

COAST MENTAL HEALTH'S
Courage
 TO COME BACK AWARDS

PRESENTED BY WHEATON PRECIOUS METALS

PAST RECIPIENTS

1999



LORNE KIMBER
 GENERAL MEDICINE
 Diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in 1980 and confined to a wheelchair within a few years. EXPO '86 committee chair for better access. Behind the region's accessible buses and Canada's first 100% accessible taxi fleet. Lorne died in 2008.



ANDRE SPENCER
 CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY
 Ran away at 14, lived on the streets and on drugs; by 37 he had lost all hope. Self-imposed cold turkey in the wilderness brought Andre new hope. He now leads healing circles, helping groups and individuals.



KARILYN WALKER
 GENERAL MEDICINE
 Diagnosed with Crohn's disease at nine. Despite spending much time in hospitals over the years, Karilyn has a challenging career and remains physically active. Spokesperson for Crohn's & Colitis Foundation of Canada.



DOROTHY WARD
 CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY
 Destitute, widowed and a mother of six at 34, Dorothy had long battled alcoholism. She went back to school, then earned two university degrees, and is now Director of Social Development for the Penticton Indian Band.



APRIL PORTER
 MENTAL HEALTH
 After years of misdiagnosis, identified as suffering from Bipolar disorder. Self-medicated with alcohol and street drugs, became suicidal. Clean since 1993, April is a strong advocate for those with mental illness.



PAMELA ANDREWS
 SOCIAL/ECONOMIC ADVERSITY
 Lived in extreme poverty with four sons and abusive husband, but broke free. Despite her progressive multiple sclerosis, award-winning Pamela graduated from UBC in 2000 as a fulltime occupational therapist



PAUL MCGILLICUDDY
 MENTAL HEALTH
 Suffering from Bipolar disorder, paranoid schizophrenia and physical ailments, Paul became an active volunteer and a Board member of Coast Society. He was a leader in the mental health community until his death in 2004.



CAROL DAUPHINAIS
 SOCIAL/ECONOMIC ADVERSITY
 Extensive child abuse, labelled a 'Low Moron' and institutionalized, Carol escaped to live on the streets. With the help of a kind lady, she found a place to live, learn and earn money. Carol is now married, an author and a volunteer.



TINA SUTER
 PHYSICAL REHABILITATION
 A brain operation left Tina partially paralysed and legally blind. Barely able to read, she enrolled and graduated from college. Remains a dogged campaigner and advocate for brain injury survivors.



SHERRY CAVES
 PHYSICAL REHABILITATION
 Hit by a drunk driver at seven, Sherry was rendered paraplegic. Forced to quit work by deteriorating spinal condition. Devoted parent and former VP of Mothers Against Drunk Driving.



NATALIE LACHOWICZ
 YOUTH
 When she was 11, Natalie fell and suffered severe injuries. She awoke from a coma unable to read, write or walk. An honour-roll student who raises money and talks to students about safety and brain injuries.

2001



KRISTY COUEFFIN
 GENERAL MEDICINE
 Kristy is a lifelong epileptic, who had undergone three brain surgeries by the age of 13. Taking medication to help reduce her own seizures, she works to support epileptics.



FRED MILNE
 CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY
 As a child Fred already used and sold drugs. In and out of prison, he survived an overdose and eventually turned his life around. He has established innovative programs to help recovering addicts.



CHERYL BROWN
 GENERAL MEDICINE
 UBC Masters Graduate. Suffered extensive rheumatoid arthritis. Co-founder of the Ovarian Cancer Alliance Canada, Cheryl succumbed to the disease in 2003 after a 10-year battle.



JADE BELL
 CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY
 Abused alcohol, cocaine, then heroin as a teenager. Overdose-induced coma left him blind, paralysed and unable to speak. From the brink of giving up completely, Jade now communicates to thousands of students about drug abuse.



PENNY KEENE
 MENTAL HEALTH
 In her own words, Penny "had it all and lost everything." In and out of hospital for manic highs and depressive lows. She became a Peer Support Worker and an award-winning mental health advocate until her death in 2013.



FREDA ENS
 SOCIAL/ECONOMIC ADVERSITY
 Her mother sold her as a baby for a bottle of beer. Freda and her children made ends meet by dumpster diving. Freda is now a certified family counsellor and past Executive Director of Vancouver Police Native Liaison Society.



PUNKAJ BHUSHAN
 MENTAL HEALTH
 Diagnosed as schizophrenic as a student, the illness and medication left him feeling morose. Punkaj eventually came to grips with his disease. Successful in business, married, father of two, he also volunteers to help others with a mental illness.



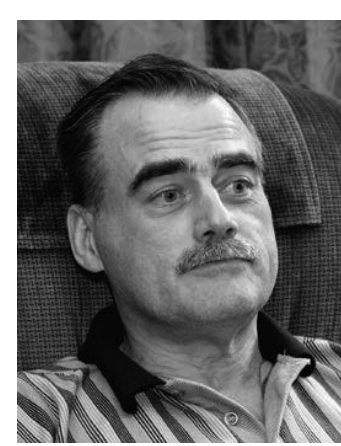
YVONNE SUTTON-FREGIN
 SOCIAL/ECONOMIC ADVERSITY
 Sexually abused as a child and later in two marriages, Yvonne was an alcoholic. Refusing welfare, she scraped through menial jobs. Her children forced her to get help. Clean, remarried and helps run a group home for pregnant teens.



MARY WILLIAMS
 PHYSICAL REHABILITATION
 A motorcycle accident left her a quadriplegic, breathing with a respirator. Determined to live independently, Mary did. She was a tireless volunteer and advocate until her death in 2001.



PATRICK BAYNAM
 YOUTH
 First diagnosed with leukemia at four. Patrick suffered brain damage after later treatment. Despite his learning disability, he made honour roll. Aspiring actor, camp counsellor, college student.



RANDY HERMAN
 PHYSICAL REHABILITATION
 RCMP officer, severely hurt in two separate traffic incidents. Dubbed the 'Comeback Kid' for his seemingly unstoppable spirit, Randy died in 2006 after an 8-year battle with cancer.



