

Recipients – 2013 Access Equity and Human Rights Awards

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To:	Executive Committee
From:	Joseph P. Pennachetti, City Manager
Wards:	Citywide
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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 Spirited 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 separate sub item to this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Manager recommends that:

1. City Council extend congratulations to the following who have been selected as recipients of the 2013 City of Toronto Access, Equity and Human Rights Awards:
Aboriginal Affairs Award: Steven Vanloffeld
Access Award: Lucy Costa
Pride Award: Sherbourne Health Centre
William P. Hubbard Award: Samuel Getachew

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 on December 4th 2013 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 Spirited Issues

The Pride Award for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Transsexual and Two Spirited 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: Rob Lackie, York University; Andria Spindel, Ontario March of Dimes; Debbie Douglas, Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI); Julia Lo, CivicAction. Staff support is provided by Equity, Diversity and Human Rights, City Manager's Office.

Aboriginal Affairs Award:

Steven Vanloffeld - is Ojibway from Saugeen First Nation, Ontario. In his role as the Executive Director of the Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council (TASSC), Steven works to address social determinants to improve and enhance the social, economic and cultural base of Aboriginal peoples in the City of Toronto. Steven advocates for the 10 member organizations comprising the Council and develops strategic partnerships in order to implement the recommendations of the Toronto Aboriginal Research Project (TARP). In both his professional and personal life Steven works tirelessly to build partnerships between Toronto's Aboriginal community and key decision makers at the grassroots, municipal, provincial and national level. Steven also volunteers as the Ontario President of the Aboriginal

People's Commission of the Liberal Party of Canada, promoting the active and equitable participation of Aboriginal people at all levels of the party structure.

Access Award:

Lucy Costa is a Systemic Advocate with The Empowerment Council, an organization representing client issues within a psychiatric facility in Toronto. She is Vice Chair of Sound Times Support Services and a current Board member at ARCH Disability Law Centre. She is Chair of the Psychiatric Disabilities Coalition against Violence, a group of psychiatric consumer-survivors, mental health workers, and community members working to address violence experienced by people with lived experiences of the mental health system. She is co-founder of the Mad Students Society and former Board member of the Psychiatric Survivor Archives of Toronto. This impressive list of community participation and engagement rightly characterizes Ms. Costa as being at the forefront of the local psychiatric consumer-survivor movement, through her tireless work to enhance access for people with psychiatric disabilities to education, employment, and good quality housing, support and care — in short, the socially just inclusion of psychiatric consumer-survivors in social, economic, and political life in Toronto.

Pride Award:

Sherbourne Health Centre - Sherbourne has the largest LGBT-focused health program in Canada. It strives to address the social determinants of health - the conditions in which we are born, grow, live, work and age. It reduces social, economic and systemic barriers to healthier lives and offers tangible support to the LGBT communities at every life-stage. It not only works with and across LGBT communities, but across cultural and linguistic communities — LGBT clients and program participants come from over 70 countries around the world and speak at least 38 languages between them. Sherbourne specifically improves the quality of life for LGBT communities in Toronto through an accredited and dynamic mix of accessible direct services; community engagement; inter-generational bridge-building; education, social action and advocacy; supporting and disseminating research; setting standards of care; and building capacity among professionals and the community itself. Linking all of these initiatives is Sherbourne's respectful, innovative and client-centred approach.

William P. Hubbard Award:

Samuel Getachew – an Ethiopian immigrant, has been a dedicated volunteer and an award winning community journalist for more than a decade. His effort was recognized by the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario and the Duke of Edinburgh Awards — with a Gold medal. He has shown a remarkable dedication to his country and many of Canada's diverse communities. Equally noteworthy is his significant involvement with APPA — African In Partnership Against HIV/AIDS — as a board member for the last four years and also with the United Way — serving as a member of a committee that helps distribute funds in the community. Mr. Getachew's most impactful contribution, as well as the least visible, is the mentorship he has provided to countless young people over the decades. With humility and unmatched dedication, Mr. Getachew has personally reached out to many of the country's most dynamic yet under-resourced young leaders and has extended his own networks, time and

support in service of their personal and community ambitions. Mr. Getachew ran for office in the 2010 Municipal Elections in hopes of creating changes with poverty, unemployment, crime, social housing and disengagement of youth in Toronto.

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.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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