

2021 Premier's Award for Excellence in the Public Service Recipients

Brooklyn Launders, Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation – *Emerging Leader*

Brooklyn Launders is a Human Resources Consultant at Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation (SCIC) and has done an outstanding job of bringing staff together for training opportunities despite the challenges of COVID-19. Prior to March 2020, learning offerings were not readily available online. She found creative ways to involve people in virtual learning, ensuring sessions were engaging and impactful. Using Microsoft Teams was relatively new for SCIC staff, but Brooklyn worked hard to ensure everyone could easily engage in discussion and stay connected. She continues to be creative; building new techniques and technologies into her learning sessions. Her action and leadership has been immensely helpful in engaging staff in meaningful ways while working apart and her positive attitude has been exemplary.

Anmoal Romana, Ministry of Highways – *Emerging Leader*

Anmoal Romana started with the Ministry of Highways as a 16-month term student in 2015 and came back as a Project Manager on April 1, 2020, after graduating from the University of Regina and spending two years in the consulting industry. He started working from home due to COVID-19 restrictions. His work ethic has been impeccable from the beginning, always ensuring that the districts were following ministry policies. He worked with groups in the ministry to ensure operations contracts were executed on time. He delivers tasks promptly and manages each project to the best of his ability. He is respectful to staff and creates a fun work environment. He is determined and works well without direction. He shows an eagerness to learn by expanding his knowledge through leadership training courses and participation in the mentorship program. Anmoal is currently a 'star' in the Southern Region Operations team and will only become a more valuable asset as he gains further experience.

Grant Crawford, SaskPower – *Individual*

Grant Crawford provided excellent strategic planning and risk mitigation as he considered the needs of SaskPower and northern communities in his role as Director of Distribution Asset Management and Planning. His aim was to reduce the risk of wildfires to northern communities, the forest, and the environment, while maintaining customer electrical services. He successfully applied for and obtained federal funding, which SaskPower matched, resulting in a \$50 million ten-year program to clear vegetation around its facilities and widen the power line rights-of-way in an effort to fire guard northern communities. Grant collaborated with the provincial

Wildfire Management Branch, northern Indigenous groups and ensured that the local residents were consulted. SaskPower then committed to have the vegetation work done by northern Indigenous communities. Because of his planning and execution through a collaborative team effort, his work will impact countless lives over the next decade and into the future.

Justin Dumont, Ministry of SaskBuilds and Procurement – *Individual*

Justin Dumont is a Facility Worker in the Operations and Service Delivery Branch of SaskBuilds and Procurement. Justin, better known as JJ, demonstrates remarkable dedication to his job and continually goes above and beyond his regular duties, so much so that staff have written poems about him expressing their appreciation. JJ's commitment to excellence was no more apparent than when COVID-19 first broke out and the Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) asked for help cleaning the La Loche Hospital. JJ went to La Loche, 500 kilometres from his home, no questions asked. He cleaned at the hospital, as well as CVA cars, and anything that the SHA asked of him willingly and with a positive attitude. He did this for 10 hours a day for 21 consecutive days. JJ also had to self-isolate when he returned home. JJ's attitude is infectious and he has a great relationship with his co-workers and clients. He truly lives and embodies the values of the commitment to excellence of the Government of Saskatchewan.

Zoey Kim-Zeggelaar, Ministry of Justice and Attorney General – *Individual*

Zoey Kim-Zeggelaar is a Crown Prosecutor at the Ministry of Justice in Regina and goes above and beyond. She taught the week-long annual Police College search warrant course in 2019 and 2020 and has collaborated to create a video training session for the Regina Police Service block training program. Zoey's "Boot Camp" sessions for junior prosecutors are noted for being a safe place for them to try out criminal procedures before performing them in court. She stayed agile during the pandemic, adapting to Microsoft Teams and other tech-platforms to continue her training initiatives. She participates on the in-house Education Committee, which organizes training sessions for prosecutors and students. Zoey clearly has a passion for cultivating those who come after her, building their confidence and seeing them well prepared to be the best lawyers they can be. She is known for championing her teammates, mentorship, breaking down silos by building bonds across sectors, encouraging open communication and bringing the team together to achieve their shared goal of seeking justice.