KELSEY KILBURN
 YOUTH
 On dialysis at three, a kidney transplant at four, and subsequent side effects made Kelsey a regular hospital guest. Nevertheless, she achieved honour roll, made the student council, became camp counsellor and volunteer for BC Transplant Society.

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2003



JACQUELINE POPE
 GENERAL MEDICINE
 Jacqueline has a rare genetic condition, which attacks her skin with blistering and scarring. Hospitalized ten times in five years. Studied fashion design, relentless volunteer, founded Disabled Women's Support Group.



JOE ROBERTS
 CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY
 Started on drugs at nine, was using intravenously by 16. Joe hit bottom in 1991 and turned things around. Earned marketing diplomas and founded Mindware Design Communications. Author and presenter of "Don't buy the lie about getting high".



LORI WIKDAHL
 GENERAL MEDICINE
 It took seven years for Lori to be diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, a time in which she became increasingly debilitated and severely withdrawn. Virtually bedridden in 2002, she became inspired to walk. Walk she did: 6,423 kilometres across Canada to raise funds.



RODNEY FREGIN
 CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY
 Already injecting heroin at 12, Rodney started his interactions with the BC Penitentiary at 16. 30 years later, on a binge and suicidal, he found a Salvation Army detox centre. Drugfree since 1989, pardoned in 2002, he married and was a youth support worker until his death in 2012.



JILL STAINSBY
 MENTAL HEALTH
 Jill's first psychotic episode was followed by many hospitalizations for paranoid schizophrenia over the years. Clean since 1986, first Masters Degree in 1991 and her second in 2007. Now a Social Worker.



BLANCHE ANDERSON
 SOCIAL/ECONOMIC ADVERSITY
 As a child, separated from her family in residential school. Later, Blanche found the strength to leave her abusive husband. She worked at Tranquille Institution, gained Health Worker certificate. Now retired, she continues to study and volunteer in Victoria.



MARY GRAHAM
 MENTAL HEALTH
 As a teenager, Mary was often in hospital for self harming. Between that and her abusive marriage, she hit bottom. The Self Abuse Finally Ends program in the US changed everything. Mary introduced SAFE to Canada and Australasia.



FLORENCE RITA RICKARDS
 SOCIAL/ECONOMIC ADVERSITY
 Florence grew up in poverty and violence until she ran away at 16. She worked full-time to raise her son, earned social worker credentials in the evening and went on to gain an MBA. She inspires others through speaking engagements.



ROBB DUNFIELD
 PHYSICAL REHABILITATION
 Robb became a ventilator-dependent quadriplegic at 19. He learned basic functions and how to paint with his mouth. Married since 1992 and father of twin girls. Accomplished artist, frequent speaker. Works full time for The Rick Hanson Foundation.



HARDEEP BATH
 YOUTH
 Born with no spleen, Hardeep's body could not filter out disease, and she lost her hands and parts of her feet as a baby. She worked through her disabilities and helped others through theirs, until her death in 2010.



GEOFF MCMURCHY
 PHYSICAL REHABILITATION
 Art student rendered quadriplegic in a 1977 diving accident. Geoff has nevertheless been self-sufficient since. He serves many disability and arts organizations. Prime mover for the Society for Disability Arts and Culture and Kickstart festival.



STEPHANIE DAVID
 YOUTH
 Undergoing surgery at age 10 for a malignant brain tumour, Stephanie lost coordination on her left side. After corrective surgeries, within a year she was riding her bike. She raises funds for other cancer patients and is a busy volunteer.

2005



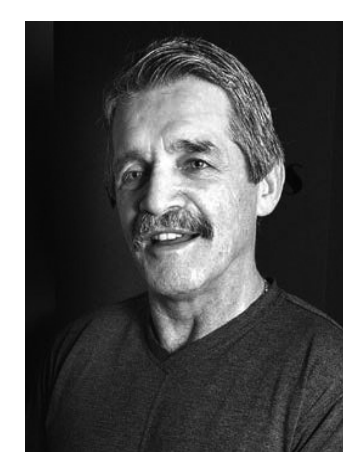
MELANIE CARLBECK
 GENERAL MEDICINE
 Melanie beat the odds and lived beyond the numerous surgeries for spina bifida. Wheelchair bound, she has been self-supporting and independent all her adult life. After graduating from high school and UBC, she also went into teaching.



LORA JOHNSTON-CORBETT
 CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY
 Lora financed 16 years of heroin addiction with crime, while others raised her children. Finally, close to ending it all, she turned the corner. She gained her Social Work degree and later her Masters. Now married and active in community affairs.



RENEA LOUISE MOHAMMED
 MENTAL HEALTH
 Renea earned a BA, was married and started her Masters. Diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia and attempted suicide several times before realizing that if the medication stopped the voices, the voices weren't real. Now a trainer and Peer Support Worker.



RANDY H. MILLER
 ADDICTION
 Started smoking pot, harder drugs followed, was living on the streets and had spent time in prison by 19. Painkillers for an injury led Randy to heroin. Entered recovery, spent 3 years getting off methadone. Reactivated longshoreman's ticket. Now working and speaking to teenagers in schools.



DONALD FRASER
 MENTAL HEALTH
 Two roller-coaster decades of institutions, successes and failures, until better diagnosis and treatments for schizophrenia and epilepsy helped turn around Donald's life. Living independently, he has a good job and often speaks to caregivers, parents and students about the disease.



HALLDOR BJARNASON
 INSPIRATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT
 Born with cerebral palsy. Graduated law school; couldn't find steady work; researched and free-lanced. Now in private practice, Halldor is chair of the Law Society's Disability Advisory Committee and a busy volunteer. He holds a 1988 Paralympic gold medal.



GLADYS MONTGOMERY EVOJ
 SOCIAL ADVERSITY
 Hitting the streets by age 13 to finance her habits, Gladys finally went into detox after her twin babies—born with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome—were taken away from her. Went back to school, work and got her twins back. Now a family outreach worker.



