

Healthy U of T Awards

History & Purpose

At the opening ceremonies for the Centre for Health Promotion in 1990, University of Toronto President Robert Pritchard remarked that the University, under the leadership of the Centre, was committed to creating a healthier environment. Since then, a Healthy U of T Interest Group was formed and a number of different projects were undertaken to fulfill this mandate. Included in their projects was the inception of the Healthy U of T Awards (Individual and Group), first presented in 1999.

The Healthy U of T Awards were established to recognize individuals, departments and/or organizations affiliated with the University who have made an outstanding “healthy university” contribution to the campus community. In so doing, the Healthy U of T Committee hopes to draw attention to the issue of health within the University and to familiarize the campus community with the definition of health in its broadest terms.

Selection Criteria

In making its decision, the Selection Committee will assess the nature, extent, quality and impact of the Individual and Group nominees’ contribution to the promotion of a Healthy University, either within or outside the realm of regular duties or job expectations.

The Awards selection committee seeks candidates who:

- ensure and strengthen the participation of campus community members in creating a healthier University environment;
- form partnerships to create healthy and supportive environments within the University;
- support and advocate for the adoption of healthy public policies within University;
- work with the most vulnerable members of the University community;
- empower campus community members to achieve physical, mental and spiritual well-being.

Please note that if, in any given year, no suitable candidate is brought forward in either the Individual or Group category, no Award will be presented.

Awards Presentation & Description

The Awards, in the form of a framed certificate, are presented at the Centre for Health Promotion Annual General Meeting, held annually in November.

Past Recipients

2007

The first person sharing the individual award was **Rachelle Pascoe-Deslauriers**, Executive Director of the University of Toronto Sexual Education and Peer Counselling Centre. Rachelle has been involved with the Centre since 2003, and has refined the image of the Centre as an accountable and highly professional organization that is becoming a centre of expertise for inclusive sex-positive education. She has consistently pushed to de-stigmatize sex, creating the well known and appreciated 'Porn and Cookies' event. Her holistic approach and emphasis on areas of commonality rather than division has also diversified the centre's reach across campus to include St Michael's College, whose views were previously considered incompatible with the Centre. All of this has been achieved as a volunteer and a student, a remarkable achievement. Her work is an excellent example of the health promotion strategies of "developing personal skills" and "creating environments conducive to health."

The co-winner of the individual award was **Dr. Michael Evans**. Michael is a faculty member of the Department of Family and Community Medicine. Michael has shown a very high level of commitment to educating people from the campus outwards to create healthy and aware communities. The Healthy U of T Awards Committee was particularly impressed by his work in launching the renowned Mini-Med School at the University of Toronto. This innovative idea of pooling the University's expertise on health and using it to educate and engage the community through interactive sessions, graduates 1000 laypeople annually, and has now been launched at 5 other universities. It is an incredible achievement that showcases the wonderful work done at the University of Toronto to a wider audience and is an inspiration to those who are working to develop and promote the expertise fostered by the University. This work exemplifies the health promotion strategy of "developing personal skills."

2006

The Healthy U of T 2006 Individual Award was presented to **Diana Alli**, who has been serving the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual needs of not only students on campus but to the larger Toronto GTA community for the past 30 years. She was nominated by Sagar Dugani, an MD/PhD candidate at the Faculty of Medicine and the letters of recommendation received for her nomination were heartfelt and genuine - and they speak to the fact that she has truly helped create a sense of community and belonging for those she has touched. Her long record of initiatives and ongoing commitments include the founding of the Summer Mentorship Program, Saturday Tutoring Program, Earthtones, Rhythm and Dance, "Out of the Cold" programs, and MedLife.

Past Recipients ctd

SHOP (Student Health Outreach Program), nominated by Dr. Sara Taman, Director of Health Services, was awarded the Group Award for 2006. It is a health promotion program of Health Services on the St. George campus. It began as a peer-to-peer education pilot program with 10 students in 1991 and has grown to over 30 students in the past 15 years. Students are trained to be peer health educators. They provide health information, education, confidential referrals, peer support and presentations on current health topics of interest to students. The variety of programming, fun initiatives, information and commitment to healthy student experience that SHOP volunteers are committed to bringing about on campus is commendable.

2005

Carlene Thatcher Martin received the 2005 Individual Healthy U of T Award for conceiving and initiating Bikechain, a facility on campus that promotes bicycle use on campus by providing encouragement, resources and practical support. BikeChain, which helps reduce barriers to cycling by teaching people about road safety and bike repair, and by providing free repair and resources for cyclists, was realized through Carlene's hours of volunteer work, her ability to mobilize other volunteers and secure funding, and her considerable energy and enthusiasm.

