

# Saskatchewan Order of Merit

## 2023 Recipients

### Al Anderson (Saskatoon)

Al Anderson is a successful business entrepreneur and a dedicated servant to his community. Committed to enhancing the lives of those with intellectual disabilities, he has worked to establish many organizations that provide valuable experiences and opportunities for these citizens.

Al is past president of what is now known as the Community Living Association of Saskatoon. In addition, he is a founding member of Kinsmen Elmwood Residences, Cosmopolitan Industries Ltd., and the Saskatchewan Prevention Institute. Al is a member of the Riversdale Kiwanis Club and assisted in launching the RIKI Walkathon, which helped fund Camp Easter Seal on the shores of Lake Manitou.

Al owned and operated a successful sports store, Athletic Equipment Sales, later becoming Al Anderson's Source for Sports. He also developed Cosmo Golf, a partnership between Al Anderson's Source for Sports and Cosmo Industries, where individuals with intellectual impairments produced golf clubs which were successfully marketed and sold through North America.

An avid basketball player and coach and a volunteer with many sports organizations, he has also been involved with ParticipACTION, which saw the rise of volunteerism and mass physical participation within Saskatoon.

In recognition of his dedicated service, Al has been honoured with the B'nai Brith We're Proud of You Award, has been named CTV's Citizen of the Year, and has been inducted into the SABEX Hall of Fame. In 2022, he was a recipient of the Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Medal (Saskatchewan).

### Nora Cummings, S.V.M. (Saskatoon)

A respected leader in her community, Nora Cummings has been a strong voice for Métis people and all citizens of Saskatchewan. Accomplishing much throughout her life, she founded Gabriel Dumont Local #11 and has been one of Métis Society's first field workers and family advocates. Nora was the founder and a board member of both the Saskatchewan Native Women's Association and Native Women's Association of Canada.

Passionate about preserving families in Indigenous and Métis communities, she challenged the Government of Saskatchewan's Adopt Indian and Métis (AIM) program in the 1960s to 1970s. Nora was instrumental in setting up eight Women's Referral Centres in Regina, Saskatoon, and Prince Albert.

Nora has been a groundbreaking leader in many ways, becoming the first woman on the board for the Saskatoon Indian and Métis Friendship Centre and the first Indigenous person to run for Saskatoon city council. She offered valuable contributions towards the International Women's Year project in Saskatoon and was Mrs. Batoche at the Back to Batoche Days celebration. In addition, Nora became a senator for the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan and has served on many boards with the City of Saskatoon, Meewasin Valley Authority, Saskatoon Police Elders Advisory, RCMP, Reconciliation Saskatoon, and Legal Aid Board.

Nora has received many awards for her inspiring achievements, including the Guy Bouvier Lifetime Achievement Award, the Queen Elizabeth II Golden Jubilee Medal, the Saskatchewan Centennial Medal, the

# Saskatchewan Order of Merit

## 2023 Recipients

Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal, the Wiichihwayshinawan Foundation Lifetime Achievement Award, the Saskatoon Women's Hall of Fame, the Métis National Council Achievement Award, the YWCA Saskatoon Women of Distinction Lifetime Achievement Award, the Order of Gabriel Dumont, and the Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Medal (Saskatchewan).

### **Neal Hardy (Hudson Bay)**

As one of the province's most respected rural public figures, Neal Hardy has given his tireless service to the people of Saskatchewan. Influential in municipal government, he has been councillor and Reeve of the Rural Municipality of Hudson Bay No. 394 since 1977 and was the Member of the Legislative Assembly for Kelsey-Tisdale from 1980 to 1991. Neal has also served as Minister of Environment, Minister of Rural Development, vice-president and president of the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities, and chairperson of the Saskatchewan Assessment Management Agency Board of Directors.

Neal is a devoted member of the community, involved as a board member of the Hudson Bay Emergency Measures Organization, Hudson Bay Radio Station, and Saskatchewan Elk's Association. His other community endeavors include being a committee member of the Hudson Bay Waste Disposal, president of the Elks and Royal Purple Housing Complex, chairman of the Hudson Bay Rural Development Committee (1992 to 1996), past president of Hudson Bay Minor Baseball and the Hudson Bay Curling Club, and chairperson of the Saskatchewan Assessment Management Agency Board of Directors.

Recognized for his exemplary work, Neal received the Lou Jacobs Award in 2007, the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal in 2012, the Lieutenant Governor's Award for Outstanding Service to Rural Saskatchewan in 2019, and the Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Medal (Saskatchewan) in 2022.

### **Dr. Pierre Hucl (Saskatoon)**

Dr. Pierre Hucl, a distinguished professor and plant breeder, has contributed to the advancement of Saskatchewan's agriculture industry through his innovation and dedication. Working at the Crop Development Centre in the College of Agriculture and Bioresources at the University of Saskatchewan for 33 years, Pierre is chair of the Ministry of Agriculture Strategic Research Program.