KIMBERLY D. BLACK
 MEDICAL
 Diagnosed with cystic fibrosis (CF) at 16 months, then CF-related diabetes. Kim trained to be a nurse despite osteopenia and kidney stones. Wrote finals while on intravenous antibiotics. Now a Paediatric Community Health Nurse caring for chronically ill children.



JOHANNA JOHNSON
 PHYSICAL REHABILITATION
 Hit by a car at age 12, Johanna became a ventilator-dependent quadriplegic. She always wanted to teach and earned two UBC degrees. It was hard to find a position, but she is now a full-day kindergarten teacher and a spirited volunteer.



EMILY WHITE
 YOUTH
 Emily was diagnosed with asthma at age seven, her condition deteriorated and by 10 she was Ventolin dependent. Within a year, wheelchair-bound Emily found a new doctor who stopped the medications. She is now a healthy A student and an active volunteer.



JENECEE A. EDROFF
 YOUTH
 Diagnosed at three with severe Neurofibromatosis. Was not expected to walk again after spinal surgery at age five. She did: Jeneece is a fighter. She undergoes chemotherapy but she also leads a full life. Although in pain most days, has raised many thousands for charity.



JAMES MICHAEL SEAN WATERLOW
 PHYSICAL REHABILITATION
 A cut on Jamie's leg became infected and developed necrotizing fasciitis. In an induced coma for three weeks and 24 surgeries in six months later, his leg had to be amputated. That didn't stop him earning a diploma in recreational leadership, working in child-care, volunteering and continuing his athletics.



SAMUEL C. SULLIVAN
 2006 SPECIAL COURAGE AWARD
 In 2006, Vancouver Mayor Sam Sullivan was awarded the first ever Special Courage Award in recognition of his inspirational achievement in overcoming great challenges and reaching great heights of community involvement and success. At the age of 19, in a skiing accident, he broke his neck and was rendered quadriplegic. Following a period of despair, he began the journey back to a full life. He founded several non-profit organizations which benefit thousands of people with disabilities. He was elected Mayor of Vancouver in 2006 and millions saw him wave the Olympic flag at the closing ceremonies of the Turin games.

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2007



LESLIE NELSON
SOCIAL ADVERSITY
Growing up in poverty, became immersed in the drug and gang culture by 16. Many years of violent behaviour, addiction, homelessness and jail time. After attending a workshop, Leslie turned his life around. Now drug-free and an employment counsellor.



HERSH ABRAMSON
ADDICTION
Started doing hard drugs at an early age. Hersh lived on streets by 17; overdose on heroin prompted several clean years. Relapse back to streets and jail for five years. Infection led to leg amputation in 2000. Entered recovery, became clean and was a health care worker until his death in 2013.

2008



ZOSIA ETTEMBERG
MEDICAL
Stricken by polio, Zosia did not walk until age four. She went on to become a physiotherapist, married and adopted two brothers. Eventually forced to use a wheelchair. After her husband died of cancer, she was diagnosed with breast cancer and diabetes. She retrained to support herself and continues to volunteer tirelessly.



MARLENE SWIFT
ADDICTION
By 21 Marlene was an alcoholic, drug user, and in a series of violent relationships. In her mid 30s she was brutally beaten, raped and left for dead. Eventually began to attend church and 12-step meetings. Now a Coordinator of Victim Services and a very busy volunteer.



LOYANNE MCCUAIG
MENTAL HEALTH
At 30, Lorraine began experiencing symptoms of schizophrenia. Undiagnosed for years resulting in periods of homelessness. With her children's help, she battled illness in rehab and became committed to raising awareness of mental illness. Diagnosed with lung cancer in 2004, she died in 2007.



JOHN MORRISON
MEDICAL
Diagnosed with diabetes at 9, complications led to amputation of both legs and complete blindness. John was involved in many initiatives and presentations to educate on disabilities. An accident in 2004 rendered him paraplegic. He died in 2009.



DEBBIE SESULA
MENTAL HEALTH
An outgoing young woman, Debbie became depressed and scared, started self-harming and attempted suicide. Struggled to graduate from University, would start jobs then quit, convinced the staff were after her. Eventually gained control over mental illness. Currently works as a mental health professional and is pursuing a Masters.



TRISHA BAPTIE
SOCIAL ADVERSITY
Addicted to drugs and alcohol by 12, a mother by 17. Trisha worked the streets and had two more children. She turned her life around, escaped the drugs and violence, went to school and made a safe, stable home. Now she helps women living as she once did.



MERLE SMITH
PHYSICAL REHABILITATION
An accident left Merle quadriplegic at 14. She earned two university degrees and became Ombudsman for the Handicapped. Struck by a drunk driver at age 26 and again at 39, she battled back and continued her work with the Ministry and volunteering for people with disabilities.



KAYTEE TUOMOLA
YOUTH
Neglected by her parents, Kaytee turned to drinking and drugs at 13. Crystal meth addict and pregnant at 16, forced to live on the streets. Sought help and never looked back. Now clean and sober; loving mother to healthy son; attending post-secondary trades classes.



JOHN BANOVICH
PHYSICAL REHABILITATION
John's car was hit by a drunk driver, leaving injuries to his face, arms and hips. Three months and more than 90 surgeries later, doctors said he'd never walk again. John proved them wrong. He speaks to thousands of people annually about drinking and driving.



MICHAEL CHILDS
YOUTH
Michael was seven when he sustained a traumatic head injury. He could not speak, eat or move. After a year of rehabilitation, his eyesight returned, he learned to swallow food and pilot a power wheelchair. He volunteers and fundraises extensively for organizations who have helped him.

2009



LORI SLATER
MEDICAL
Born with spina bifida, at 10 days old she had the first of dozens of surgeries. Walking until her late 30s, she eventually needed a wheelchair. Now she holds 8 volunteer positions to make the world more inclusive to people with disabilities. Still living with chronic pain, she makes a huge difference in her community.



HELEN BURNHAM
ADDICTION
Even though she had a strict upbringing, she began drinking to ease the pain of her husband's abuse, escalating it when they divorced. When her son died in an alcohol-related accident, she sought help to quit. Since then, as Co-Founder and Executive Director of a recovery centre, she has helped thousands of women achieve and maintain sobriety.



