



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

Recipients – 2015 Access Equity and Human Rights Awards

Date:	June 11, 2015
To:	Executive Committee
From:	Acting City Manager
Wards:	Citywide
Reference Number:	

SUMMARY

This report advises Council of the result of the nomination process for the City of Toronto Access, Equity and Human Rights Awards. These Awards are the Aboriginal Affairs Award, the Access Award on Disability Issues, the Constance E. Hamilton Award on the Status of Women, the Pride Award for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Transsexual and Two Spirit Issues and the William P. Hubbard Race Relations Award.

The recipient of the Constance E. Hamilton Award is selected by the Women Members of Council and will be a supplementary item to this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Acting City Manager recommends that:

1. City Council extend congratulations to the following who have been selected by a community panel as recipients of the 2015 City of Toronto Access, Equity and Human Rights Awards:
 - Aboriginal Affairs Award: Joanne Dallaire
 - Access Award: Farah N. Mawani
 - Pride Award: Mark Smith
 - William P. Hubbard Award: Kamala-Jean Gopie

Financial Impact

The adoption of this report's recommendation will have no financial impact beyond what has already been approved in divisions' budgets.

Equity Impact Statement

This program highlights the City's commitment to equity issues and provides an important opportunity to celebrate human rights achievements.

DECISION HISTORY

Toronto City Council established five awards to recognize individuals or organizations who have made significant contributions on access, equity and human rights issues. Nomination forms are available in December of each year. Recipients are considered from nominations submitted by the public and selected by a panel comprised of community individuals with expertise and knowledge of the issues relevant to the areas covered by the awards. Recipients of the Constance E. Hamilton Award are selected by the Women Members of Council.

The recipients of the Awards are recognized at a ceremony in December 2015 commemorating the United Nations Human Rights Day that is celebrated on December 10th.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

1. The City of Toronto Aboriginal Affairs Award

Established in 2003, the Aboriginal Affairs Award is presented annually to a person or persons or organization whose volunteer efforts have made a significant contribution towards improving the quality of life for the Aboriginal community in Toronto. Examples of contributions include services or advocacy work on issues such as health, shelter or street work, governance and self-determination, employment, economic development, human rights or cultural activities.

2. The City of Toronto Access Award for Disability Issues

The Access Award for Disability Issues was established during 1981 as part of the celebrations for the International Year for the Disabled. The Access Award is presented annually to a person or persons who have made a significant contribution towards improving the lives of people with disabilities by integrating them into all aspects of society.

Access can include the design of a new or renovated structure, program or service that contributes significantly towards the independent living of people with disabilities. Public acknowledgement of the work of the recipients serves to encourage others to help create an environment of inclusion.

3. Pride Award for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Transsexual and Two Spirit Issues

The Pride Award for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Transsexual and Two Spirit Issues was established in 2003 to mark the thirtieth anniversary of Toronto City Council's decision to adopt a human rights policy to provide protection on the basis of sexual orientation. The Award honours individuals and/or organizations who have made or are making a significant or ongoing

contribution to the well-being and advancement of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual and two spirited community in Toronto.

4. William P. Hubbard Award for Race Relations

The William P. Hubbard Race Relations Award was established in 1987 and is named after the first person of African heritage to serve as a Toronto City Councillor. William P. Hubbard entered politics in 1894 and served for a total of 15 years. He was Acting Mayor in 1906 and 1907. He was an advocate of public ownership of the hydroelectric system and during his political career worked towards the founding of Ontario Hydro.

The William P. Hubbard Race Relations Award celebrates the achievements of Toronto residents who work, often without recognition, to foster a positive race relations environment. Their dedication and commitment has improved the quality of life for all in the City. The public acknowledgement of the work of the recipients serves to encourage others to become actively involved in the elimination of racism and prejudice.

5. The Constance E. Hamilton Award on the Status of Women

The Constance E. Hamilton Award was established in 1979 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Person's Case, which recognized that women were "persons" and could be appointed to the Senate of Canada. The Award was named after Constance E. Hamilton who in 1920 was the first woman elected to a municipal council in Toronto.

