canada. Through sharing their grief and in their resolve to create new pathways forward they have helped to draw attention to the devastation and the pain experienced across so many First Nations people and communities in Canada. In giving this Award, we want show that we stand in solidarity and allyship with the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc First Nations in recognizing the children who never made it home and their call to action that *every child matters*.

### The Savage Society

The Savage Society to use Indigenous storytelling as a way of building a deeper understanding of what it means to be Indigenous. This is done through sharing their own stories, sourcing myths and traditions as well as sharing contemporary perspectives. In the statement from the Artistic Director Kevin Loring, he explains the term 'savage' and the various ideas embedded in the word. This includes the connotation of being strong and unafraid as well as the various relationships and roles that we all play as survivors, warriors, hunters, and nurturers. For many years Savage Society was an important contributor to the Lytton River Festival through their Songs of the Land Project, bringing to life the stories, words, cultures, and traditions of the Nlaka'pamux Nation. In 2021 the history of the people and the community of Lytton (the Nlaka'pamux Nation) was forever changed by the wildfires that took place and we hope the Savage Society will be able to continue to give a voice to power, resilience, and healing for the people of Lytton as they rebuild.

### Julia of Julia's Junction

Julia is a girl who is 7-years old and who like other kids her age loves to play. There is one problem- the playground is not accessible, and Julia has a hard time keeping up with her friends because of the wood chips, loose rocks and other barriers that keep getting in her way. Julia is determined not to let this stop her. Working with her mom, Julia has launched a campaign to secure the funding needed to make the playground accessible not only for herself, but for other children like her. They have named the project "Julia's Junction" and see the word 'junction' as a place where kids play freely, meet new friends, and feel connected. Julia's commitment and energy in working to ensure that people understand the importance of working together to create welcoming spaces where kids like herself can play is infectious.

### Sharon Karsten, The Walk With Me Project

The Walk With Me Project started as a way of developing a deeper understanding of the human dimensions of the overdose crisis by bringing together a broad cross-section of civil society (artists, researchers, front-line workers and people with lived/living experience) to attempt to come to terms with the impact that the opioid crisis has had on individuals and communities. This was done

through capturing the individual stories both as a way of helping to build increased awareness and understanding as well as in terms of helping to create a road map for new ways forward. The leader of the Walk With Me Project, Sharon Karsten, is a strong community builder, active listener and a deep believer in the difference that can be made when people and communities come together with a shared vision and a common purpose

#### **Linda LaVallee**

One does not have to spend too much time working on the issue of homelessness within the Greater Vancouver region before one becomes aware of the long shadow of Linda's work. However, it is Linda's quiet strength, dedication, and deep humility that one will remember most. Perhaps one of the best insights into Linda's strength and determination came out of an event in 2019 when she was 'racially profiled'. Linda spoke about the shock and hurt of the situation but upon reflection decided that if people were going to stereotype and label her, she was going to fight back by wearing her Indigeneity proudly. To this end, Linda started to make traditional "ribbon skirts" based on the cultural traditions of her Cree people. Linda known for her creativity did not make just 1 skirt or even 2 skirts. Linda made 365 skirts-one for each day of the year! While, her initial efforts were her attempt find healing, Linda found so much more. Not only was she surprised when strangers would talk to her about her skirts, but she also started to feel that she was walking taller and stronger with her ancestors behind her. As Linda continues to find her voice and her strength, she continues to use it to speak up on behalf of others whose voice are not always heard and to mentor Indigenous youth in ways that help to give them a sense of pride and to connect them to their history and traditions.

#### **2020/2021 Positive Living North Buckley Valley, Smithers**

In keeping with the Board's interest in looking at ways that communities were able to successfully respond to issues of food insecurity during COVID-19, this example shows the strength of the community response in a time of need. Recognizing that in addition to helping to meet basic needs, local supports and programs are also about the social connection and sense of community for many clients.