CINDY THOMSEN
MEDICAL
In 1996 a case of blood poisoning 'bacterially burned' Cindy's lips, hands and feet, which were then amputated. Unable to talk, walk, or eat, she spent months in rehabilitation. Today she volunteers extensively, working with burn victims and amputees.



STARR PEARDON
ADDICTION
From poor family of 12, Starr's home life was violent. At 14, she began to use drugs and alcohol, eventually landing in prison. In her 30s, sober, she opened a recovery house and has since helped hundreds of women leave the life Starr once led.



TINA TOMASHIRO
MENTAL HEALTH
Lost in mental illness and living in the DTES, she masked her pain with illegal drugs and eventually attempted suicide. After getting help, she took a job as receptionist at a law society and is training to be a paralegal. She volunteers extensively and spends her free time helping others in her community.



BECKI WYER
SOCIAL ADVERSITY
Raised in an abusive household, at 14 she attempted suicide. In her 20s she was homeless, living in an inner-city park with a drug dealer, when compassionate police officers connected her to medical/social services. She now has a home, meaningful work, and shares her story so that others may also be helped.



THERESA DUGGAN
MENTAL HEALTH
Migraines led to an addiction to prescription painkillers. An attempt to quit hospitalized her with mania and psychosis. After many tries, Theresa conquered her addictions and became stabilized on psychiatric medication. She now works fulltime as a Mental Health Peer Support Worker.



MYRNA CRANMER
SOCIAL ADVERSITY
For 27 years Myrna lived in 'Canada's poorest postal code' using drugs and committing crimes to obtain them. In 1994, she entered a detox facility, got her GED, then enrolled in university, eventually earning an MA degree. Today she is an Outreach Worker at the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre.



VIVIAN GARCIA
PHYSICAL REHABILITATION
When she was 22 a tree fell on her, severing her spinal cord and leaving her in constant pain and in a wheelchair. Divorced, she raised two sons and has volunteered for many years to positively impact the lives of people in her city, both those with and without disabilities.



JESSICA BRIMACOMBE
YOUTH
Born with a genetic bone disorder, she has had more than 30 surgeries in her 18 years. Despite extensive hospital and rehab time, she maintained a 95% grade average and volunteered raising funds, tutoring younger students, writing and acting. She plans to attend University to become a children's art therapist.



MARK AUDIO ASH
PHYSICAL REHABILITATION
In 2001, Mark, a professional musician sustained a paralyzing brain injury which cost him his family, home, and livelihood. Undeterred, he researched and developed his own recovery plan incorporating music. Today, he volunteers tutoring brain injury patients and plays in a new band.



FAHREEN MAPARA
YOUTH
Born prematurely with an abnormal pathway between her trachea and esophagus, Fahreen has had many surgeries. Never expected to talk, at 4 she began to speak and today chatters happily in 2 languages. Although she must have medical equipment with her at all times, she attends school, does sports, and volunteers extensively.

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2011



DR GRAHAM BRYCE
 MEDICAL
 In his 40s, Graham was a highly-respected surgeon when he suffered a stroke and the life he knew was brought to an abrupt halt. Recovery was slow, but after years of therapy, he returned to many of his previous work and volunteer commitments and has found ways to apply his personal experience to benefit others.



JEROME BOUVIER
 ADDICTION
 At 14, Jerome began using drugs and by 19 was addicted. In 1983, an accident left him paralyzed in a wheelchair, but he continued using. One day he found a friend dead of a heroin overdose—he got clean, enrolled in college, and became a drug and alcohol counselor working with youth. His nonprofit has helped thousands of young people.



MARGARET BENSON
 MEDICAL
 Diagnosed with one year to live at age 14, Margaret defied the odds until age 40 when her cystic fibrosis rapidly eroded her health. Today, more than a decade after receiving a double lung transplant, Margaret is deeply involved with transplant advocacy and is a multi-medal winning competitive athlete.



ANGIE LOHR
 ADDICTION
 After the tragic loss of her husband to mental illness, for nearly 14 years cocaine abuse led Angie on a hellish trip through poverty, prostitution, crime and homelessness. She completed detox and now runs an organization that serves sex-trade workers, providing street outreach, counselling, and housing.



AMANDA SCHELL
 MENTAL HEALTH
 Amanda began experiencing visual hallucinations when she was in grade 1 and by age 12 was also hearing voices. At 23, she was diagnosed with schizophrenia. With medication, counselling, and new coping skills, she has recovered. She began volunteering then working in mental health, and speaks publicly about mental illness and its impact on family.



VICTORIA WATERS
 SOCIAL ADVERSITY
 From 8 to 18 Vicki was sexually, physically and emotionally abused by a close relative. For years she struggled with depression and flashbacks, even after she married and began a family of her own. In 2003, Vicki went public with her story and today helps victims of childhood sexual abuse.



SANDRA YUEN MACKAY
 MENTAL HEALTH
 After multiple hospitalizations following her diagnosis of paranoid schizophrenia at age 15, Sandra was determined to begin her life again. With the assistance of new medication and a supportive family she now speaks to recovery groups, has published a memoir and is an award-winning artist.



KAMAL DHILLON
 SOCIAL ADVERSITY
 For nearly 12 years, Kamal was severely abused by her husband, leaving her near death several times. Since leaving her marriage and regaining her four children, and after many reconstructive surgeries, she has worked tirelessly to help organizations identify and prevent violence, and has written a memoir.



CAPTAIN TREVOR GREENE
 PHYSICAL REHABILITATION
 While serving with Canadian forces in Afghanistan, Trevor was struck in the head with an axe. After many surgeries and years in hospital, he began to recover, defying all odds. He speaks at schools, community gatherings, and at large public events, inspiring many people with his incredible story of recovery and forgiveness.



CURTIS BALDWINSON
 YOUTH
 Living with his drug-addicted mother, Curtis was neglected, dirty and seriously underweight. By the time he was 6 his father had gained custody, and Curtis was treated for clinical depression and ADHD. After a late start, he learned how to read, achieving proficiency in months, and by 15 was an Internet entrepreneur. Today he volunteers extensively, helping troubled youth.



