

Power of Peace Awards – April 28, 2008

It was an evening full of inspiration and entertainment, and a celebration of those among us who are truly working to change the world – both in Vancouver, and across the globe. Inspiring, changing and leading for Peace: that's the YMCA of Greater Vancouver's goal in hosting the annual Power of Peace Awards Ceremony. By recognizing a wide variety of efforts to promote peace, the YMCA Power of Peace Awards makes for an entertaining and meaningful night to celebrate perhaps one of the greatest wishes for our shared future – world peace. The 2008 Power of Peace Awards Ceremony recognized 24 nominees from local, international and youth peacemaker categories – the most ever! It was one of the toughest years to pick one recipient among each category from such an outstanding group; however, we are pleased to congratulate the following recipients of the YMCA's 2008 Power of Peace Medals:

In the Local Category: The Cinderella Project

The Cinderella Project is about believing in youth. It is about believing that they can make their own dreams come true. It was created for disadvantaged young people who have overcome incredible challenges to graduate from high school, this is a day to envision their future – a future filled with hope. The Project provides high school graduates with formal attire so they can attend their graduation festivities with pride. On Boutique Day the Renaissance Hotel provides, free of charge – a perfect setting for the magic of the day.



In the International Category: Dr. Mordecai Briemberg

According to Dr. Briemberg, “East-end Edmonton was my little world, until a journey to Yugoslavia in 1958 opened my consciousness to a further horizon, one that included the shattering effects of war. In Israel the same summer, I began a long journey that brought me to understand the root cause of the suffering of Palestinians. Studying in England, Bertrand Russell – then in his 90's and still engaged in civil disobedience -- inspired me to imagine a life-long involvement in the effort for peace, one that began in the anti-nuclear weapons movement. And so it has continued over the decades to my present anti-war work with STOPWAR.CA, Vancouver's largest peace coalition, Palestine solidarity work with CanPalNet, and humanitarian projects in the Middle East with NECEF.”



In the Young Peacemaker Category: Stephanie Ngo

Sir Winston Churchill Secondary student Stephanie Ngo has done a lot in her 17 years. The Duke of Edinburgh Silver Standard Award recipient has a strong belief in the betterment of community, through programs for at-risk youth. She is a member of the Youth Inspiring Action network (YIA), and has been involved in the Youth on the Go program (YOGO). She is the CEO of the Douglas Park Youth Council, and is active in a variety of school clubs and councils.



This year's Power of Peace Awards ceremony was a great success in recognizing some of the most outstanding peacemakers in our community and was a successful fundraiser for the YMCA's Partners With Youth campaign, to help support the Youth Peace Network (YPN), a CIDA-supported summer program hosting youth from around the world. The YPN program won the national Huguette Labelle Award for Excellence in Youth Programming for 2007 at the 15th Annual Canadian Awards for International Cooperation. We look forward to carrying the mounting attention and success of the Power of Peace Awards Ceremony into years to come!