The Digital Services Pandemic Response Team, Ministry of SaskBuilds and Procurement

The Digital Services Pandemic Response Team at the Ministry of SaskBuilds and Procurement has shown outstanding leadership by working collaboratively with the Ministry of Health and serving citizens with timely and relevant information. Saskatchewan.ca, Saskatchewan Account and Government of Saskatchewan social media channels took center stage in the Government's response to the pandemic. The Government website and common account provided a single access point for citizens regarding public health measures, testing information, Re-Open Saskatchewan plan, COVID-19 data indicators and vaccine booking. Customer service has been a priority for the team, making sure ministry clients have the support they require and citizens have the information and support they need. Their work is both preemptive and reactionary, from making proactive technical infrastructure enhancements to responding to over 138,000 comments and direct messages through Government social media outlets. Customer and citizen support has increased after hours and on weekends. To date, several team members have each put in over 800 hours of additional time since the start of the pandemic. Despite the increase in workload, service levels never dropped – an incredible feat. Their workload increased dramatically, and yet they accepted the challenge and changing deadlines. The feedback from clients has been nothing but positive and the whole province can appreciate their efforts because it has served every sector.

Commitment to Serving Citizens Team, Ministry of Social Services

Heather Kapeluck and Brenda Read are Team Managers in Service Delivery in the Income Assistance Branch at the Ministry of Social Services. Their job is to collaborate with community partners and coordinate emergency overnight stays for impacted individuals in addition to leading a team of more than 60 staff in Saskatoon who administer benefits and supports for more than 6,000 households in the community. When the need is greater than resources, staff often go the extra mile in terms of collaboration, innovation, effort and, in some cases, hours of work to ensure that these individuals aren't left without a place to stay when winters are coldest. Early in 2021, temperatures hovered around -40 C; lives were in jeopardy without access to safe shelter, a problem which was exacerbated by reduced beds due to COVID-19. The team led internal brainstorming, reached out to community-based organizations and negotiated with numerous hotels, both in Saskatoon and surrounding communities, to find flexible and creative solutions. The Saskatoon team acted to ensure emergency needs for clients were addressed quickly. Their efforts in this exceptional situation and everyday reflect their focus on serving citizens with compassion and integrity, their ability to be industrious and collaborate across sectors, and show immense leadership and direction to their staff.

Business Response Team (BRT) 2.0, Ministry of Immigration and Career Training, Ministry of Education and the Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency

The Business Response Team (BRT) 2.0 team is composed of 53 members at the Ministry of Immigration and Career Training (ICT), the Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency (SPSA) and the Ministry of Education. It was formed as a solution to field the many questions relating to COVID-19 restrictions that would arise from the wide array of businesses, chambers of commerce, faith communities, education sectors, sports facilities and event hosts. The team effectively provided all Saskatchewan businesses, associations and citizens a single initial point of contact for finding direction on guidelines and safety protocols. During the pandemic, the BRT has dealt with 12,000 front line emails and more than 24,000 phone calls from citizens. Not only are they an intake centre, but also conduct regular outreach with impacted industry and business groups to hear concerns related to the Re-Open Saskatchewan Plan. They have managed evolving messaging while communicating with respect and empathy to often frustrated clients. The BRT has built a reputation for being highly responsive to citizens' questions and concerns throughout the pandemic. When they became aware of unintended consequences of the measures they communicated this with the Ministry of Health and the office of the Chief Medical Health Officer; they remained citizen focused as they played a crucial role aiding Government's ability to strike a balance with the livelihoods of its citizens in mind.

Visitor Experience and Public Programming Team - Ministry of Parks, Culture, and Sport

When COVID-19 hit Saskatchewan, the Visitor Experience and Public Programming Team for Parks within the Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport was apprehensive programming would be cancelled. Instead of allowing the pandemic to hinder them, this seven-member team chose to innovate and create Sask Cyber-Parks. The program offered families nature-themed crafts, activities and park-related skill development opportunities on social channels. This was a big hit and engagement soared. They fought internal skepticism but made the case to offer further contactless programming. Pick-up Park Activity Kits (P.A.K.s) were born. Envelopes of activities in outdoor bins for the public were picked up and completed at their campsite. With COVID protocols in place, they safely moved to offer in-person programming which included guided hikes and geo-caching. The team stayed committed to the goal of maintaining engagement with visitors and furthering the public's interest in nature and parks. The new programs were wildly successful: Sask Cyber Parks had 468,000 people reached and engagement of 24,650 people on social channels; there were 27,104 P.A.K.s picked up; and, daily entry and camping numbers increased as high as a 77 per cent compared to the same dates in 2019. Their innovation and resilience to push forward when the task seemed impossible is admirable.