

The Lieutenant Governor's Award for the Advancement of Interreligious Understanding

Terms of reference for the advisory committee responsible to make recommendations to the Lieutenant Governor (as of June, 2017)

1. THE NAME OF THE AWARD:

1.1. *The Lieutenant Governor's Award for the Advancement of Interreligious Understanding*

2. A BRIEF DESCRIPTION:

- . 2.1. Early in January or February of each year, in a ceremony at Government House, the Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of Manitoba may confer *The Lieutenant Governor's Award for the Advancement of Interreligious Understanding* (the "Award") upon a worthy recipient, at the recommendation of an advisory committee, which serves at the pleasure of the Lieutenant Governor and under the authority of the Manitoba Multifaith Council ("Award Committee");
- . 2.2. Each year, under the patronage of the Lieutenant Governor, the Award normally recognizes the contributions of an individual member of Manitoba's various religious communities toward greater interfaith understanding of, and harmony among, the religious communities in the Province, and beyond;
- . 2.3. The recipient's contributions may be offered through any realm of endeavour – the arts, community organization or service, cultural engagement, education, media;
- . 2.4. The Award is intended to be conferred across the broadest religious spectrum possible, with no restrictions of age, gender, or personal trait;
- . 2.5. This Award shall be regarded as the highest tribute that can be paid to residents of Manitoba by the Vice-Regal office for valuable and distinguished service to the community through engendering and promoting Interreligious understanding.

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3. HISTORY: A Brief History of

The Lieutenant Governor's Award for the Advancement of Interreligious Understanding

The Lieutenant Governor's Award for the Advancement of Interreligious Understanding, at least until its presentation in January of 2015, remains unique in the world.

First officially acknowledged by the striking and presentation of a medal and an accompanying citation to the composer Zane Zalis on January 11, 2011, by His Honour Phillip Lee, the vision of this award first emerged in the autumn of 2006.

During the Parliament of the World's Religions Five Year Retrospective of "9/11" in September of 2006, in Montréal, Anthony Mansour, *Directeur du Centre canadien d'oecuménisme (CCE)*, approached Dr. James Christie, then Dean of the Faculty of Theology at the University of Winnipeg, with an idea for promoting Interfaith Dialogue.

M. Mansour mooted first, the possibility of expanding a three-city tour – Montréal, Ottawa, and Toronto, by Professore Alberto Melloni, of the University of Bologna, to include Winnipeg. Prof. Melloni was to visit Canada at the behest of the Turkish Government to promote his groundbreaking edition of *The Holocaust Journals of John XXIII*, who, as papal Nuncio in Turkey during WWII, undertook the rescue of European Jews from the Nazis, and arranged for many to be smuggled into the British Protectorate of Palestine.

M. Mansour believed this provided an opportunity to honour both the late Pontiff and, in each city, a Jew, a Christian and a Muslim who had contributed to interreligious understanding over many years.

The CCE would prepare and award plaques accordingly.

Dr. Christie enthusiastically endorsed the concept, but pushed it a step further.

He approached the Honourable John Harvard, then Lieutenant Governor of Manitoba, to present the plaques as the Queen's Representative.

He then convened an *ad hoc* interfaith advisory group to propose names for that first award. In October 2007, CCE plaques were presented by Mr. Harvard to Sandy Hyman, of the Jewish community; to Dr. Asad Kahn, a

Manitoba Muslim; and to Ms. Frieda Lalbihari, a Roman Catholic. The concept was so well received that the *ad hoc* committee constituted itself as the *Community Advisory Committee for the Lieutenant Governor's Award for the Advancement of Interreligious Understanding*, a designation meticulously crafted with the Office of the Lieutenant Governor.

Two years of planning and negotiation culminated in the 2011 inaugural presentation of the newly minted award to Mr. Zane Zalis, composer and librettist of *I Believe*, an *oratorio* inspired by the *Shoa*. Mr. Zalis was born into the Ukrainian Catholic Church, and is now a communicant in the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Winnipeg. In 2012, the Lieutenant Governor took the unusual step of acknowledging two recipients, Mae Louise Campbell, a Métis-Cree Elder, and Pundit Atish Muniar, a Hindu Priest. These three received concurrent award plaques from the CCE.

