



FOR RELEASE  
December 3, 2012

## **Award celebrates outstanding Aboriginal employees in the Yukon government**

WHITEHORSE—Two Yukon government employees were recently awarded the 2012 Aboriginal Employees Award of Honour. The awards were presented by Elaine Taylor, Minister responsible for the Public Service Commission, at the 5th annual year-end gathering of the Aboriginal Employees Forum.

The recipients of the 2012 Aboriginal Employees Award of Honour are: Roberta Sembsmoen, an employee with Energy, Mines and Resources Client Services and Inspections in Haines Junction; and Helen Gartner, a First Nations Liaison Worker at Copper Ridge Place in the Department of Health and Social Services.

"The Aboriginal Employees Award of Honour recognizes the accomplishments of outstanding Aboriginal employees in the Yukon government," Minister responsible for the Public Service Commission Elaine Taylor said. "I was honoured to present the 2012 award to these employees whose work in the public service has made remarkable contributions to our community."

The Aboriginal Employees Award of Honour was established in 2009 through the Aboriginal Employees Forum. The forum works to increase the recruitment and retention of Aboriginal employees in the Yukon government and is guided by the Final Agreement—Representative Public Service Plan.

-30-

Backgrounder attached.

Contact:

Elaine Schiman  
Cabinet Communications  
867-633-7961  
elaine.schiman@gov.yk.ca

Sarah Crane  
Communications, Public Service  
Commission  
867-667-8902  
sarah.crane@gov.yk.ca

### **Background**

#### **2012 Aboriginal Employees Award of Honour recipients**

##### **Roberta Sembsmoen**

Client Services and Inspections  
Energy, Mines and Resources

Roberta Sembsmoen has worked in the Haines Junction office of EMR's Client Services and

Inspections for almost 10 years. She is known for providing very high quality service to her colleagues and clients. Her nominators say she has been instrumental in strengthening relationships between the Yukon government and First Nations and was described as a champion of local First Nations culture.

Sembsmoen is well known and respected amongst her peers and clients. She is knowledgeable in all program areas, processes and protocols and is a role model and mentor for many of her peers.

### **Helen Gartner**

First Nation Liaison Worker, Copper Ridge Place  
Health and Social Services

In Helen Gartner's work as a First Nations Liaison Worker at Copper Ridge place, she bridges gaps between First Nations and non-First Nations staff, residents and family members by leading with a strong example. She has worked at the facility for 10 years and is described as a powerful advocate for the residents she works with.

One of Gartner's most remarkable achievements is the life celebration ceremonies that she performs with skill and compassion. The ceremonies give residents, staff and family members time to pause and honour each person who passes away.

Her nominators say her kind and gentle way makes people feel respected and cared for. She was described as a valued team member who is admired and respected by everyone. She also provides guidance and support to many staff.

*News Release #12-237*



Stay up to date with the latest Yukon government news by subscribing to our RSS feed here: <http://www.gov.yk.ca/news/rss.html>. Or follow us on Twitter @yukongov.