

2014

# Arthur R. Smith Awards

McDougall Centre  
Tuesday, March 10, 2015



Calgary  
Homeless  
Foundation

# The 2014 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 a front-line employee, a front-line team and a volunteer who have demonstrated long-term commitment to Housing First and the goal to end homelessness. These awards are open to employees and volunteers, excluding executive directors.

Successful nominations showed that nominees' results contributed to the long-term goal of ending homelessness by helping people move towards independence in housing. Award recipients were seen as demonstrating exemplary leadership, innovation and commitment to clients. Nominators included compelling stories from clients or observers.

The 2014 selection committee consisted of present board members.

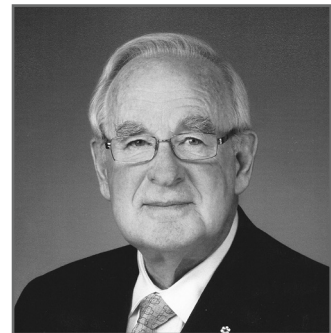
Lucy Miller

Robin Wortman

Wayne Barkauskas

## Sponsored by

**Mr. James Stanford, OC**



We would like to acknowledge and thank Mr. Stanford for generously sponsoring the Arthur R. Smith Awards this year and until 2017. He is graciously covering the costs of the recipients' awards, the luncheon, memorable plaques and staff time to oversee the awards. Mr. Stanford has a long giving history in Calgary and was honoured as an Outstanding Lifetime Philanthropist by the Association of Fundraising Professionals in 2011. We very much appreciate his support of the Arthur R. Smith Awards.

# 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 Mrs. Betty Ann Smith, Arthur's wife, with us today to present the awards. These recipients reflect Arthur's vision in the quality and compassionate service they provide to our neighbours at risk of or experiencing homelessness.

# Volunteer

who has demonstrated a long-term commitment to volunteerism within the homeless sector



## Sharon Robertson

The Alex – Pathways

### Nominated by:

Alexandra Bahlsen, The Alex

At The Alex's 2014 Annual General Meeting volunteer extraordinaire, Sharon Robertson, inspired everyone in attendance with her passionate sharing of what volunteering in the Alex's Pathways to Housing Program means to her. Her deep compassion and commitment to her work with the formerly homeless population experiencing significant mental illness is a gift that benefits everyone at The Alex, from staff to clients, to other volunteers.

For over four consecutive years Sharon's commitment, hard work, attitude, and general presence, has made The Alex a better place and, along with making the lives of our clients easier, has created ripples of well-being throughout the organization. Health and well-being are a priority for Sharon and every week, she picks up clients for doctor's appointments, sometimes arriving with trays of food she prepared the night before to ensure clients have a nourishing lunch to eat. And she can be guaranteed to always bring a smile for everyone.

The colour orange is iconic at The Alex and Sharon has proudly incorporated the color into her daily attire, proudly wearing her orange Alex coat and sharing the Alex story where ever she goes. Sharon is a natural educator and continually advocates on behalf of those experiencing homelessness, doing whatever she can to raise awareness by attending events such as Homeless Awareness Day at Olympic Plaza every October.

Sharon embodies all of the qualities of an ideal volunteer; she is generous with her time, talents and treasures and effortlessly gives from her heart.

**“Sharon is more than a volunteer, more than a cook, she is an amazing person, always looking out for the best interests of the people she cares most about... the clients.”**

*Caitlin Kaminsky, Recreation Therapist  
The Alex*

# Front-line Employee

who demonstrated a strong commitment to Housing First and the goal to end homelessness

## Gabriel Chen

Calgary Legal Guidance

### Nominated by:

Sarah Knopp, The Alex – Pathways

When Calgary Legal Guidance lawyer and homeless advocate Gabriel Chen looks at someone experiencing homelessness, he sees the whole person and the impact homelessness has had on every aspect of their life. He compassionately sees beyond their legal issues to support them in their efforts to leave their involvement in the justice system and homelessness behind.