MICHAEL COSS
 PHYSICAL REHABILITATION
 A car accident left Michael in a coma for seven months with severe brain trauma, unlikely to speak, eat or move independently again. He received hyperbaric oxygen therapy and rigorous rehabilitation, and is now a sought-after public speaker who has written a book about his experience.



REBECCA HILL
 YOUTH
 After being forcibly removed from her family home and placed in foster care, Rebecca developed a methamphetamine addiction, turning to crime to finance her habit. After becoming pregnant at 17, she sought support and beat her addiction, and is now raising her daughter.

2013



CINDY LEE
 MEDICAL
 A rare congenital condition affecting mobility did not stop Cindy from accomplishing her dreams, even as the system tried to hold her back. With her family's support and her own determination, Cindy overcame her physical challenges and currently works with students with special needs to find postsecondary work.



THEA MEYER CUNNINGHAM
 ADDICTION
 Drug use led Thea to years of homelessness and prostitution; she became addicted to meth and other drugs coming close to death many times. After several tries at rehab Thea got clean, reconnected with her daughter and is an outreach worker with at-risk women.



PAUL CAUNE
 MEDICAL
 Paul has serious physical challenges but they haven't stopped him from being a human rights leader who inspires others. In his drive to help others maintain their own civil rights, Paul shares his strength of will as Executive Director of "Civil Rights Now!"



JOE CALENDINO
 ADDICTION
 Joe was a longtime gang member who became addicted to drugs and alcohol. Today, he spearheads an effective youth mentoring program so that his "Yo Bro" kids do not take the path he did.



ANDY FIORE
 MENTAL HEALTH
 Diagnosed with schizophrenia after a psychotic break while traveling abroad. Now recovered, Andy uses his work as a filmmaker to showcase Vancouver's most vulnerable citizens challenging perceptions of life in the DTES, highlighting the strength and resilience of the human character.



CURTIS MILLER JOE
 SOCIAL ADVERSITY
 Childhood was not easy for Curtis. Removed by child protective services to an abusive foster family, he turned to drugs and gangs. Between time in jail and homelessness, Curtis made the decision to change his life for the better and now shares his experiences with at-risk youth.



JACKIE HOOPER
 MENTAL HEALTH
 At age 87, Jackie's colourful and hardworking life has yielded some impressive triumphs stemming from her lifelong fight with severe depression, including being the driving force behind Coast's first housing project, Hooper Apartments.



BRENDA GARDINER
 SOCIAL ADVERSITY
 Brenda's early years were warped by violence and alcohol abuse. Leading by example and sharing her personal story, Brenda signals to everyone around her that with determination and strength we can all rise above, no matter what adversity we might face.



JAMES SANDERS
 PHYSICAL REHABILITATION
 A freak accident one New Year's Eve left James, a promising athlete and actor, paralyzed from the waist down. Faced with a long recovery, and told that he might not be able to act in a leading role again, James began his own theater company which tours throughout the world.



LINDSAY LOURENCO
 YOUTH
 Lindsey thought of others first, even through illness and pain. While on a family trip to Europe at age 12, Lindsey fell gravely ill. She recovered, and battled cancer while keeping honour roll standing through high school. She passed away just after being selected as the 2013 Youth recipient, at age 18.



KRIS STANBRA
 PHYSICAL REHABILITATION
 Kris' life was dramatically altered when their car was run off the road and Kris was thrown more than 40 feet from the vehicle. She was told she would never walk again nor be a parent. After working toward her recovery, Kris became a powerful advocate for people with disabilities, volunteering extensively and working with community leaders to improve accessibility in Castlegar.



KENNEDY BAKER
 YOUTH
 A series of traumatic events wreaked havoc on Kennedy's young life and mental wellness. Instead of succumbing to her travails, she bravely confronted them and has emerged stronger than ever. Throughout her struggles and to this day, she has generously volunteered her time for many organizations, including "STAND", a nonprofit for social change she created.

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2015



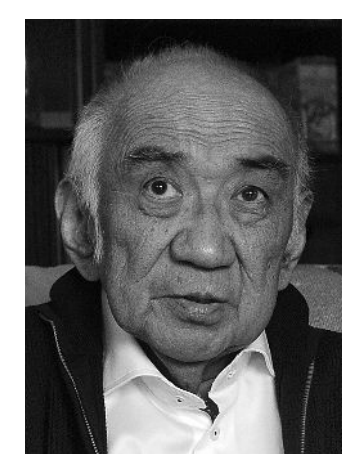
WENDY ST. MARIE
MEDICAL
Born to a single mother, Wendy grew up subjected to taunts and ridicule. In her early 20s Wendy was diagnosed with malignant melanoma in the hip and face. In her 30s, she was diagnosed with diabetes, multiple sclerosis, and osteoporosis coupled with multiple fractures. She is now an accessibility consultant, fundraiser, volunteer, and is active in her church and community.



ANDREW BHATTI
ADDICTION
When he was 8, Andy's mentor began sexually abusing him. Terrified to tell anyone, he turned to heroin. When he learned he was to be a father, Andy began attending support meetings for his addiction and to face the abuse in his childhood. Today, he is an addiction interventionist and raises money and awareness for victims of abuse.



JEMAL DAMTAW
ADDICTION
A child soldier in Ethiopia, Jemal ran away and sought asylum in Canada. Undiagnosed PTSD made life difficult to cope; he became an alcoholic and addict. Over 10 years sober, Jemal is an outreach worker and preacher at UGM.



TOM TERANISHI
MEDICAL
Born into a Japanese-Canadian internment camp in 1942, Tom had vision issues at birth. He has lived with kidney disease and has received two transplants. Despite his medical issues, Tom completed his bachelor's and master's degrees in social work and worked in hospitals for many years.



ANDREA PAQUETTE
MENTAL HEALTH
After her parents' divorce when she was a teen, Andrea began doing drugs and drinking daily. By grade 10, she had dropped out of school. At 25, she began to suffer from depression, panic attacks, mania and delusions. She had bipolar disorder. Today, as the founder of the Bipolar Disorder Society of BC, Andrea teaches that people aren't defined by their illnesses.



