



FOR RELEASE
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Community Safety Award recipients honoured

WHITEHORSE—Justice Minister Mike Nixon presented eleven recipients with the new Community Safety Awards at the welcoming reception of the National Symposium on Policing in Northern and Remote Canada on September 18. The recipients were honoured for their contribution to building safer Yukon communities. The award was created from the Review of Yukon's Police Force and *Sharing Common Ground* report, which highlighted a need to recognize the contributions of Yukoners who promote community safety.

"I was very impressed with the scale of contributions made by the award recipients. Our citizens deserve special recognition when they demonstrate a strong commitment to ensuring that Yukon remains a safe place to live and to visit," Nixon said. "The recipients and all the nominees represent positive examples of citizens working hard to improve public safety in Yukon communities."

Over 50 nominations were received in six different categories including lifetime contributions to community safety; outstanding community policing; mentorship; bridge-building; a volunteer award; and outstanding project or program.

Tuesday night's awards ceremony marks the first annual presentation of the Minister of Justice Community Safety Awards.

For more information about the awards call 867-667-3226 or visit www.justice.gov.yk.ca.

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See backgrounder below.

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Background

- The Community Safety Awards were launched during Police Week at the end of May 2012. Individuals, RCMP members, youth, community groups and programs were eligible to be nominated before August 10.
- The final selection process for the Community Safety Awards involved the review of nominations by a committee comprising the following representatives:

- Yukon Police Council, Bill Klassen and Doris Mclean;
 - Department of Justice, assistant deputy minister Robert Riches; and
 - RCMP M Division, criminal operations officer, – Superintendent Paul McConnell.
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- Each nominee was measured against the following criteria:
 - Commitment
 - Contribution
 - Working together
 - Empowerment
 - Innovative, inclusive and flexible
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- **Community Safety Award recipients:**
 - **Mr. Roger Kyikavichik – Lifetime Achievement Award**

Roger Kyikavichik plays an important role in helping to break down barriers between community members and RCMP in Old Crow. He is a member of the Commanding Officers First Nation Advisory Committee and has acted as a special constable for two years. Kyikavichik actively supports the work of the RCMP by encouraging community members to contact RCMP when issues arise. He is a community mentor to new RCMP members and volunteers with the RCMP to locate missing persons from the community, including one RCMP member whose boat capsized on the Porcupine River.
 - **Sergeant Dave Wallace – Outstanding Community Policing Award**

Sergeant Wallace has served with the RCMP for over 22 years; 17 were in Yukon communities. He was recognized for his work in helping to rebuild the community of Dawson City's trust and faith in the RCMP.
 - **Ms. May Stewart – Bridge Builder Award**

May Stewart is the justice director with the Liard First Nation and has been instrumental in building positive relationships and breaking down barriers between the RCMP, the Liard First Nation and women's groups. Stewart is the chair of the Liard First Nation Police Advisory Board and she represents the Liard First Nation on the Liard Aboriginal Women's Society. She has organized community feasts to introduce the RCMP in Watson Lake to community members and created a cultural education program to teach new RCMP members about the Kaska culture and introduce them to First Nation Elders. She organizes trips on the Liard River to orient RCMP members with the land, culturally significant areas and water hazards. Stewart also organizes sentencing circles and ensures that community members are supported in court by First Nation court workers.
 - **RCMP Corporal Calista MacLeod, Ms. Barbara McInerney, Ms. Lareina Twardochleb – Bridge Builder Award (group)**

By working together, Corporal Calista MacLeod, Barbara McInerney and Lareina Twardochleb have been instrumental in raising awareness, enhancing policy and ensuring that partners work together to make Yukon a safer place for women. Macleod's longstanding interest in the area of women's safety has made her an excellent liaison on a number of projects, initiatives and working groups. Over her career, McInerney, executive director of Kaushee's Place, has provided valuable and forthright perspectives on improving relations between the RCMP, government organizations, community groups and the clients that these organizations serve. Twardochleb works as the project manager in the Justice department to implement Sharing Common Ground recommendations. Twardochleb has a sound understanding of issues facing Yukon women and her work is focused on facilitating and supporting communities and service providers.

- **Whitehorse Citizens-on-Patrol (COP) – Outstanding Project Award**

The Whitehorse Citizens-on-Patrol (COP) volunteer program has been operating in Whitehorse since 1998. COP is comprised of seven dedicated individuals who take an active role in keeping communities safe by providing the RCMP with extra eyes and ears. Over each of the past nine years COP has averaged 1,513 volunteer hours and driven 27,372 kilometres during their patrols. Citizens on Patrol president Wayne Balcaen accepted the award on behalf of the group.

- **Jackson Lake Land-based Healing – Outstanding Program Award**

The Jackson Lake land-based healing program is operated by the Kwanlin Dün First Nation and provides a supportive environment for individuals struggling with substance abuse; the effect of residential schools; grief and violence. It provides a local treatment option that helps prevent people from entering or re-entering the criminal justice system. Kwanlin Dün justice director Jeanie Dendys accepted the award on behalf of the program.

- **Auxiliary Constable Richard Smith – Volunteer Award**

Richard Smith has been an active member of the auxiliary constable program for 10 years. He has dedicated over 350 hours each year to the program and assumed a number of leadership positions within the program including Auxiliary Police Association president. Smith played a pivotal role in securing federal funding for the RCMP Young Riders and Crew White-water Program which enabled disadvantaged youth to participate in recreational sports and develop a positive relationship with regular and auxiliary officers. Over 300 youth have participated in these programs.

- **RCMP Victim Assistance Volunteers – Volunteer Award (group)**

The Victim Assistance Volunteers (VAV) are a group of seven who assist the RCMP with providing immediate, confidential, and short term emotional support to victims, usually at the scene of an incident. The volunteers are on call 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and assist

individuals who are victims of crime. Member Jan Trimm accepted the award on behalf of the group.

o **Mr. John Mitchell – Youth Mentor Award**

John Mitchell is a long-time resident of Dawson City and head of the Klondike Search and Rescue Group, local Canadian Rangers and Junior Ranger program. Through his involvement in these programs Mitchell dedicates countless hours to the community and youth of Dawson. He is also a positive role model and mentor for Yukon youth.

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