His research has resulted in the release of over 88 new crop varieties, many of which have had a substantial economic impact on Western Canadian agriculture. Releasing the first hairless canaryseed variety, Pierre is an internationally recognized leader in plant breeding who has had a direct impact on food security through his contributions to sustainability and increasing productivity of wheat in Western Canada.

Pierre has authored or coauthored over 210 peer-reviewed publications in discipline-relevant journals and trained 24 undergraduate students during their thesis preparation. In addition, he has supervised 17 master's and Ph.D. level post-graduate students and has been a member of dozens of graduate student supervisory committees.

Devoting his time and expertise to other organizations as well, Pierre was an advisor for the Saskatchewan

# Saskatchewan Order of Merit

## 2023 Recipients

Seed Growers Association for a decade, advisor to the Saskatchewan Canary Seed Development Commission, and chair for the 9th International Wheat Genetics Symposium. He has also been involved in the Crop Production Show Executive Committee, the Prairie Grain Development Committee, and the Canadian Special Crops Association Market and Promotion Committee.

His many accomplishments have been widely recognized. For example, Pierre's co-developed wheat variety, CDC Teal, was awarded Seed of the Year in 2016. His other honours and awards include being a fellow in the Canadian Society of Agronomy, being awarded the AgBio Excellence in Research Award, becoming an Honorary Life Member of both the Saskatchewan Seed Growers Association and the Canadian Seed Growers Association, and being awarded a SABEX award for his innovation in the agriculture industry.

### **Don Meikle (Saskatoon)**

Don Meikle has worked selflessly to empower and improve the lives of vulnerable youth. Starting at EGADZ in 1993, his positions have included youth worker, street outreach worker and coordinator, client services coordinator, director of Housing and Outreach, and finally, executive director. All through these years he was a driver for many of the innovative programs at EGADZ.

These important programs offer support and opportunities for youth in difficult situations. My Homes offers homes for those with severe mental illness, and both Operation Help and the Day of Mourning foster essential new partnerships. The Sweet Dreams Supported Independent Home and Sweet Dreams Early Learning Centre were developed in collaboration with the first ever Social Impact Bond in Canada. This program more than doubled its projected number of reunited children by only the third year. The Ground Zero Youth Transition Home is the first "for youth, by youth" housing program, and Operation Runaway has been hugely successful in reducing the number of times youth run and reduces the number of missing persons reported to the police. Don also worked to bring about the Restorative Circle Initiative and the Baby Steps program, including Mah's and Cameron House, Action to Employment, Fusion 22, and I AM NOT 4 SALE website and app.

Don is continuously building relationships with police, social workers, private sector partners, the Saskatchewan Health Authority, and government. He drove those collaborations and instigated many programs, all of which are still active and successful today. One of his largest collaborations with the Ministry of Social Services, police forces, and the Ministry of Health has been with Operation No Go for Sexually Exploited Youth and Missing Youth Saskatchewan giving a new and innovative approach to missing youth.

Don's life work with EGADZ has impacted countless lives, and his career highlights and community highlights are synonymous. He cares about youth and has worked tirelessly for nearly 30 years to see young girls rescued from sex trafficking, get youth off the street, establish training and independence for young people, and reunite children with their young mothers.

In recognition for his efforts, he was awarded the Merit Award of Social Issues from the International Downtown Improvement in 2002, the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal in 2012, the Governor General's Award for Innovation in 2019 for the Sweet Dreams Social Impact Bond, and the Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Medal (Saskatchewan) in 2022.

# Saskatchewan Order of Merit 2023 Recipients

## Jacqueline Tisher (Regina)

Jacqueline Tisher is a pediatric and neonatal intensive care nurse who has made a difference in the lives of countless children and their families in Saskatchewan. Desiring a loving environment for children with complex medical needs where they could still receive the high level of care they need, she founded and is the CEO of Hope's Home, established in 2005. Hope's Home provides supportive living homes, 24-hour care homes for children with complex medical needs, and Early Learning and Childcare Centres, which blend groups of children with complex medical needs and typical children for childcare in a fun, safe, and inclusive environment. This organization supports children and families across the province, with locations in Saskatoon, Regina, Prince Albert, and Warman. With the help of over 300 employees, Hope's Home's operations care for more than 360 children, and, as of January 2023, 29 children are under full-time supportive living care.

As a foster parent herself, Jacqueline understands and works to support families through all the challenges that caring for a child with complex medical needs can pose. She is a community advocate for families who need intense medical support for their children and has worked to fundraise for the organization, bringing in millions from private donors over more than a decade and a half to support her vision for Hope's Home. Travelling across the country, she speaks about the Hope's Home model of care to help other provinces find solutions to caring for children with complex medical needs.

In 2022, Jacqueline was a recipient of the Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Medal (Saskatchewan).