JIM MANDOLIN
SOCIAL ADVERSITY
A few years ago, you could have found Jim selling and using drugs in the downtown eastside. Raised by an alcoholic member of the Ku Klux Klan in a culture of hatred, Jim was a violent, addicted criminal. When a serious overdose caused his heart to stop, he gave up drugs and alcohol, and now brings hope and inspiration to others at risk in the DTES.



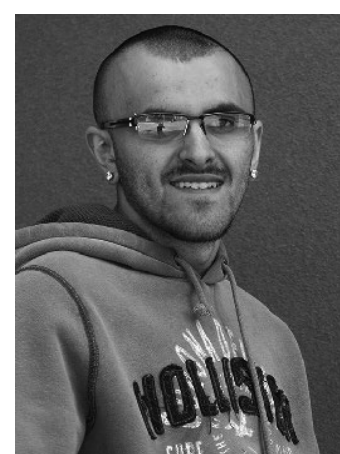
BARBARA HARRIS
MENTAL HEALTH
During her youth, Barbara experienced sexual abuse. She ran away and became an addict to escape her PTSD and depression. In 1986 she became sober. She completed her bachelor's and master's degree in social work. She received her PhD in 2009 and opened a full-time private practice.



CHRISTY CAMPBELL
PHYSICAL REHABILITATION
At 31, Christy suffered a stroke which left her unable to walk, talk or read. She had aphasia. Christy is the co-founder of an aphasia camp, established an education fund, and volunteers with multiple health organizations.



JOHNNY HEDDERSON
PHYSICAL REHABILITATION
Johnny was a man with tremendous energy who gave selflessly to his family, friends, colleagues and community. At 36, he suffered a paralyzing stroke. Rehabbing in a swimming pool, he suffered a seizure and almost drowned. A ruptured appendix, two heart attacks and bypass surgery followed, then a head injury. He has fought through them all to come back and help others.



KYLE JACQUES
YOUTH
At 11, Kyle was paralyzed. At 13, his father passed suddenly from a heart attack, and only four years later his mother died. Despite being only 17 and in a wheelchair, Kyle lived on his own, supported himself, finished high school, and graduated from two vocational programs. He has volunteered for years to help others with spinal cord injuries, and is a full-time mechanic and father.



MEREDITH GRAHAM
SOCIAL ADVERSITY
Meredith's childhood was marred by poverty, hunger, violence, periods of mental illness, and substance use. With her struggles she went on to complete a counselling program and is now studying for her degree in child and youth care. Meredith is a youth and family development worker, an active volunteer.

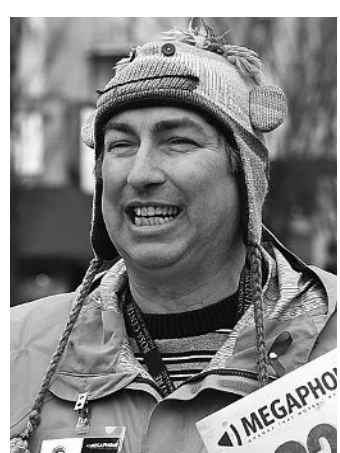


COLTYN LIU
YOUTH
As a toddler, Coltyn was hit by a shopping cart resulting in a traumatic brain injury. He had to relearn to walk, talk, and comprehend. Today, he is an A student, a volleyball star, and a mentor. Coltyn is also a co-founder of KarePower, an organization which identifies community challenges and comes up with solutions from a youth perspective.

2017



DEBORAH CARTER
ADDICTION
After the trauma of surviving a car accident and sexual assault, Deborah began abusing prescription drugs and heroin. After four years living on the streets, she became motivated to get clean. Deborah is now a vital resource and positive influence for women battling addiction and violence.



STEPHEN SCOTT
MEDICAL
After surviving two accidents and diagnoses of both HIV and a brain tumor, Stephen found himself homeless. He overcame his adversity - finding work and getting off the streets. Now serving his community as a peer support worker, Stephen is known for his upbeat attitude and generosity.



JOSH DAHLING
ADDICTION
After surviving a childhood fraught with poverty, abuse, and addictions, Josh found sobriety. While raising three children independently, he completed a social work degree, helped establish an organization to help families cope with loss, and volunteered to support those struggling with bereavement and addictions.



INGRID BATES
MEDICAL
After returning to school as a mature student, Ingrid was diagnosed with breast cancer. Her treatment resulted in several rare life-threatening illnesses and long hospital stays. Ingrid has become an inspiring teacher, passionate volunteer, and active dragon boat racer and a Run for the Cure participant.



RACHEL FEHR
MENTAL HEALTH
Rachel was improperly diagnosed with depression at 13. After being wrongly prescribed medications with inadequate support, Rachel started self medicating with drugs. Many years later, Rachel received a proper diagnosis and began self-improvement classes, getting clean, and thriving. She now runs a program for at-risk youth and women.



JOHN WESTHAVER
PHYSICAL REHABILITATION
A car accident left him with life-threatening burns covering 75% of his body. After undergoing countless painful surgeries, he was determined to empower others. John became a motivational speaker and holds an active role with the Canadian Burn Survivor Community.



SUZANNE VENUTA
MENTAL HEALTH
Suzanne survived a traumatic childhood characterized by poverty and abuse, she overcame each setback to transform her life and community. Despite a lifelong struggle with mental illnesses, she continues improving her health and wellness, while volunteering countless hours as an inspirational advocate for mental health.



JIM RYAN
PHYSICAL REHABILITATION
In a life-changing moment, an accident left Jim paralyzed below the shoulders. Motivated by his family, he underwent gruelling rehabilitation, publically sharing his ongoing recovery journey. Jim's tireless work as a volunteer, advocate, and inspirational speaker has helped thousands of people living with disabilities.



ESTHER MATSUBUCHI
SOCIAL ADVERSITY
Interned in a WW2 BC prison camp, she later suffered serious injuries from a car accident, and was diagnosed with breast cancer and then diabetes. In her 70s, she has become a social justice advocate and volunteer for numerous organizations: an inspiration to many breast cancer survivors.



