

2010

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# Arthur R. Smith Awards

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**Community Summit**

BMO Centre,  
Thursday, March 10, 2011



Calgary  
Homeless  
Foundation

## The 2010 Arthur R. Smith Awards

The Arthur R. Smith Awards were created in the name of the founder of the Calgary Homeless Foundation (CHF) to recognize and honour front-line staff and volunteers who provide re-housing and support to those at risk of or experiencing homelessness in Calgary. These awards are open to staff and volunteers, excluding executive directors.

Successful nominations showed that nominees' results contributed to the goal of ending homelessness by helping people move into housing and/or maintain housing over time. Award recipients were seen as going beyond the expectations of their defined role, and their nominator included compelling stories from clients or observers.

To recognize that awards were postponed in 2009, there are two winners for each category in 2010. The selection of winners has been made by the CHF's Community Relations and Stakeholder Committee.

## Selection Committee

Mr. Stephen Clark

Mr. Tom Jackson

Mr. Trevor Daroux

Ms. Ruth Ramsden-Wood

Mr. Barry Davidson

Ms. Amal Remu

Bishop Fred Henry

## About Arthur Smith



**Hon. Col. Arthur R. Smith,**  
OC, AOE, DFC, Hon. LLD

**May 16, 1919 – June 30, 2008**

Arthur was a friend, colleague, mentor and so much more to the people involved with the CHF, as well as to many other Calgarians, Albertans and Canadians. Arthur understood the plight of people facing homelessness and helped others understand as well. His foresight, compassion and energy led him to develop the CHF in 1998. Before his passing, he provided wise counsel on the path forward with Calgary's 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness.

We continue to draw upon Arthur's initiative and example to guide our mission to end homelessness in Calgary. We are honoured to have Ms. Betty Ann Smith, Arthur's wife, with us today to present the awards. These recipients reflect Arthur in the quality and compassionate service they provide to our neighbours experiencing homelessness.

## Volunteer Whose Work Makes A

## Contribution In Any Way To Those Without A Home



### Stacie Buttee

Volunteer, Calgary Drop-In and Rehab Centre

**Nominated by:**  
Meaghan Bell,  
Calgary Drop-In and Rehab Centre

Stacie has overcome numerous obstacles in her life. Growing up with blocks of heroine on her kitchen table rather than food, Stacie took to the streets at age 12. For the next 26 years she cycled in and out of shelters and prison, but today looks to the future with great aspirations to assist those still on the streets. Stacie is an incredible woman – honest, compassionate and driven to help change lives.

Having maintained housing for four years, Stacie continues to volunteer at the DI, where she shares her own story with clients, providing a sense of hope that they too can find a life off the streets. Stacie also works with at risk youth in Calgary, and volunteers with the Calgary Police Service to promote understanding between police officers and those experiencing homelessness. With the “Inside Out” project, she helps address the cycle of incarceration and homelessness among women in Calgary. And she never stops motivating and encouraging others to join in with the work to end homelessness.

Currently, Stacie is completing her academic upgrading at Bow Valley College, and has been hired part-time by Sunrise Treatment Centre. She hopes to attend Mount Royal University in the fall, to take the certificate program on addictions counselling.

**“Stacie is an incredible woman – honest, compassionate and driven to help change lives,”**

*Meaghan Bell, Nominator.*

### Natalie Ross

Volunteer, Calgary Drop-In and Rehab Centre

**Nominated by:**  
Jordan Hamilton  
Calgary Drop-In and Rehab Centre



Natalie has volunteered at the DI since 2004. In fact, it was the first place she volunteered when she moved to Calgary. Since then, Natalie has volunteered more than 1,000 hours and continues to inspire countless other volunteers.

**“Natalie has volunteered more than 1,000 hours and continues to inspire countless other volunteers,”**

*Jordan Hamilton, Nominator.*

For the last four years, Natalie has led the DI Christmas Wishlist. Without her support, the DI would struggle to operate the program, and it wouldn't be nearly as successful. During Christmas 2010, Natalie's hard work and dedication to the program meant that 684 Calgarians experiencing homelessness received a special gift. From work

boots to warm jackets, bus tickets to gift cards, hockey tickets to hockey jerseys, eye glasses to dentures, she made a significant difference in life at the DI.

While leading the Wishlist program, Natalie went above and beyond with the amount of time and energy she put into entering client information. As a result, many clients with “expensive” wishes were sponsored.