A tireless advocate for Housing First, Gabriel has championed the case for housing stability of numerous at-risk clients to organizations throughout the System of Care including judges, opposing counsel and the agencies providing supportive housing in Calgary. Whether in court, or talking to a social service provider, or appealing to an agency for housing for his clients, Gabriel is committed to ensuring his clients get an opportunity to begin living their lives beyond their homeless identity.

Gabriel believes in the redemptive nature of every human being and is committed to helping clients move beyond their pasts, dedicating time and heart to supporting them every step of their legal journey. He is creative in finding ways to reduce the impact of these cases on the justice system by implementing reduced fines, tickets and by-laws.

**“Without Gabriel Chen to champion the cases of people experiencing homelessness, clients would struggle to move away from the stigma that follows them out of their situations.”**

*Natalie Woodcock, Program Assistant  
The Alex*

Well-respect in the community, Gabriel is a leader and role model for collective impact. He continually puts in action his belief that for people to change, systems must change too. No one can do it alone and Gabriel constantly calls upon everyone in the system to shift perspectives and positions to see the possibility for change in everyone. Gabriel never gives up pushing for a better deal for his clients and for a better society for everyone.

# Front-line Team Award

who demonstrated a strong commitment to Housing First and the goal to end homelessness

## The Infinity Project Team

Boys and Girls Clubs of Calgary

### Nominated by:

Kim Wirth, Boys and Girls Clubs of Calgary



### Team members:

*Left to right: Heidi Walter, Amber Ward, Felicia Bradley, Misha Waheed, Jonathan Hung, Joelene Fawcett*

Leaders innovate. The Infinity Project, operated by the Boys and Girls Clubs of Calgary (BBGC), is an example of leadership in action.

The Infinity Project is a shining example of how deep understanding of a social issue, a desire to design solutions that are specifically built around the unique needs and characteristics of the user group and a focus on sustainability and measurable results, can and does make a difference.

Since its beginnings in 2009, The Infinity Project team has had a 92% housing success rate.

This demonstrates the exemplary supports and commitment of the team to ensure youth are successful in ending their experience with homelessness. Holding true to the “no discharge to homelessness” philosophy ensures that youth are supported to reaching their goals, becoming self-sufficient and connected to resources, community and natural supports, regardless of any setbacks they have along the way.

The Infinity Team offers youth experiencing homelessness access to housing and then wraps the necessary supports around them to maintain their housing. The foundation for their work always begins with the building of a positive relationship. The team believes that having a positive and open relationship with each youth they serve is the conduit for change. For each youth, the team asks themselves “what would it take to end this youth’s experience with homelessness with this episode”. Using this approach the team focuses on helping the youth to move forward, focusing on their possibilities and not the barriers.

**“The Infinity Team knows how to celebrate the big and small. ”**

*Kim Wirth, Director, Youth Housing & Shelters  
Boys and Girls Clubs of Calgary*

As a team they come together to celebrate birthdays, graduations and holidays with large community dinners or BBQ’s in the park. On Christmas Eve they went to every youth’s home to hang a stocking for each youth on their door, so that when they woke up on

Christmas Day they would know that someone had thought about them. More importantly they also take time to acknowledge and celebrate the small things that happen every day. They often send emails celebrating a youth paying rent for the first time or getting a job. They are proud of every step their youth take on their path.

Heidi, Felicia, Jon, Amber, Jolene and Misha are strong advocates for the youth they serve. They are relentless in their approach and will “do whatever it takes” to ensure that each youth feel supported and cared for. Every day they show up to work with a commitment to Housing First and ending homelessness in Calgary. And every day, with every youth, they make a difference.

# Recognition

The nominees and recipients of the 2014 Arthur R. Smith Awards represent the tremendous effort and compassion being done on the front-line in the Calgary community to end homelessness.

The CHF and a Selection Committee made up of past and present board members wishes to thank and honour everyone who was nominated, as well as those who submitted nominations, for their outstanding work. In total, we received 14 submissions.

