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City awards recognize achievements and mark anniversary of human rights charter

Saturday, November 28, 2009

Friends, families and colleagues gathered this evening to honour 10 award recipients at Toronto's annual Human Rights Awards ceremony. The ceremony marks Human Rights Day, December 10, and celebrates the efforts of three organizations and seven individuals to advance human rights in Toronto.

"I'm proud that Toronto is at the forefront of social change – and it's important that we celebrate how far we've come," said Toronto Mayor David Miller. "But we must never lose sight of, or become complacent about injustice, oppression or inequality."

Mayor Miller was joined by Councillors Janet Davis (Ward 31 Beaches-East York), Paula Fletcher (Ward 30 Toronto-Danforth), Pam McConnell (Ward 28 Toronto Centre-Rosedale), Kyle Rae (Ward 27 Toronto Centre-Rosedale) and Gord Perks (Ward 14 Parkdale-High Park) to make presentations to community activists for their human rights volunteer work. In one of her first appearances as Toronto's new Poet Laureate, Dionne Brand paid tribute to the recipients for their efforts.

Seven residents and three organizations received awards. Their work is contributing to the elimination of violence, racism, sexism, homophobia, homelessness, hate crimes, hunger, poverty and illiteracy in Toronto. The 2009 recipients of the Access, Equity and Human Rights Awards are:

- Aboriginal Affairs Award: Kimberly Murray
- Access Award for Disability Issues: John Rae, Birchmount Bluffs Neighbourhood Centre, Committee for Accessible AIDS Treatment
- Constance E. Hamilton Award on the Status of Women: Ann Buller, Sonja Gredkol
- Pride Award for Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Two Spirited Issues: John Campey
- William P. Hubbard Award for Race Relations: Adrienne Shadd, Paul Nguyen, Scadding Court Community Centre

Biographies of the recipients can be found on the City's website at <http://www.toronto.ca/civicawards/2009winners.htm>.

(The biographies are also provided below.)

Toronto is Canada's largest city and sixth largest government, and home to a diverse population of about 2.6 million people. It is the economic engine of Canada and one of the greenest and most creative cities in North America. Toronto has won numerous awards for quality, innovation and efficiency in delivering public services. 2009 marks the 175th anniversary of Toronto's incorporation as a city. Toronto's government is dedicated to prosperity, opportunity and liveability for all its residents.

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