

SPIRIT AWARD RECIPIENTS ANNOUNCED IN LLOYDMINSTER

Lloydminster MLA Tim McMillan, on behalf of Social Services Minister Donna Harpauer, today announced the recipients of the annual Spirit Award For Community-Based Organizations (CBOs). The Spirit Award honours CBOs that deliver programs and services on behalf of the Ministry of Social Services or its agency, the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation.

"The Spirit Award celebrates the contributions of human-services CBOs to the well-being of Saskatchewan people," McMillan said. "The CBOs that deliver these services are all non-profit organizations operated by volunteer boards. And they share a common goal—to improve the lives of people and families in their communities."

CBOs that received funding within the past two years from the Ministry or the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation were eligible for the award. Funded CBOs include those that provide services and supports for people with disabilities, those that support children, youth, and families facing challenges or crisis, as well as housing authorities that deliver housing programs and services for lower-income people and families.

This year's recipients are:

- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Lloydminster (Children, Youth and Families category)
- Porcupine Opportunities Program, Porcupine Plain (People with Disabilities category)
- River Bank Development Corporation, Prince Albert (Housing category)

McMillan presented Big Brothers Big Sisters of Lloydminster with their award, including a cheque for \$1,000. Presentations to the other two recipients will be made in a few weeks.

"As one of the many CBOs across Saskatchewan working to make a difference in the lives of children, youth and families, we're thrilled by this recognition," Big Brothers Big Sisters of Lloydminster Chairperson Kathy Paniak said. "Through the many strong partnerships we have developed with families in Lloydminster, we will continue to offer mentoring and other quality programs to the children of our community."

CBOs from across Saskatchewan were nominated for the 2008-09 Spirit Awards. Recipients were selected based on their demonstrated ability to make a difference in people's lives through exceptional service and program delivery. This year's selection committee was comprised of Eileen Gelowitz of Saskatoon, Richard L'Hoir of Biggar, Ian Morrison of Moose Jaw, Louise Trudelle of Regina, and M. L. Whittles of Kenaston.

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BACKGROUNDER

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Lloydminster – Recipient, 2008-09 Spirit Award, Children, Youth and Families category

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Lloydminster has developed a strong partnership with families in its community. Last year, nearly 1,000 children benefited from the various programs offered by Big Brothers Big Sisters of Lloydminster. It currently offers mentoring programs to more than 100 children at no cost to their families. Through diverse programming and the opportunity to develop relationships, children who attend its programs show social, emotional and academic growth, including the development of greater self-esteem and self-control, better peer relationships, and enhanced communication skills. Big Brothers Big Sisters of Lloydminster is an accredited member of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Canada.

Porcupine Opportunities Program, Porcupine Plain – Recipient, 2008-09 Spirit Award, People with Disabilities category

The Porcupine Opportunities Program was established in 1974 in Porcupine Plain by a group of parents of children with disabilities and other concerned citizens who recognized the need for a sheltered workshop within the community. Today, the program provides opportunities for 35 participants. Its woodworking shop now produces about 100,000 core boxes a year. The program also operates a laundromat, a pet supply store, and a paper recycling program. In addition, the program manages two group homes which provide a home for 13 people; an apartment block and detached house where six people live in a supported living environment; and two apartments where four individuals live in an enhanced supported living arrangement.

River Bank Development Corporation, Prince Albert – Recipient, 2008-09 Spirit Award, Housing category

River Bank Development Corporation is a non-profit corporation funded through the Provincial Neighbourhood Development Program. Its mandate is to promote social and economic development in Prince Albert's low-income community. River Bank has been active in housing since its inception, forming four new housing co-ops between 1998 and 2003 which assisted 40 families to purchase their own homes in core neighbourhoods in Prince Albert. Other projects included the purchase and renovation of the Cedar Brook Apartment Project in 2003-04 and the completion of five duplexes. River Bank is currently working on a three duplex project which is almost complete, and owns and rents three older homes in the West Flat neighbourhood. With 57 units, River Bank is now the fourth largest non-profit housing provider for families in Prince Albert.