#### **Canadian Mental Health Association, Salmon Arm**

Social prescribing is an idea that looks at ways to treat individuals in ways that extend beyond their immediate health condition. In this way the focus is on working to create a more holistic and comprehensive approach to supporting the health and well-being of individuals and families. In Salmon Arm, the Canadian Mental Health Association has been encouraging local physicians to consider the use of social prescribing as part of the course of treatment for individuals who have a mental illness such as depression and anxiety with the idea being that the use of this approach can help to build a deeper sense of inclusion and connection among individuals experiencing these types of challenges. As a result, in addition to the medical treatment the individual also receives a "prescription" to get out into nature.

#### **The Indian Residential School Survivors Society**

The Indian Residential School Survivors Society (IRSSS) is a Provincial organization with a 20 year history of providing a range of services to residential school survivors and to those dealing with intergenerational trauma. These services include a Crisis Line which is available 24-hours a day for anyone experiencing pain or distress from his or her residential school experience, a willingness to make presentations at schools, community forums, and other events, as well as conducting education and advocacy around the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and it's 94 Calls to



Action. The Society also founded Orange Shirt Day which grew out of the dehumanizing and all too frequent story of an Indigenous child, in this case Phyllis who had her new orange shirt taken from her on her first day of school. The IRSSS offers such irreplaceable services for Indigenous persons and Residential School survivors, while also ensuring that a much needed Provincial and National conversation aimed at healing and reconciliation continues to occur.

#### **Phoenix Choir Chamber, Social Distance Singing Project**

The Phoenix Chamber Choir was first established in 1983 and includes a diverse mix of members who bring a long history of innovation in chamber music and a history of accomplishments in choral music. For more than 30 years, the Phoenix Chamber Choir has created opportunities for young musicians, composers, and conductors to share the joy of singing and to develop both their personal skills as well as their group's choral achievements. One of the unique aspects of the Phoenix Chamber Choir is the longstanding commitment to creating high level music while working exclusively with amateur singers. With the emergence of COVID, traditional venues and avenues for making choral music were no longer possible. As a result, members started to explore the use of technology as a means of continuing to engage with the choir including the creation of a Canadian Physicians Virtual Choir.

#### **A Way Home Kamloops (AWHK) in memory of Katherine McParland**

This year we saw the passing of Katherine McParland, the co-founder of A Way Home Kamloops (AWHK). It was during her time at AWHK that she was able to achieve countless goals that she had set out for herself- dozens of awards and accolades received, Masters' degree completed, and a difference made in the lives of thousands of vulnerable and 'at risk' youth experiencing homelessness. Katherine also served on B.C. Housing's Board of Directors, was Co-chair of the B.C. Coalition to End Youth Homelessness, and a member of the federal government's Advisory Committee on Homelessness. Katherine was an amazing advocate and champion for ending youth homelessness and it was that beautiful and unique combination of optimism and determination. It was also her commitment to positive change which so eloquently illustrated what a difference one can make when one works with a deep intensity of purpose, an unwavering belief in the importance of change, and compassion for those who struggle and who need others to demonstrate that they are not forgotten.

#### **2019/2020 All Nations Driving Academy**

Obtaining a driver's license is an empowering rite of passage, but for some Indigenous people in northern British Columbia, it can be a real challenge. The inability to drive, especially in remote communities, makes accessing employment, medical appointments and evacuating during natural disasters difficult and even, at times, impossible. Academy founder, Lucy Sager, started the All Nations Driving Academy after similarly realizing transportation can be a difficult issue in remote communities, especially when there are vast distances separating residents from services like driving schools. Most of the thousands of new trades jobs expected in the region over the coming years will require applicants to have a driver's license. All Nations Driving Academy is working to build community capacity and community well-being by creating innovation that creates positive change for Indigenous people in northern communities. From Haida Gwaii to Prince George, All Nations Driving Academy is hoping to change the dynamic of family units by teaching individuals how to operate a vehicle.

#### **Ocean Legacy Foundation**

Ocean Legacy Foundation's goal is to give plastic waste an economic value to stimulate the plastic circular economy and provide communities the long-term tools they need to steward their

environment by keeping plastic out of the oceans. At the heart of Ocean Legacy Foundation is a community development approach that makes space for youth to be actively involved and to co-lead plastic pollution clean-up projects, from capacity building, logistics leadership, plastic pollution collection to reporting on positive impacts of environmental clean-up.