**Front-line employee** who has demonstrated a strong commitment to Housing First and the goal to end homelessness.

Nominee	Nominated by
Sarah Knopp The Alex – Pathways	Tiffany Syroid The Alex – Pahtways
Perry Litwack Aspen Family and Community Network Society	David Sannes Aspen Family and Community Network Society
Dr. Bernard Sowa The Alex	Jennifer Eyford The Alex – Pathways
Lundi LaVictorie Alberta Health Services	Jennifer Eyford The Alex – Pathways
Anna Arseneault Inn From the Cold	Joelle Berard Inn From the Cold



**Front-line team** that has demonstrated a long-term commitment to Housing First and the goal to end homelessness.

Nominee	Nominated by
<b>AFCC Aboriginal Homeless Initiative and Outreach Team</b> Susan Bare Shin Bone Samantha First Charger Brad Fisher Sydney Gill Helen Hamlin	<b>George Calliou</b> Aboriginal Friendship Centre of Calgary
<b>Aspen Sustainable Families Team</b> Lillian Bouclin Donna Cashin Angela Clarke Denise Cunningham Blake Early Barbara Eikmans Corrie Gibbons Amelia Larson Perry Litwack Trina Marshall Rob Martens Karl Melting Tallow Brisa Ochoa	<b>David Sannesl</b> Aspen Family and Community Network Society

# Recognition (cont'd)

Nominee	Nominated by
<p>Coordinated Access and Assessment Team – Calgary Distress Centre</p> <p>Natasha Cole Catherine Deck Ashley Handrahan Simon Lai Terry McCann Lisa Thomson Ryan Widmer</p>	<p>Joan Roy Distress Centre Calgary</p>
<p>Keys to Recovery Front-line Team</p> <p>Michelle Brooks Terri Gillis Kelly Peirce Melissa Powell Deitra Pye Elise Olson George Rowley Cheryle Sklapsky Shannon Towson</p>	<p>Dr. Debb Hurlock Creative Theory Consulting Ltd.</p>
<p>Newbridge Team – Accessible Housing</p> <p>Nelson Carreon Joshua Clarke (Program Coordinator) Joseph Matendechere Peter Idwasi Lamlani Mtombeni Norbert Munyarusisriro Stephen Owusu Lacey Shurmer Tamara Valois (Case Manager)</p>	<p>Sarah Knopp The Alex – Pathways</p> <p>Joshua Clarke Accessible Housing</p>

# Past Recipients of the Arthur R. Smith Awards

**Volunteer** who has demonstrated a long term commitment to volunteerism within the homeless sector.

Pat Colman	Salvation Army Community Services	(2007)
Megan Davidson	Phoenix Home Education Foundation	(2008)
Stacie Buttee	Calgary Drop-In and Rehab Centre	(2009-10)
Natalie Ross	Calgary Drop-In and Rehab Centre	(2009-10)
Dennis Halstead	Community Volunteer	(2011)
Marlies Bird	Calgary Dream Centre	(2012)
Harry and Irene Simmelink	Sonshine Community Services	(2013)

**Front-line Employee** who demonstrated a strong commitment to Housing First and the goal to end homelessness.

Loan Tirlui	Trinity Place Foundation of Alberta	(2007)
Lisa Garrisen	CUPS Community Health Centre	(2007)
Nicole Bealing	Alpha House	(2008)
Ralph Watson	Oxford House Foundation of Canada	(2008)
Bradley Fisher	Aboriginal Friendship Centre	(2009-10)
Krista Mergel	Boys and Girls Clubs of Calgary	(2009-10)
Joe Schreiber	Southern Alberta Brain Injury Society	(2009-10)
Viviane Theriault	The Alex	(2009-10)
Scott Calling Last	Elbow River Healing Lodge	(2011)
Chloe Neumann	Boys and Girls Clubs of Calgary	(2012)
Cheryle Sklapsky	Keys to Recovery	(2013)

**Front-line Team** who demonstrated a strong commitment to Housing First and the goal to end homelessness.

Inn from the Cold Case Management Team	(2011)
Alberta Works Outreach Team	(2012)
Sunalta Lodging House Team, Calgary Alpha House Society	(2013)

Our mission is to end  
homelessness in Calgary.

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**Connect with us:**

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