Brian shares this story: “My teeth were a mess. I knew medical social services would take them out, but they wouldn't give me teeth.” Through the DI Wishlist, Brian received false teeth. “I can eat corn on the cob,” he says. “I'm still getting used to smiling, because for a long time I didn't want anyone to see my mouth.” Brian's wish for his “two front teeth,” came true, as did many others' wishes, due in part to Natalie's significant role in the process.

## Front-line Staff Member Who



### Bradley Fisher

Aboriginal Friendship Centre  
of Calgary

**Nominated by:**

Carol Mason  
Aboriginal Friendship Centre of Calgary

Brad is in every sense of the word a front-line worker and beyond. It is his passion every day to seek, assist and aid Aboriginal People experiencing homelessness. Brad has worked tirelessly, far beyond his job description, to do what it takes to get his clients housed. He has placed people into housing where others have failed. Without hesitation, Brad will find a way to partner with like agencies to find a home for his clients so they can get back on track – spiritually and culturally.

Brad will be the first to admit he has experienced turmoil in his own life – yet has overcome obstacles and rediscovered his heritage. He has used this first-hand experience to help the clients he serves. Brad includes holistic healing as part of his work to instill pride and a sense of purpose in his clients.

In addition to his work with people experiencing homelessness, Brad conducts traditional Aboriginal sweats for anyone interested in learning more about the First Nation culture and ways of life. He offers a better understanding of the plight of Aboriginal People, without blame or retribution of the past.

Brad is a unique individual who can place himself in any situation. Whether it's in the board room or on the streets, he conducts himself with the best he has to offer – himself!

**“Whether it’s in the board room or on the streets, Brad conducts himself with the best he has to offer,”**

*Carol Mason, Nominator.*

## Provides Support To Those Without A Home

### Joe Schreiber

Southern Alberta Brain Injury Society

**Nominated by:**

Lisa Somers  
Southern Alberta Brain Injury Society



As a front-line service coordinator, Joe has patiently and successfully supported many individuals with brain injuries on their journey towards independence and into stable housing. With each individual, he must overcome many challenges and barriers that arise due to the complexity of disabilities, addiction and mental health issues, isolation and lack of understanding from the community.

Joe refuses to allow his clients to fall through the cracks, even after years of attempts to end their homelessness. To ensure a smooth transition, he goes above the call of duty, evaluating the physical space of the new home relative to their needs and then arranging affordable moving assistance.

Joe is relentless and never gives up on his clients or on the system. He has an admirable faith in the power of the human spirit and a belief in the right for individuals to choose their own course of action, without judgment or imposed consequences.

His gentle harm reduction approach does not leave clients feeling pressured or judged, but empowered and motivated to take positive steps.

As another way of contributing to the long-term goal of ending homelessness, Joe teaches others on acquired brain injuries and advocates for increasing the capacity of the community in this

area. He has worked with emergency shelters, homeless-serving agencies, and with parents and teachers to increase understanding and collaboration.

**“Joe is relentless and never gives up on the clients, on the resources or on the system”**

*Lisa Somers, Nominator.*

## Front-line Staff Member Who



### Krista Mergel

Infinity Project, Boys and Girls Clubs of Calgary

**Nominated by:**  
Ronni Abraham  
Boys and Girls Clubs of Calgary

Krista immediately saw the advantages of applying the Housing First model to youth at risk of or experiencing homelessness. Through the Infinity Project, she tirelessly builds relationships with Calgary landlords, supportive roommates and other agencies. She understands that youth need to have a say in the people they want to live with and the communities they want to live in. With practice, these youth can be excellent neighbours.

Krista is an innovator, a motivator, a success coach and a vocal advocate of providing opportunities for vulnerable youth in the community. She works from the firm belief that with the right support every youth can successfully receive and maintain housing permanently.

A young person Krista helped off the street shares this story: “When I was 16 I started getting into drugs like Ecstasy. I had left the transitional housing program where Krista was working and had gone to the streets. She had no obligation to help me anymore, but she took me to Tim Horton’s for lunch. Her eyes teared up as she told me she wished she could do something to stop me from using drugs. I remember for one of the first times in my life I felt cared about. I thought that if someone could care about me that much, than maybe I should care about myself too. She led me through the Infinity Program and encouraged me, and she continues to inspire and mentor me. I am so blessed to have Krista in my life.”