#### **Unity Centre Association For Black Cultures (UCABC)**

The Unity Centre Association for Black Cultures (UCABC) is a non-profit organization which celebrates the social and economic contributions of all Black Canadians and Black people in Canada and supports the integration of individuals and families into local communities. The Unity Centre is committed to building a “Hub” to enable programs that reflect and acknowledge the history, heritage, and cultural diversity of Black Canadians, other Black people and all individuals who associate with the cultures of the African diaspora in Canadian society. SPARC BC has been privileged to witness, through the Independent Community Conversations and Access Awareness Day 2020, the Unity Centre’s creative ability to communicate and share information during a time of self-isolation by raising awareness and continuing discussions among Black people with disabilities.

#### **Transition Salt Spring’s Climate Action Group**

Transition Salt Spring (TSS) is a community-led response to global climate change, based out of Salt Spring Island, B.C. TSS is a registered B.C. non-profit society supporting community members whose vision is to work together to create resilience and vibrancy in their community. To build and enhance community capacity and to support innovation that creates positive change for people and communities, TSS launched their Climate Action Group (CAG) in 2019, where volunteers have researched, written and released two (2) Climate Action Plans (CAPs) for Salt Spring Island, B.C. Most communities in Canada turn to their local governments to make and implement plans to combat climate change, but Salt Spring Island has a unique governance structure which sometimes results in service gaps that are filled by volunteers and citizen-driven initiatives. The CAG is one of those initiatives and the group is demonstrating grassroots leadership and vision at a time when it is needed most.

#### **2018/2019 North Okanagan Community Chaplaincy**

In October 2013, Chuck Harper created the North Okanagan Chaplaincy (NOCC) to respond to a need he saw in the community to befriend those who are homeless. Initially Chuck would start by going for coffee with men who were going through a difficult time. However, as he started to learn more about the different men and their stories, he felt that there was need for both collective and individual action to remember those who have passed away alone on the streets. This became as he said his “Popeye moment.” The effort to advocate for equity, fairness, dignity and respect are clear in the actions that Chuck and his partners have taken with a view to changing the narrative and building increased awareness and understanding about the importance of social and community well-being.

#### **Port Alberni Shelter Farm Project**

Through the Shelter Farm Project, the Port Alberni Shelter Society has partnered with the North Island College to help to break down barriers and to create new opportunities and new pathways forward for those who are homeless. This includes supporting individuals from across the community to learn agroecological farming practices through the Shelter Farm providing them with an opportunity to gain new skills and new experiences. Not only does the Port Alberni Shelter Society and Shelter Farm contribute to community capacity and well-being through food growth,



but it is also grounded in the principles of equity, inclusion, integrity and learning. Through this approach, the Shelter Farm Project provides a model of success and integrates social, cultural, and economic well-being along with a commitment to ending homelessness.

#### **The Fort Nelson Aboriginal Friendship Society**

Fort Nelson is located on the northeast corner of British Columbia at Mile 300 on the Alaska Highway and is the largest town between Fort St. John and the Yukon border. The community continues to face significant challenges in terms of poverty and isolation with the loss of the Greyhound bus service, yet another loss to the community this year. Within this context, the Fort Nelson Aboriginal Friendship Society – a non-profit organization first established in 1975 – provides services and supports to both longstanding residents in the community as well as individuals who are without a place to live and who are passing through the community on their way to the Yukon in search of a better life.

#### **2017/2018 Some Assembly Arts Society and the Roundhouse Youth Theatre Action Group (RHYTAG)**

Some Assembly provides safe, inclusive, and respectful environments for youth to create meaningful theatre productions with professional artists. Each year participants develop skills and confidence through a range of workshops and creative processes in script development, acting, music, movement, design, film, and facilitation. Using the power of theatre for positive transformation, youth contributors of Some Assembly theatre productions provide relevance that resonate with young audiences. At past plays, youth audience say they feel part of the larger community because they connect to their peers on stage who validate their concerns, ideas, and experiences.

