



FOR RELEASE  
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## **Outstanding students and volunteers to be honoured at Commissioner's Levee**

WHITEHORSE—The public are invited to join Commissioner Doug Phillips in acknowledging 15 exceptional Yukoners at the Commissioner's New Year's Levee January 1, 2012.

The Commissioner's Award for Volunteer Public Service will be presented to Renee Charlie, Ramesh Ferris, Fred Smith and Joy Wickett for their significant and lasting contribution to the social, political, economic, academic or cultural fabric of their community.

"I am pleased to be presenting the awards for volunteer public service to these very deserving Yukoners," Phillips said. "Their dedication over the years to serving their communities is truly admirable and enriches the lives of many."

As well as the awards for volunteer public service, 11 students from across the territory will receive the Governor General's Academic Award, the most prestigious student award in Canada. It is earned by secondary school students who graduate with the highest final marks in their school.

"These exceptional students are being recognized for their hard work and motivation, which has earned them this significant academic honour," Phillips said. "It is important to celebrate the achievements of our youth as they continue their educational endeavors and grow into our future leaders."

The Commissioner's levee will also include the launch of a congratulatory book for messages to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on the occasion of her Diamond Jubilee.

The levee will take place from 2 to 4 p.m. in the foyer of the Government of Yukon Administration Building in Whitehorse, the awards ceremony will begin at 2 p.m.

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See backgrounder below.

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**Backgrounder:**

## Recipients of the 2011 Commissioner's Award for Volunteer Public Service:

**Renee Charlie**—In recognition of more than 40 years as a community leader and her multi-faceted volunteer efforts serving the community of Old Crow through organizing and directing cultural events and serving on a wide range of boards and committees each year.

**Ramesh Ferris**—In recognition of his tireless efforts both in Yukon and Canada-wide promoting awareness of polio and the importance of immunization through activities including cycling across Canada in 2008 and travelling worldwide as a motivational speaker. He is also recognized for his work with organizations such as the Active Living Alliance for Canadians with a Disability, Canadian Wheelchair Sports Association and Canadian Wheelchair Basketball Association.

**Fred Smith**—In recognition of his significant contribution to the community of Whitehorse, through his years of diverse volunteer efforts with the Yukon Order of Pioneers, the Rotary Club of Whitehorse, the United Church, as a host for many years with the international student program, and as a member of the Yukon Rangers. In addition, since his retirement, Fred has spent a part of each year volunteering as a teacher in Thailand.

**Joy Wickett**—In recognition of her years of committed volunteer service in a wide range of activities and organizations in Whitehorse, including the Whitehorse Community Choir, the Neptunes and the Happy Hour Choir, the United Church, Whitehorse soup kitchen, the Many Rivers outreach van, and in a number of different capacities within the arts community, particularly with the Friends of the Gallery Society.

## Recipients of the 2011 Governor General's Academic Award:

**Cayla Bekk**—Del van Gorder School

**Nanuht'ee Flather**—F.H. Collins Secondary School

**Phillip Gauthier-Landry**—École Émilie-Tremblay

**Anna Jacobsen**—Porter Creek Secondary School

**Sara Koltun**—Vanier Catholic Secondary School

**Bryan Leary**—Robert Service School

**Rosa MacDougall**—Tantalus School

**Marissa Mills**—Individual Learning Centre

**Caitlin O'Donoghue**—J.V. Clark School

**Abbie Rotundi**—Watson Lake Secondary School

**Savannah Van Vliet**—St. Elias Community School

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