

Kaiser Foundation hosts National Mental Health and Addictions Awards in Montreal

May, Vancouver – On May 26, 2009, the Kaiser Foundation will honour an impressive group of individuals and community groups at the 2009 National Awards for Excellence Program Dinner and Awards Ceremony in Montreal. Now in their fourth year, the awards have become the gold standard, and are the only national honours that recognize those who have made exceptional contributions in the mental health and addictions field.

The seven winners from across Canada, each of whom will receive a \$10,000 grant for a recognized charity of their choice, will take centre stage at a dinner that will feature Quebec political leaders, the business community and representatives from the mental health and addictions community.

The 2009 winners are:

Spirits of Burns Lake for Excellence in Aboriginal Programming;
Pine River Institute of Ontario for Excellence in Community Programming;
Dr. Liz Whynot, former president of BC Women's Hospital for Excellence in Leadership;
André Picard of the Globe and Mail for Excellence in Media Reporting;
COAST (Crisis Outreach and Support Team) of Hamilton for Excellence in Mental Health and Substance Use Programming;
Michel Perron of CCSA (Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse) for Excellence in Public Policy;
Loryn Marcellus of Fort McMurray for Excellence in Youth Leadership.

Award winners were judged by a evaluation standard established by a National Secretariat administered by the Centre for Addictions Research, BC. Finalists were then selected by the Kaiser Foundation's National Advisory Board, made up of government and private sector leaders.

The Kaiser Foundation's National Awards for Excellence Program is made possible because of the support of its National Partners, Provincial partnerships, Foundations, corporations, and committed individuals.

The Award Winners also receive an informational video of their activities which can be used by themselves and the organizations which they represent. Others in the field, who may not have won can also use the DVD as an example of the kind of work in which they are engaged for their constituencies.

The Kaiser Foundation was founded 24 years ago by businessman and philanthropist Edgar Kaiser Jr. His mission is to recognize mental health and substance use as health issues, not moral ones, which affect all levels of society. The National Awards for Excellence Program was established as a way of acknowledging the efforts of people and organizations at the grassroots level, who work in mental health and addictions across the country, noting that governments alone cannot solve these problems.