RICHARD QUAN
YOUTH
Diagnosed at age three with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy - a often-misunderstood disability, he was in a wheelchair at 10. After exploring adapted music, Richard began to shine, performing live for various groups. Despite his terminal illness, he focuses on what he can do, not what he can't do.



ALISA GIL SILVESTRE
YOUTH
Born with Congenital Muscular Dystrophy, Alisa survived a near-fatal illness thanks to a life-saving procedure. Alisa did not let the resulting 24/7 care routine prevent her from graduating alongside her peers, volunteering as a highly-successful fundraiser, pursuing a degree in Anthropology, and inspiring others with public speaking.

COAST MENTAL HEALTH'S
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PRESENTED BY WHEATON PRECIOUS METALS

PAST RECIPIENTS

2019



GERI IININAATOÁÁKI BEMISTER-WILLIAMS
 ADDICTION
 A survivor of childhood abuse, Geri turned to substance use to cope. After courageously addressing her substance use and enduring complications resulting from breast cancer, she completed her education and now dedicates her life of recovery to helping others heal from trauma, substance-use and criminality.



KATHRYN PALMER
 MEDICAL
 Diagnosed with Complex Regional Pain Syndrome at age 20, Kathryn faces a lifetime of excruciating pain. Forced to abandon her career and many activities, this dedicated mother of three co-founded the CRPS Hope & Awareness Foundation to help others like her.



AMANDA STALLER
 ADDICTION
 From the time she was a child, Amanda faced physical, sexual, and emotional abuse. She was addicted to drugs, working in the sex trade, and living a high-risk lifestyle. With courage she became an addictions counsellor and has shares her story in hopes to help others in their own journey.



ANDREW TEEL
 YOUTH
 Andrew spent his first six years in foster homes. He suffered from PTSD, coupled with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome. Supported by his adopted family, Andrew defied expectations and excelled at school and sport. In June 2020, he graduated high school and has raised over \$60,000 for charity.



ERIN EMIRU
 MENTAL HEALTH
 Excelling in neuroscience at university, Erin was also learning to manage schizophrenia and an eating disorder. Reluctantly withdrawing from her PhD program to protect her mental health, she continues to share her personal experiences to help people affected by schizophrenia.



HARRIET RONAGHAN
 PHYSICAL REHABILITATION
 A devastating car crash left 18-year-old Harriet with a traumatic brain injury. Determined to reclaim her future, she beat the odds: relearning many of her basic functions, and fulfilling her dream of becoming a wife and mother. She now shares her story to inspire others.



COREY HIRSCH
 MENTAL HEALTH
 Playing in the NHL and the 1994 Olympics, he was battling with undiagnosed OCD - leading to self-harm and suicidal thoughts. Finally diagnosed, and a 10-year journey he is breaking wide open the issue of mental health. Corey has become an advocate, and public speaker bringing awareness of mental health stigmas across the country.



RUMANA MONZUR
 PHYSICAL REHABILITATION
 An attack left Rumana blind and in need of surgery. After she dealt with psychological impacts on her mental health. She had to re-learn how to read, write, walk, and live without eyesight while raising her daughter. She completed her Masters, and got a job at the Department of Justice. A powerful advocate of social justice for women. Rumana uses her experience to help others.



TAYLIN MCGILL
 YOUTH
 Taylin contracted bacterial meningitis at ten days old, enduring 14 brain surgeries. While she continues to recover from the lasting effects of years of prolonged seizures and damage to her brain, she finds joy in sharing her story to inspire hope and raise funds to help others.



SHOOGOFA (MARIAM) NASRII
 MEDICAL
 Born in Afghanistan, Mariam faced racism, and extreme trauma. In 2009, she suffered life-changing injuries, leaving her with pain, depression and isolation. Despite all that, she returned to Afghanistan to help women with addiction and mental illness. She has written on Afghan victims of domestic violence, highlighting social issues within the community and established a non-profit.

2021



GUY FELICELLA
 ADDICTION
 Against the odds, Guy has overcome a 30-year cycle of addiction, homelessness, crime and jail, living within a two-block radius in the Downtown Eastside. He has been sober for 8 years, and is a public speaker and tireless advocate for people living with addiction, while also working as a policy advisor.



GREG ANCTIL
 MEDICAL
 Despite 20+ years of ill health including Crohn's Disease, cancer, emergency surgeries and four joint replacements, Greg's story is one of positivity. Forced to close down his law practices, he has returned to the law four times, all while volunteering his time for CHILD Foundation and the Parish Council amongst others. A dedicated husband and father.



CHLOË ANGUS
 MEDICAL
 Chloë Angus suffered a spinal cord injury (SCI), leaving her paralyzed from the waist down. Unwilling to take the drugs needed to manage her symptoms, she developed her own alternative regime. Now, she runs her own ethical fashion business and has helped develop a pioneering exoskeleton that allows her to walk. She has become a tireless advocate for people living with SCI.



BERNADINE FOX
 MENTAL HEALTH
 Bernadine Fox endured sexual and physical abuse as a child, and later at the hands of her therapist and abuser. Despite the lifelong trauma, PTSD, Chronic Fatigue and Osteoarthritis, she selflessly chooses to share her story and use her voice to shed light on the issues of mental health and abuse of power.



ALEX SANGHA
 MENTAL HEALTH
 Diagnosed with bipolar disorder, gay, and from a South Asian community where neither is widely accepted, Alex is a formidable force for good. A creator of safe spaces, LGBTQ activist, award-winning documentary-maker, author and speaker, he has founded two charities to support South Asian and elderly LGBTQ communities.



LESTER WONG
 PHYSICAL HEALTH
 A horrific car accident burnt 30 per cent of his body, Lester was left disfigured and underwent countless surgeries. Undeterred, he returned to school, resumed his military reserve role and gained his commercial pilot license, despite his loss of fingers. He selflessly volunteers for Burns charities, and shares his story to help others.



