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## Awards recognize volunteer excellence

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The 2016 Celebration of Excellence gala at Roberts Creek Hall on Oct. 28 saw a record number of community volunteers recognized for their outstanding contributions to the Sunshine Coast.

The evening started with recipients being ceremonially drummed to their seats, then a keynote speech by Ashley Doyle, founder of the Alive2Thrive support group for young adults with cancer.

**Arts and Culture** awards were given to Dorothy Fraser, for her numerous involvements in local organizations, and Patricia and Murray Drope, founding members of the Gibsons Public Art Gallery.

**Community Building** awards went to Alison Sawyer, for free legal services, Anne Titcomb for extensive work including chairing the SCRD's Parks and Recreation Master Plan committee, and Conchita Harding for her 13 years of leadership in the Sea Cavalcade Society. Other winners were Lennea Perpet for her work with the Lions Club, Patricia Stuart who founded the Gibsons Family Network, and Sue Jackel for her advocacy work in affordable housing and seniors services.

**The Education** award was given to a group: the Sunshine Coast Elder College Society, which brings high quality educational courses to the coast.

**Environmental** awards went to Barbara Hetherington of Gibsons Recycling and Zero Waste Canada, and a posthumous award to Daniel Kingsbury who, at age 24, founded the Jellyfish Project to educate youth about climate change and environmental stewardship.

**Health and Wellness** awards were given to three individuals and one group. Donna Kyewich, Maxine Nelson and Michelle Chapman were all honoured for their work with different branches of the Healthcare Auxiliary, and the Sunshine

Coast

**Homelessness Advisory Council** steering committee was recognized for its role in creating a cold weather shelter. **New volunteer** awards went to Janice Williams, organizer of Brave Mike events, and the team who run the Community Services Thrift Store in Gibsons. Finally, in the Safety category, Mark Wenn was recognized for his work with Royal Canadian Marine Search and Rescue.

In all 55 individuals received awards. The event was organized by the Community Services Society and the Volunteer Centre, with the financial support of the Sunshine Coast Credit Union and nineteen other community sponsors.

*Donna McMahon*

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