The Award recognizes person(s) who have made a significant contribution to improving the social, economic, cultural and political status of women in Toronto and whose efforts have received limited public attention. Recognition of the work of the recipients serves to encourage others in their efforts to achieve equality and to remove barriers.

COMMENTS

The nominating panel has selected recipients of the Access, Equity and Human Rights Awards from nominations submitted by the public. The members of the nominating panel were Pedro Barata, United Way; Tracy Odell, Ministry of Government and Consumer Services; Monica Winkler, Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work; Cheryl Trudeau, Ryerson University; Fatima Filippi, Rexdale Women's Centre; Tam Goossen, Urban Alliance on Race Relations; Anne Creighton, Toronto PFlag; Ibrahim Absiye, CultureLink; Monica McKay, Ryerson University; and Valerie Martin, Learning Disabilities Ontario. Staff support is provided by Equity, Diversity and Human Rights Division, City Manager's Office.

Aboriginal Affairs Award:

Joanne Dallaire

Joanne Dallaire, Shadow Hawk Woman of the Wolf Clan, is Cree Omushkego with ancestry from Attawapiskat, Ontario. For the past 10 years, she has worked at Ryerson as an Elder and Traditional Counsellor. Joanne has made extraordinary contributions in the area of counselling, advising and education as well as empowering and capacity building with the Aboriginal community in Toronto. Joanne has worked with a variety of organizations including Ministry of Health Canada, the Royal Ontario Conservatory for Music, Centre for Addiction and Mental

Health, Ryerson University, York University, Seneca College, Diabetes Association of Ontario, Native Canadian Centre of Toronto, Native Women's Resource Centre of Toronto as well as several First Nations and social service agencies. Her work has transformed lives and improved relations between the Aboriginal community elder, counselor and traditional healer.

Joanne has spent over 30 years in the areas of counselling, advising and educating Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal individuals and organizations on various Aboriginal topics.

Access Award:

Farah N. Mawani

Farah N. Mawani has been a long time champion of human rights and equity, particularly marginalized populations experiencing mental and physical disabilities. Most notably Ms. Mawani founded and leads a growing program in Toronto called Building Roads Together. Building Roads is a community-based peer support walking (and rolling with mobility aids) program designed to reduce mental health inequalities and promote inclusion and empowerment by building capacity for people to lead peer walking groups. With the collaboration of a growing number of community-based health and social organizations, the program maximizes accessibility to populations facing barriers to exercising due to mental health issues and inequalities associated with low income, racialized status, migration status, disability and other dimensions of diversity by focussing on urban walking close to people's homes.

Pride Award:

Mark Smith

Mark has devoted much of his life to selfless service, fighting for universal values and freedoms and trying to make a positive change in the lives of all members of his and the greater community. He has a mission, to find ways for community members to have a place where their voice to be heard. He has never sought recognition for these efforts and when asked why he does it, he will always tell you a story of the joy that someone found at one of the events he has been involved with.

Over the past twenty years, Mark has officially logged more than 16,000 hours as a volunteer with Pride Toronto.

William P. Hubbard Award:

Kamala-Jean Gopie

Kamala-Jean Gopie is an individual who has had a life-long commitment to positive race relations in society. For over four decades she has worked, both in a professional and volunteer capacity, to change public policy and support the implementation of anti-racist and ethno-cultural equity practices in education, employment, media, justice and policing, politics and the arts. She embodies what we can achieve if we work together to effect change in our communities. She has lobbied institutions to change their practices and become more inclusive but she has also challenged the youth to participate in institutions such as the United Way and other services and give back to their communities. By example, she is encouraging support for the arts and for us not to limit ourselves to just what we know and are comfortable with and this augurs well for race relations in this city. Whether as a professional or a volunteer with a number of community organizations, Kamala- Jean Gopie has focused her energies,

time and resources on improving the life conditions of those who are most disadvantaged and vulnerable in our city - racial minorities and immigrants.

Constance E. Hamilton Award

The Women Members of Council will report separately on the results of their selection.

Conclusion

The City of Toronto's Access, Equity and Human Rights Awards program gives recognition to the efforts being made to create an inclusive, barrier free city where human rights are respected and diversity is recognized and celebrated as a strength.

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SIGNATURE

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