
News release

Communiqué

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 12, 2010

GOVERNMENT OF CANADA HONOURS FIVE WOMEN RECEIVING GOVERNOR GENERAL'S AWARDS

OTTAWA – The Honourable Rona Ambrose, Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for Status of Women, is pleased to announce the recipients of the 2010 Governor General's Awards in Commemoration of the Persons Case. These 31st annual awards recognize outstanding individuals who have helped to advance equality for women in Canada. The awards ceremony will take place at Rideau Hall on Persons Day, October 18, 2010.

“These awards commemorate the five Alberta women who in 1929 achieved the right for women to serve in the Senate,” said Minister Ambrose. “This year we recognize five more women whose hard work has truly benefitted women and girls. The legacy of the Famous Five endures in these award recipients. We are proud to recognize the ongoing contributions of Canadians to improving the lives of women and girls in communities across the country.”

The following five individuals are the 2010 recipients of the Governor General's Awards in Commemoration of the Persons Case:

Marie Louise Fish, of Elgin, Ontario is a trailblazer for women in non-traditional roles, particularly in the Canadian Forces. Her military career reflects many women's “firsts,” including being the first woman to serve at sea as a naval officer – at a time when there were very few women in the Canadian Navy. Upon retiring, Ms. Fish entered the field of university and college security administration, developing policies and practices that enhance women's safety, and increasing the representation of women on security staff.

Lucille Harper, of Pomquet, Nova Scotia, is a long-time advocate for social justice and women's equality. As Executive Director of the Antigonish Women's Resource Centre since 1988, she works with girls and women on issues of poverty, violence, social exclusion, health education and training. Ms. Harper helped to found several key women's organizations, and has contributed to the work of the Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women.

Kerline Joseph, of Delson, Quebec, is a federal public servant and holds a doctorate in law. Since the early 1990s, she has dedicated herself to fighting discrimination against women. Ms. Joseph was the assistant to the Special Rapporteur of the African Commission. In 2005, she created *Voix sans frontières* [*Voices without borders*], which assists immigrant women in Canada. Ms. Joseph is the organization's president.

Anne Michaud, of Montréal, Quebec, has been active in the women's movement since the 1970s, focusing on helping women feel safer in the urban environment. In 1981, she helped launch “Take Back the Night,” a series of simultaneous demonstrations in various cities across Canada that continue to this day. Ms. Michaud helped to make Montréal a leader in urban safety for women. In 2002, Ms. Michaud co-founded Women in Cities International.

Barbara Mowat, of Abbotsford, British Columbia, is dedicated to advancing women in business. A business development specialist, she is President of Impact Communications Ltd. Ms. Mowat is the Women Presidents' Organization Chapter Chair in Vancouver and an advisory board member for the Global Banking Alliance for Women. Involved in international work supporting women entrepreneurs in developing countries, Ms. Mowat led a special United Nations project to support businesswomen in Afghanistan.

This year marks the 81st anniversary of the Persons Case. In 1929, five Canadian women – Emily Murphy, Henrietta Muir Edwards, Louise McKinney, Irene Parlby and Nellie McClung, who became known as the Famous Five – fought and won the right for women to be recognized as persons before the law, and thus eligible to sit in the Senate. In 1979, the Government of Canada established the Governor General's Awards in Commemoration of the Persons Case to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Persons Case decision and to recognize contributions to the advancement of women.

An official call for nominations for the Governor General's Awards in Commemoration of the Persons Case is made every spring. Nomination forms and brochures outlining selection criteria are always available on Status of Women Canada's web site. Nominations may be submitted at any time and will be considered at the annual Selection Committee meeting held in late summer.

- 30 -

For more information, please contact:

Rebecca Thompson
Director of Communications
Office of the Minister of Public Works and
Government Services and
Minister for Status of Women
613-997-5421

Nanci-Jean Waugh
Director General, Communications and
Strategic Planning
Status of Women Canada
613-995-7839

Ce texte est également disponible en français.

For news releases and information on Status of Women Canada, go to www.swc-cfc.gc.ca.