



FOR RELEASE
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Outstanding Youth Achievement Awards program recognizes Yukon youth

WHITEHORSE—Five young Yukoners are being recognized through the Outstanding Youth Achievement Awards (OYAAs). Sophia Flather, Cody Park and Travis Banks of Whitehorse, as well as Finley Sparling and Vera Schall of Marsh Lake, will receive a cash prize of \$250, be featured on posters in their community, and will also receive a Commissioner's Youth Award.

"I am proud to partner with the Youth Directorate in giving youth the recognition they deserve; these youth are ambassadors and examples of what a good citizen should be," Commissioner Doug Phillips said.

These youth achievement awards are a new partnership between the Commissioner's Office and the Youth Directorate, and will be awarded annually.

"The recipients of the Outstanding Youth Achievement Awards recognize youth who are contributing in constructive and positive ways that better themselves, their peers and their community," Premier and minister responsible for the Youth Directorate Darrell Pasloski said.

Youth between the ages of 15 and 20 can be nominated for an OYAA. Emphasis is placed on recognizing youth who are involved in Yukon communities in constructive ways. This might include volunteering their time, fundraising, helping seniors and elders, or any activity that pertains to being a positive role model.

For more information about the OYAAs visit www.youth.gov.yk.ca/OYAA.html.

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See backgrounder and photos for profiles of the OYAA recipients.

Contact:

Matthew Grant
Cabinet Communications
867-393-6470
matthew.grant@gov.yk.ca

Cheryl Major
Communications, Executive Council Office
867-667-5339
cheryl.major@gov.yk.ca

2013 OYAA Recipients

Sophia Flather, 20

Sophia is being recognized as an outstanding youth for her work as a volunteer, tutor and role model. Her actions include working as a tutor to help students from the Vuntut Gwitchin First

Nation, taking part in her school's Social Justice Club and volunteering for a number of causes both in and out of Yukon. Sophia has also spent time in Old Crow working for the VGFN Heritage Branch, volunteering for community events, and spending her time with elders and younger children. Sophia is an enthusiastic and dedicated individual, devoted to learning about her cultural heritage and giving back to her community.

Cody Park, 17

Cody is being recognized as an outstanding youth for his efforts as a positive mentor, youth leader and role model. Cody has been coaching sports for other youth at Vanier Catholic Secondary School for several years, providing students with mentorship and support. This year, Cody was chosen as valedictorian during the First Nations Grad due to the example he has set both academically and in sport. Cody recognizes the value of the support he has received throughout his life, and is committed to bringing such support to other youth.

Finley Sparling, 16 and Vera Schall, 17

Finley and Vera are being recognized as outstanding youth for their ongoing contribution to the community of Marsh Lake. They are consistent volunteers at community events, helping out whenever they can. In addition to being a dedicated volunteer, Finley has worked as a sailing camp instructor for youth, and he continues to act as a leader and role model. Vera has recently been involved in running children's programming as a Youth Recreation Assistant. She is also credited with co-ordinating the Marsh Lake Annual Dog show. Through their activities and engagement, these two individuals have shown great community spirit and exemplary youth leadership.

Travis Banks, 18

Travis is being recognized as an outstanding youth for his great work as a soccer coach for younger kids. He has been volunteering for Whitehorse Minor Soccer, acting as a positive role model and mentor for the participants while focusing on the importance of fair play, teamwork, equality and fun. He will be part of Team Yukon at the Canada Summer Games this year, and will also be involved in running summer soccer camps for kids. By dedicating his time, energy and talent Travis is passing on his love of sport and team spirit to a new generation of players.

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