In 2013, the award was presented to Dr. Redwan Moqbel, an immunology researcher and a representative of the Baha'i community who has provided leadership in promoting peaceful relations and spiritual insight among many different traditions. The Lieutenant Governor, in 2014, recognized the Honourable Dr. Lloyd Axworthy for promoting interreligious understanding in ways well beyond the usual expectations of a University President. In 2015 Rabbi Neal and Mrs. Carol Rose were jointly honoured for their years of service together.

Her Honour the Honourable Janice C. Filmon, graciously agreed to continue issuing the award when she was appointed Lieutenant Governor in June of 2015. In 2016, Her Honour presented the award to Karen Toole, former provincial spiritual care co-ordinator, radio host and newspaper columnist.

Beginning in 2017, Her Honour replaced the presentation of a medal with the planting of a Regal Celebration Maple Tree. A legacy project of Her Honours, these trees will be a new and sustainable way of recognizing award recipients. Former Winnipeg Police Service Chief, Devon Clunis was the first to be honoured with the planting of a tree under this program.

In 2017, her Honour also approved a new institutional home for the award committee. The official “handover” took place during the award ceremony in February of 2017.

The Committee acknowledges with gratitude the vision – and courage – of Their Honours John Harvard and Phillip Lee; Phyllis Fraser of the Office of the Lieutenant Governor of Manitoba; and of Anthony Mansour for the original inspiration.

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THE CRITERIA TO RECEIVE THE AWARD: Recipients of the Award:

- 4.1. will have been residents in Manitoba during the time of their contribution;**
- 4.2. will have been active in their own faith community during their time of contribution;**
- 4.3. will have actively gone beyond the expectation of their position (voluntary or professional) to engage their own community and encourage others in interfaith activity that promotes human harmony and understanding of one another’s religious perspectives;**
- 4.4. will have demonstrated a significant length of service to the cause of Interreligious understanding;**
- 4.5. will have a demonstrated breadth of influence beyond their own traditions;**
- 4.6. will have made a contribution which is worthy of the description “with distinction;”**
- 4.7. will normally be individuals;**
- 4.8. will normally be living, but posthumous Awards may be considered (normally at the first or second presentation of the Award after the recipient’s death). Posthumous Awards are not to be pursued for lack of a living recipient;**
- 4.9. The number of recipients to be recommended for the Award each year shall be one. The number shall be limited so as to preserve the distinction of the Award; the Committee may choose to recommend that the Award not be given in a particular year;**
- 4.10. Admission to the Award shall not be granted simply because a person holds, or has held, a certain position or office, or is simply fulfilling the terms of one’s position. Preference will be given to those whose contribution is given as an unpaid volunteer.**

5. THE EMBLEMS OF THE AWARD:

- 5.1. A personalized sterling silver gold plated medal**
- 5.2. A certificate suitable for display detailing the Award will be presented by the Lieutenant Governor, to the recipient;**

5.3. The names of each year’s Award recipient(s) shall be

5.3.1. noted on such electronic platforms as deemed suitable by the Committee

and The Lieutenant Governor (e.g. Lieutenant Governor’s website).

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6. THE AWARD COMMITTEE:

6.1. Shall normally be members of the Board of Directors of the Manitoba Multifaith Council; .

6.2. The members of the Award committee shall also be under the particular rubric of the Community Relations Committee of MMC; that that from 2017 hence, recommendations of recipients for the Award will be determined by the MMC Board meeting *in camera* annually for that purpose;

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CONFIDENTIAL NOMINATION FORM FOR

The Lieutenant Governor’s Award for the Advancement of Interreligious Understanding

The accuracy, clarity and brevity of nominations will assist the Award Committee to consider this nominee.

The deadline for “intent to nominate” emails is August 15 and for completed nominations is September 15.

Nominee’s Complete Name: _____

Address: _____ Email: _____

Phone Number: _____ (Work) _____ (Home) _____ (Cell) _____

Nominator: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____ Email: _____

Phone Number: _____ (Work) _____ (Home) _____ (Cell) _____

Involvement in Interreligious Work (Include *Dates From* _____ *To* _____)

Send "intent to nominate" email and completed forms to harrisray@mymts.net
Or mail to **Lt. Gov. Award Committee, 1841 Assiniboine Avenue R3J 0A7**

Inquiries may be made to Ray Harris.

I confirm the information above is correct, and agree to the nomination, to accept the Lieutenant Governor's Award should it be offered to me, to attend the award ceremony, and to speak briefly (about 5 minutes) about my efforts for interreligious understanding at that ceremony.

Signature of Nominee _____ Date: _____

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