

CWC ANNUAL AWARD WINNERS

CANADA'S CREAM OF THE CROP IN COMMUNICATIONS

TORONTO – March 7, 2006 – Canadian Women in Communications (CWC) announced today the winners of its prestigious CWC Annual Awards, recognizing exceptional women in the Canadian communications industry and those who have helped women to advance. CWC is also pleased to announce the participants of the 2006 Jeanne Sauvé Professional Development Program, bringing together women from the private and public sector to participate in a program at the Department of Canadian Heritage, Industry Canada and the CRTC for an inside look at communications policy and regulation.

The media is invited to attend the awards presentation at the CWC Annual Awards Gala on Wednesday, March 8, 2006 at the Ottawa Congress Centre starting at 6:00 pm. The CWC Gala is a Who's Who of the Canadian communications industry, uniting over 600 industry leaders and government representatives. Presenters will include the Honourable Bev Oda, Minister of Canadian Heritage and Status of Women; the Honourable Maxime Bernier, Minister of Industry; and Charles Dalfen, Chairman of the CRTC.

The CWC Annual Award Winners are:

Woman of the Year: Sarah Crawford, Vice-President, Public Affairs, CHUM Ltd., Toronto

This award was created to recognize those unique women who have excelled in their careers in the communications industry and have contributed materially to the professional advancement of women.

At CHUM, Sarah Crawford's achievements extend well beyond her job. She is perhaps best known as CHUM's company leader in diversity initiatives, serving in that role on the CAB Task Force for Cultural Diversity in Television. Her commitment to ensure that television reflects Canada's diverse population – including Aboriginal peoples, women, visible minorities and people with disabilities – has played a significant role in shaping best practices in the Canadian television industry as a whole.

CWC Employer of the Year: Alliance Atlantis Communications Inc.

This citation is awarded from time to time at the discretion of the CWC Board of Directors to an employer that has an outstanding track record or has demonstrated leadership over time in the promotion of women.

Alliance Atlantis Communications is an industry leader in changing corporate culture to foster the advancement, promotion and recognition of women. The recent appointment of Phyllis Yaffe as CEO and her subsequent appointment to the company's Board of Directors is an example of these efforts. At Alliance Atlantis, women make up 45% of senior managers, 21% of managers and 38% of senior department leaders.

CWC Trailblazer of the Year: Sandy Larson, Manager of Customer Service and Operations, SaskTel and Mayor of Swift Current, Saskatchewan

This award honours women whose actions have cleared the path for women. A Trailblazer is someone who demonstrates that taking a risk has its rewards.

Sandy Larson's pioneering spirit make her a role model for young women and prove that hard work and commitment can foster great success, even in non-traditional roles. She is Manager of Customer Service - Operations for SaskTel and has consistently excelled in traditionally male-dominated roles. She is also the Mayor of the City of Swift Current.

CWC Mentor of the Year: Cindy Chatwell, Acting Marketing Manager, Aboriginal Peoples' Television Network (APTN), Winnipeg

This award was created to encourage women and men to mentor women new to the communications industry and those aspiring to career advancement.

Cindy Chatwell's management philosophy mirrors that of APTN: encouraging staff to reach for their dreams, take chances and stretch their comfort zones so they can reach their full potential, both personally and professionally. In her 12 years of experience in the communications industry she has not only led by example, but actively encouraged those around her.

Chapter Leader of the Year: Diane Johnson, President, Descriptive Video Works, Vancouver

This award honours a CWC member whose time, effort and commitment has helped to build CWC or has contributed significantly to the organization's success.

Diane Johnson is president and founder of the only company that produces described video for the vision impaired in Western Canada. She has been an active member of the broadcasting industry for more than 18 years and was a driving force behind the founding of the CWC British Columbia chapter. From career advice to paving the way for other women, Diane has always led by example and continues to be there for every member of CWC.

The 2006 Jeanne Sauvé Professional Development Program winners are:

Justine Sider, Spectrum Engineering Branch, Industry Canada

Véronique Fiset, Senior Analyst, Canadian Program Certification, CRTC

Susan Makela, Manager of Programming Business Affairs, Corus Television

Aneez Khanani-Datoo, Sr. Communications Advisor, CBC/Radio-Canada

Armine Tchakmakchian, Broadcasting Policy and Programs, Department of Canadian Heritage

Kristen Beausoleil, Telecommunications Policy Branch, Industry Canada

Canadian Women in Communications (CWC) is a national, bilingual organization dedicated to the advancement of women in the communications industry through strategic networking, targeted professional development and meaningful recognition. There are currently over 1,400 CWC members in nine chapters across Canada. For more information on CWC visit www.cwc-afc.com

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