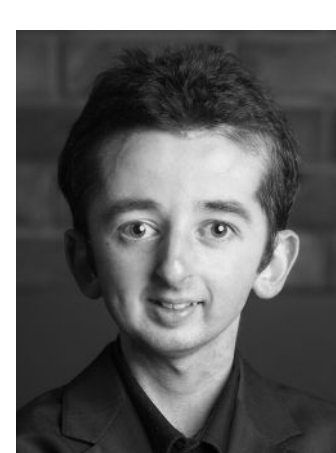
KRISTEN MCBRIDE
 PHYSICAL REHABILITATION
 When a horrific car accident left her paralyzed from the chest down, Kristen McBride refused to let that stop her. She started her own business, and became a provincial-level para-athlete, mother and wife. She selflessly volunteers and fundraises for multiple charities, and has become a champion for people living with a spinal cord injury.



DR BARNEY JR WILLIAMS (TRADITIONAL NAME: KLITH-WII-TAA)
 ADDICTIONS
 A residential school survivor and person recovering from alcoholism, Dr Barney has made it his life's mission to help others overcome alcoholism and addiction. He is a leading expert in survivors' trauma, and served as a committee member for the Truth & Reconciliation Commission. Today, aged 82, he continues to advise government officials and selflessly shares his story to help others.



MIRANDA TYMOSCHUK
 YOUTH
 Despite painful surgeries to break and lengthen her leg, living with chronic illness, mental health challenges and addiction, Miranda turned these into opportunities to help others. From a young age she has volunteered, fundraised, shared her story and trained to help, and counsel others so they might feel less alone.



CASEY WRIGHT
 YOUTH
 Diagnosed with a brain tumour at six months old, Casey Wright has endured a long and arduous journey of surgery, medication, hospital stays and rehabilitation that continues today. Throughout, his optimism has shone through. He is a true champion for children battling illness, and puts his energy into raising awareness and funds for families.

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2023



JODI GRAY
MENTAL HEALTH
 Despite facing poverty, abuse, suicide ideation, depression, anxiety and systemic oppression as a transgender person, Jodi Gray has changed the narrative and created a life worth living. She tirelessly volunteers her time to help others and has become part of the solution in making these systems better and more accessible.



RACHEL GOLDMAN
MEDICAL
 Rachel Goldman has faced a lifetime of chronic illness and pain with great courage and strength. She is an accomplished TV & Radio Producer, loving mother, and wife, and has always volunteered within her community. Rachel hopes that by sharing her story, her struggle can be a force for hope for others.



BAYLIE MCKNIGHT
MENTAL HEALTH
 By the time she was 18, Baylie McKnight had faced many challenges including physical and sexual abuse, and addiction. Diagnosed with borderline personality disorder, she found services lacking, and decided to tackle the gap herself. She founded her own charity and has helped thousands dealing with the symptoms and stigma of living with BPD.



MONICA GÄRTNER
MEDICAL
 Born with a rare bone disease, Monica Gärtner has endured over 500 broken bones and the resulting trauma and rehabilitation. Despite discrimination, accidents and collapsed lungs, she persevered, completing her studies and gaining employment. She champions equality and support for people with disabilities through her writing, speaking and her own non-profit.



JOHN OAKLEY
ADDICTION
 Despite facing a childhood of abuse, 40 years of addiction, prison, homelessness and bladder cancer, Joan Oakley dedicates his life to service. He has been in recovery for almost 15 years, and selflessly volunteers his time in Canada and in Mexico, as well as sharing his story to shine a light of hope to those he meets.



PATRICIA HENMAN
PHYSICAL REHABILITATION
 After a car crash with a drunk driver left her physically and emotionally changed forever, Patricia Henman refused to live her life as a victim. Despite a gruelling and ongoing recovery, she returned the stage, volunteers countless hours to the arts community and has become a powerful advocate against drunk driving.



KEVIN PARKER
ADDICTION
 Kevin Parker's journey from poverty, addiction, violence, and homelessness is a testament to his resilience. Today he is happily married with four children and serves as a beacon of hope to others. He advocates for recovery, diversity, and harm reduction, and is working to make positive long lasting transformative change in community for folks with a supportive and hopeful compassionate and loving lens.



LEO SAMMARELLI
PHYSICAL REHABILITATION
 Once a rising boxing star, Leo Sammarelli's life was altered forever when he was shot at 22, leaving him paralyzed. Despite the challenges, he found purpose through adaptive sports, winning medal after medal and even returning to boxing. He generously shares his story to inspire others.



DANIELLE LAVIOLETTE
YOUTH
 Despite growing up in poverty, being diagnosed with autism and losing her mom suddenly, Danielle Laviolette is a well recognized and respected force for good in her neighbourhood. She volunteers her time selflessly with Metro Kids Society and supports low-income families. She is an inspiration to those around her.



SAMANTHA SEWELL
YOUTH
 Born with a speech disorder, and bullied and tormented at school, Samantha Sewell has defied the odds to become a voice for anti-bullying and inclusion. A model, beauty-pageant winner, and early childhood education provider, she uses her platform to spread hope.

2025



STANLEY PRICE
ADDICTION
 Stan Price overcame childhood trauma, addiction, and gang involvement to become a powerful advocate for change. Now working in addictions and recovery, he also volunteers with KidsPlay Foundation, sharing his story to educate youth on the dangers of gangs and drugs, inspiring countless others to pursue brighter futures.



LOUISA BRIDGMAN
MEDICAL
 Despite living with cerebral palsy, facing childhood abuse, and systemic discrimination, Louisa Bridgman is a fierce advocate for disability rights. Through her activism, mentorship, and policy work, she is breaking down barriers and improving the lives of others in her community.



DAVID CHALK
MENTAL HEALTH
 David Chalk, a successful AI expert and entrepreneur, hid the fact that he couldn't read until his 60s. After overcoming stigma and sharing his literacy journey publicly, he is now developing Reading Road™, an AI-trained platform to make literacy accessible for all.



OMAR BSEISO
YOUNG ADULT
 Despite facing poverty, along with physical and mental health challenges, Omar Bseiso persevered. He went from a struggling student to a UBC scholarship recipient aiming to become a doctor. He has dedicated himself to improving healthcare and crisis support, influencing provincial policy and advocating for better care through his volunteer work and leadership roles.