



FOR RELEASE
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Young Yukoners receive Youth Achievement Awards

WHITEHORSE—Four young Yukoners have been recognized through the Outstanding Youth Achievement Awards. Caitlin Diakow, Alysha Gullison, Nathan Muir-Cressman and Cassel Scholz, all from Whitehorse, were chosen this year for demonstrating exemplary citizenship in their community.

"I would like to congratulate this year's winners and thank them for their efforts to make Yukon a better place for young people," Commissioner Doug Phillips said. "Recognizing youth for their achievements helps build self-esteem and helps others realize that their goals are within reach. I encourage all Yukoners to consider nominating a young person for this award next year."

Each recipient receives territory-wide recognition on an individual poster, along with a \$250 cash prize and a formal award presented by the commissioner of Yukon. The Outstanding Youth Achievement Awards are a partnership between the Office of the Commissioner and the Government of Yukon's Youth Directorate.

"This year's award recipients are, as always, worthy of this recognition," Premier and Minister responsible for the Youth Directorate Darrell Pasloski said. "Their selflessness inspires other youth to be confident, successful and responsible citizens who make positive contributions to their communities."

Outstanding Youth Achievement Award nominations can be made by anyone, and selections are made by the Yukon government's Youth Directorate. Emphasis is placed on recognizing youth who are involved in Yukon communities in constructive ways. This can include volunteering their time, fundraising, helping seniors and elders, or any activity that creates positive change.

Learn more: Outstanding Youth Achievement Awards

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See below for profiles of the award recipients.

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2015 Outstanding Youth Achievement Award recipients

Alysha Gullison (16)

Alysha is recognized for her ongoing contribution to the Boys and Girls Club of Yukon (BGC Yukon). For more than three years she has been a dedicated member of the club and a positive role model. Alysha is one of the first BGC Yukon members to connect with new participants, often acting as a mentor. She is always the first to volunteer her time to BGC Yukon fundraisers, whether it's walking dogs at the animal shelter or working at the food bank. She also acts as the youth voice on the BGC Yukon Board of Directors. Alysha is an ambassador for the club and has greatly impacted the lives of BGC Yukon youth.

Caitlin Diakow (19)

Caitlin is recognized for her ongoing contributions to Bringing Youth Towards Equality (BYTE) and her volunteer work with other organizations. She received funding and produced Empower the People, a BYTE magazine promoting health. She wrote a series of inspirational articles about body positivity and self-confidence for Yukon youth. Caitlin has long been an advocate for LGBTQ rights, and was involved in the Gay-Straight Alliance and Social Justice clubs at F.H. Collins and Porter Creek Secondary School. Caitlin also volunteered for Rethink Green, Réseau Access AIDS Network and the Northern Vegetarian Society during a six-month Canada World Youth exchange.

Cassel Scholz (17)

Cassel is recognized for being a positive role model through the Whitehorse Cadets and coaching school sports. Cassel projects positivity and respect, encouraging the youth he mentors in both basketball and the Cadets to follow his example. Cassel has received many awards for his volunteer work including the Excellence in Leadership award for his work with the Leadership Education and Athletic Development program and the Legion Medal of Excellence, awarded to cadets who have displayed excellence in citizenship. Cassel is working toward a career in the Canadian Forces and will continue to be a positive role model and mentor to youth in his life.

Nathan Muir-Cressman (15)

Nathan is recognized for his efforts as a positive mentor and role model through cooking and volunteer work. When Nathan finished working in the F.H. Collins cafeteria as a cashier, he mentored incoming staff on his own time. He has consistently volunteered for the Quebec-Yukon exchange meal prep, and has acted as a role model to youth at Braeburn Bible Camp. His volunteer work extends beyond cooking for events; Nathan has also volunteered with the Yukon Sourdough Rendezvous Festival for years, and has helped coach swimming lessons.

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