**“I am so blessed to have Krista in my life,”**  
*a young person Krista has helped.*

## Successfully Moved People Into Housing Or Keeps Those At Risk Housed

### Viviane Theriault

Pathways to Housing, The Alex

**Nominated by:**  
Sue Fortune  
Pathways to Housing, The Alex



Prior to becoming the mental health specialist with the Pathways to Housing program, Viviane spent two years as an outreach worker. She worked tirelessly and in rough conditions to find people experiencing homelessness and connect them to services. This commitment and passion sent Viviane to places many social workers would not tread – finding rough sleepers under bridges, by the river bank, behind C-Train stations and in isolated encampments throughout the city.

**“Viviane has helped many suffering from undiagnosed mental illness. She has truly saved their lives,”**  
*Sue Fortune, Nominator.*

Viviane now supports these individuals in maintaining their housing and working towards psychiatric and addiction recovery. She develops strong and meaningful relationships with her clients, due to her true knowledge of where many of them came from.

One time as an outreach worker, Viviane received an e-mail from a concerned family in Newfoundland who had received a call from a family member. He was incoherent and only able to say he was in a tent in Calgary by the railway tracks. Viviane immediately began searching, and after much diligence, she found this man’s camp. He was extremely ill – delusional and disorganized. She was able to gain his trust and help him join the Pathways to Housing program, through which he has successfully maintained housing.

Viviane has helped countless individuals like this – many suffering from undiagnosed mental illness. She has truly saved their lives.

# Recognition

The Calgary Homeless Foundation and the Community Relations Stakeholder Committee wishes to thank and honour everyone who was nominated, as well as those who submitted nominations, for their outstanding work and commitment to ending homelessness in Calgary. In total, we received 34 submissions.

## Volunteer whose work makes a contribution in any way to those without a home.

Nominee	Nominated By
Doreen Kot	Lisa Garrison, HomeBase, The Alex
Lorraine Melchior	Venerable M. Ansley Tucker, Anglican Parish of Christ Church
Melane Mullins	Lindsay Schonfelder, The Mustard Seed
Steve Sidney	Jorge Campusano, Calgary Drop-In and Rehab Centre
Dan West*	Mark Powers, Calgary Drop-In and Rehab Centre

## Front-line staff member who provides support to those without a home.

Nominee	Nominated By
Shaun Casselton	Robert Perry and Richard Mugford, CUPS Health and Education Centres
Gabriel Chen	Mary Lynn Dorsey, Calgary Legal Guidance
Meghan Finnbogason	Danene Lenstra, The Alex Youth Health Centre
Danene Lenstra*	Stasha Huntingford, University of Calgary
Michelle Louisy*	Angela Hutchinson, Children's Cottage Society & Brenda's House
Patrick MacDonald*	Jorge Campusano, Calgary Drop-In and Rehab Centre
Stephanie Schoenberg	Cecilia de la Rocha, Highbanks Independent Living for Parenting Youth

\* Nominated for more than one category.

## Front-line staff member who successfully moved people into housing or keeps those at risk housed.

Nominee	Nominated By
Remy Acedera	Heather Morely, Discovery House Family Violence Prevention Society
Jamal Afech	Amy Eagleson, Horizon Housing Society
John Benoit	Frankie Evans and Anthony Russell, Calgary John Howard Society
Sandra Boulet	Gail McNeil-Oliver, YWCA Community Housing Program
Laura Devereaux	Adam Melnyk, CUPS Health and Education Centres
Jennifer Eyford	Sue Fortune, Pathways to Housing, The Alex
Janine Frey	Hazel Orpen, AIDS Awareness Association
Pamela Godin	Frankie Evans, Calgary John Howard Society
Diane Holloway	Sue Fortune, Pathways to Housing, The Alex
Tina MacMartin	Frankie Evans and Latisha Basbeo, Calgary John Howard Society
Jeanette McDonald	Lindsay Schonfelder, The Mustard Seed
Ken Swift	Lisa Garrison, HomeBase, The Alex
Janis Taylor	Barbara Ross, Alberta Health Services
Colin Tessier	Steve Griffin, The Mustard Seed
Earl Thiessen	Ralph Watson, Oxford House Foundation of Canada
Karen Williams	Amy Eagleson, Horizon Housing Society

# Our mission is to end homelessness in Calgary.

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