#### **2016/2017 West Coast Women's Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF)**

West Coast Women's Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF) has been working to end discrimination against women since 1983. It is the first and only organization in BC dedicated to promoting women's equality through the law. In partnership with UBC's Allard School of Law, West Coast LEAF launched an independent community legal clinic called Rise Women's Legal Centre. Rise provides women-centered legal services to women engaged in family law and child protection disputes. West Coast LEAF pursues its goal to advocate equity, fairness and dignity for all through equality rights litigation, law reform and public legal education

#### **2015/2016 The Cinderella Project**

The Cinderella Project is a volunteer driven initiative that has a long history of working to help young adults who need support and encouragement in making the transition from high school to young adulthood. Through their efforts, the Cinderella Project focuses on building bridges to ensure that young adults who are part of the program know that there is someone who believes in them and who is willing to help them to pursue their dreams.

#### **2014/2015 The Coastal Family Research Coalition**

The Coastal Family Research Coalition is a multi-disciplinary network of service providers from across the Central West Region of Vancouver Island which includes the communities of Hesquiaht, Ahousaht, Opitsaht, Tofino, Esowista, Ucluelet, Hitacu and Toquaht. The Coalition works collaboratively to enhance education and impact of programming with the goals of improving social indicators of health for children, youth, and families in the region.

#### **Jason DaSilva**

Jason DaSilva is a director, producer, writer and disability rights activist best known for the Emmy Award winning documentary, *When I Walk*. The Emmy award winning film follows his diagnosis of primary progressive multiple sclerosis for seven years as he progresses from cane, to walker, to wheelchair. He is also the founder of the non-profit organization AXS Lab and of AXS Map, a crowd sourced Google map-based platform which rates the accessibility of businesses.

#### **2013/2014 British Columbia Aboriginal Network on Disability Society (BCANDS)**

The British Columbia Aboriginal Network on Disability is a provincial not for profit and federally recognized charity that serves the needs of Aboriginal individuals and communities throughout British Columbia. The mission of the BC Aboriginal Network on Disability Society is “to support the unique and comprehensive disability, health and resource needs of Aboriginal persons and organizations across British Columbia, through relevant, timely and accessible client services”. In this role, BCANDS works with over 300 individuals annually both within Aboriginal communities as well as with British Columbia’s urban and rural non aboriginal populations. BCANDS has over twenty-two (22) years of service and has been recognized for their expertise and service to community in a number of different capacities.

#### **2011/2012 Organizational Award: Storytellers’ Foundation, Hazelton**

Storytellers’ Foundation was established in 1994. It has been incorporated as a registered non-profit society since 2000. Located in the Village of Hazelton in northwest British Columbia, Canada, Storytellers’ Foundation is situated in the Upper Skeena region within the heart of the Gitksan territories. Foundation’s practice promotes community economic development through an integrated approach that stems from the diverse values and socioeconomic visions of community members. Cultural and environmental competence is a foundation for all our relationships and practice. Through their work, Storytellers’ aims to foster personal and political mobilization through the development of an active citizenry in order that residents of the Northwest can further define their social and economic destiny. Storytellers’ do this work in collaboration with community non-profits, voluntary groups, local governments, and local residents.

#### **2010/2011 Brandon Hughes**

Brandon helped found the BC Rural Network, an umbrella group of rural organizations, that works to share information across rural areas and to champion rural issues. He also initiated the Rural Summits which have taken place every second year since 2000. These conferences attract 150 or more participants from rural areas across the province to learn about economic, social, and environmental issues in rural areas. Brandon was also a founding partner of Learning Initiatives for Rural and Northern BC (LIRN) and he continues to play an active role in this important community capacity building initiative.

#### **2009/2010 Peer Net BC**

PeerNet BC, a registered non-profit society, is one of few organizations dedicated entirely to ensuring people have access to training and resources to manage their own peer support group. PeerNet BC has been awarded in recognition of their programs aimed at helping individuals create and maintain peer support groups.

**2008/2009 John Talbot**

With over 30 years of community development experience as an executive consultant, practitioner and trainer, John makes a meaningful difference in the lives of people and their communities. From all regions of British Columbia and internationally as far as Iraq and China, John is committed to excellence in the public, non-profit and private sectors.

