



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Up-dated with quote from NS Premier

Day of recognition and awards acknowledge strength of nonprofit sector

Awards aim to shed light on Nova Scotia's invisible Champions

October 14, 2020, HALIFAX - Nova Scotia is the first province in the country to mark a **Day of Recognition** for the Nonprofit Sector.

Today, the flags of Province House are flying in recognition of the 6,000 nonprofit organizations and 20,000 people who work in them across Nova Scotia. Twenty nonprofit professionals and organizations are being recognized for their exemplary contributions to our communities with the Bhayana Family Foundation Invisible Champions Awards. This is the fourth year for these peer-nominated awards in Halifax. New this year, the awards have been expanded province-wide and encompass both nonprofit organizations and registered charities. The United Way, the Bhayana Family Foundation, the Community Sector Council of Nova Scotia and the Provincial Government hosted a virtual event celebrating the Day of Recognition.

Premier Stephen McNeil says non-profits organizations have always been essential in improving the quality of life in Nova Scotia, now more than ever.

“Today, we are celebrating the non-profit sector with the first provincial Day of Recognition. Throughout COVID-19, these dedicated workers have stepped up and learned new ways of delivering programs. This is also a time when we are more aware of our history with our African Nova Scotian and Indigenous communities. The non-profit sector is a leader in addressing these challenging times and systemic inequalities. We are grateful for their leadership and thank the thousands of people in the sector for their tireless efforts.”

President and CEO of United Way Halifax, Sara Napier, says Nova Scotia's nonprofit sector has gone above and beyond during these trying times.

“Throughout the pandemic, we have seen an outpouring of compassion, dedication and love from nonprofit organizations, staff and volunteers. Their tireless efforts and commitment to community are inspiring and deserve recognition. It is great to see Nova Scotians virtually come together to celebrate and recognize the achievements of these 20 Invisible Champions.”

Raksha Bhayana says those who work in nonprofits get very little recognition for all of their dedication and hard work. "Nonprofit Champions work out of the limelight driven by a mission to help others. They provide value beyond money, transforming lives while moving the economy forward. Nova Scotia has created Canadian history by putting a spotlight on these Invisible Champions."

Award winner, Tova Sherman, CEO of reachAbility is grateful for this Day of Recognition and humbled by the award and believes everyone has a part to play in helping those most vulnerable in our communities. "The \$1000 award will be going directly to training my entire staff on cultural competency and inclusion of all people, not just those with disabilities."

Nonprofits contribute \$1Billion in Gross Domestic Product to the economy annually and in terms of employment are similar in size to the transportation and financial services sectors.

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Facebook Event: <https://www.facebook.com/events/336153980774952/>

Join us in congratulating the following winners!

Individual winner's name, organization & location:

1. Felicia Nadine Brown-Colley - East Preston Day Care/FRC (awarded posthumously)
 - East Preston, Nova Scotia
2. Dr. Heather Rudderham - Eskasoni Mental Health Services
 - Eskasoni, Nova Scotia
3. Lisa Deyoung - Viola's Place Society
 - Pictou County, Nova Scotia
4. Myrene Keating-Owen - LEA Place Women's Resource Centre
 - Eastern Shore & Musquodoboit Valley, Nova Scotia
5. Nancy Thurston - Maggie's Place Family Resource Centre
 - Colchester & Cumberland County, Nova Scotia
6. Patricia Neves - NS Association for Community Living
 - Nova Scotia
7. Saida Gazie - Veith House
 - North End Halifax, Nova Scotia
8. Colleen MacIsaac - The Bus Stop Theatre Co-op
 - Halifax Regional Municipality, Nova Scotia
9. Gina Jones-Wilson - Upper Hammonds Plains Community Development Association
 - Hammonds Plains, Nova Scotia
10. Kalkidan Gebre - Women's Wellness Within
 - Nova Scotia
11. Michelle Malette - Adsum for Women and Children
 - Halifax Regional Municipality, Nova Scotia
12. Tova Sherman - reachAbility

- Halifax Regional Municipality, Nova Scotia
13. Wanda Hill - YWCA Halifax
- Halifax Regional Municipality, Nova Scotia

Winning organization's name & location:

1. Autism Nova Scotia
 - Nova Scotia
2. Dartmouth Seniors Service Centre
 - Dartmouth, Nova Scotia
3. East Preston Empowerment Academy
 - East Preston, Nova Scotia
4. Public Good Society of Dartmouth
 - Dartmouth, Nova Scotia
5. Game Changers 902
 - Nova Scotia
6. Tri-County Women's Centre
 - Digby, Yarmouth & Shelburne, Nova Scotia
7. Halifax Refugee Clinic Association
 - Nova Scotia

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About the Bhayana Family Foundation: Incorporated in 2006, the Bhayana Family Foundation partners with United Ways across Canada to close the recognition gap for the human service sector. Their contributions to our society's well-being – and to our economy – are well-documented and immense. Yet all too often, the sector and its dedicated professionals are overlooked and undervalued. Our focus is to strengthen the roots of the community-the Invisible Champions of Canadian Communities.