**2007/2008 Mabel Jean Rawlins**

As Executive Director of the Community Council and the Quality of Life CHALLENGE, Mabel Jean's collaborative leadership has brought about profound change in our community. Her passion for social justice and her innate respect for all individuals has been the catalyst for shared decision making and multi-sectoral cooperation as the way to tackle the complex social and economic challenges in our region including poverty, food security, and housing affordability. She has inspired hundreds of people from every sector in this community to believe that we can bring about positive, sustainable change in the quality of life of all our citizens.

**2006/2007 Alex Michalos, Community Planning Council of Prince George**

Alex is Chancellor of the University of Northern British Columbia, Emeritus Professor in Political Science and Director of the Institute for Social Research and Evaluation at UNBC. He has published 24 books and 100 refereed articles, and founded or co-founded 6 scholarly journals. He is a former President of the Canadian Commission for UNESCO's Sectoral Commission on Natural, Social and Human Sciences, former President of Academy II (Humanities and Social Sciences) of the Royal Society of Canada, and of the International Society for Quality of Life Studies.

**2005/2006 Michael Clague**

Michael's assumed his first major leadership role when he became the first Executive Director of the Britannia Centre in 1976. After that, he moved on to lead the Community Council of Greater Victoria. Michael came to SPARC BC in the late 1980's where he pioneered education work in community economic development, established advisory committees on Disabled Persons Issues, Prevention of Elder Abuse and Neglect, Health, and Income Assistance, and forged a stronger relationship with the United Way, where SPARC BC undertook research and advocacy work in exchange for increased financial support.

**2004/2005 *No Award Conferred***

**2003/2004 Eliabeth (Bunny) Shannon**

Elizabeth has played a leading role in the Comox Valley Social Planning Society since it was formed in the early 1990's. In her past 8 years as President of the Comox Valley Social Planning Society Bunny has helped guide projects such as the Comox Valley Quality of Life Study and the North Island Early Childhood Development Project. As a member of the Provincial CDI Committee, she assisted in the development of a new model for CDI.

**2002/2003 Cindy Carson, Provincial Coordinator, First Call: BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition**

Cindy was a Provincial Coordinator for First Call in 1995-2002. Deryck Thomson Award was given to Cindy in appreciation for her exceptional work and sustained commitment to the well-being of children and youth in BC.

- 2001/2002 Randy Lambright, Municipal Social Planner, City of Kamloops**  
Randy is a champion for effective and innovative social planning initiatives and was instrumental in developing a Community Social Plan for Kamloops, ensuring that many of its most critical policies were adopted as part of the Official Community Plan (KAMPLAN).
- 2000/2001 Walter Paetkau, Abbotsford Community Services Society**  
Walter played important role in establishing Abbotsford Community Services Society. In 1969 Walter was on staff with the Mennonite Central Committee, and was seconded half time to develop the fledgling organization. In January 1971, sponsored by the Volunteer Association of Health and Welfare, organization received a three-year demonstration grant from Health and Welfare Canada to develop a community services agency. Walter Paetkau then became the first full time employee with Helen Layton as the support staff person. Walter served the agency as Executive Director to the summer of 2000.
- 1999/2000** *No Award Conferred*
- 1998/1999 Eugene and Rhoda Kaellis, New Westminster**  
**Phyllis Bentley, Penticton**
- 1997/1998 Sandra Henson, Penticton and District Community Resources Society**  
**The Ladysmith Resources Centre Association**
- 1996/1997 Paul Taylor, Editor of Carnegie Newsletter, Vancouver**  
**Laura Acton, Victoria**
- 1995/1996 Sharon Burdeniuk, Healthy Communities, Fort St. James**
- 1994/1995 Dorothy Livingston, Victoria**  
**Society of Organized Services of Regional District 69 (SOS), Parksville**  
**Richmond Community Services Advisory Council**
- 1993/1994 Ms. Patsy George (former Provincial Advisor on Community Development to the Ministry of Social Services)**
- 1992/1993 Mavis Henry, Community Worker with the Pauquachin Band**  
**Chilliwack Community Services Society**