The Achieving Work Life Balance Committee, chaired by Rosie Parnass, was chosen to receive the Group Healthy U of T Award 2005, in recognition of the work they do in encouraging a healthy approach to life for campus members. The Committee conceives, develops and offers Work Life Balance Month, a month-long series of events specifically designed to encourage a balanced and well-rounded lifestyle among U of T staff members, and to offer an avenue for stress relief. The initiative, introduced in 2004, is offered on all three U of T campuses.

2004

The 2004 Individual Award went to **Mike Peterson**, staff person with Computer and Network Services who has been volunteer coordinator of the recreational Graduate Student Union Volleyball League for 25 years. The Volleyball League is open campus wide and welcomes not only graduate students, but staff, faculty and undergraduates as well. The league is organized to encourage participation by all skill levels. In addition to this role, Mike has organized baseball and hockey activities on campus, and has been an active advocate for improved access to recreational facilities. Mike was nominated for the Healthy U of T Award by Mahadeo Sukhai, President of the GSU, on behalf of the Union.

The 2004 Group Award was presented to the **UTM/Evergreen Naturalization Steering Committee** in recognition of the work they do in creating a healthy and natural environment at the University of Mississauga campus, and their inclusion of campus members in their initiatives. Creating a beautiful, natural environment enhances the physical, mental and spiritual health of all and the activities and planting events organized by the Steering Committee make a lasting contribution to the surroundings at UTM. At the same time, they bring together members from across the campus in a joint effort to create a healthier environment. The group was nominated by Dr. Ian Orchard, UTM Vice-President and Principal.

Past Recipients ctd

2003

The 2003 Individual Healthy U of T Award recognized **Dr. Luigi Girolametto** of the Department of Speech–Language Pathology. Dr. Girolametto’s nomination was a glowing testimony to the difference he has made, and continues to make, in the health and well being of many lives, both students within his department, and beyond. His level of commitment and his impact on the lives he touches were impressively documented in the letters of support that accompanied his nomination. Dr. Girolametto was nominated by Speech–Pathology graduate student Janice Bennett.

The Group Award 2003 recognized the **Sexual Education and Peer Counseling Centre (SEC)**. SEC is a student–run, non–profit organization that promotes sexual and relationship health through its many services and partnerships. Non–judgmental peer counseling, information on sexual health issues, outreach programs, and increasing sexual health knowledge and safety on campus, as well as the promotion of a queer positive outlook on campus are just some what SEC does. The nomination came from U of T student, Kunmin Karen Li.

2002

At the Centre’s 2002 Annual General Meeting, the Healthy U of T Award was presented to **Victoria Simpson**, of the Health and Safety Committee, FitzGerald Building. Victoria was recognized for creating a supportive and open environment where students and staff felt that their safety concerns are given serious consideration. Victoria was nominated by Lyn Michisor of the Department of Anaesthesia, who wrote of Victoria’s ‘dedication and commitment to foster excellence and peace, personally and professionally for all staff and students.’

2001

The Healthy U of T Individual Award went to **Douglas Moore** of the U of T Gardeners Collective. The Award was presented in recognition of initiatives that promote the physical, mental, and spiritual health of campus community members and, in particular, for setting up community gardening projects on U of T campus using organic cultivation methods that put a focus on the physical, mental and social aspects of growing food and contributing to the broader community.

The Healthy U of T Group Award went to "**Leave the Pack Behind**". It recognized the initiatives the group made to promote the physical, mental, and spiritual health of campus community members, and in particular, for involving nine university and community college campuses in a drive to reduce smoking prevalence among post–secondary school students using open dialogue and multiple strategies geared to young adults.

Past Recipients ctd

2000

In the individual category, the Award was presented to **Professor Carol Rodgers** of the Faculty of Physical Education and Health. Professor Rodgers' course, "Active, Healthy Living" is offered as an elective to Arts and Science undergraduates through the Faculty of Physical Education and Health. It integrates theoretical material on health with practical components in nutritional assessments, stress management and physical activity. For many of the students this course represents their first exposure to physical activity and lifestyle management.

In the group category, there were two winners – the **Environmental Studies ENV421 Class of 1999/2000**, and the **Health and Safety Committee of the United Steelworkers of America Local 1998** representing administrative and technical staff at the University. The ENV421 class conducted research on safety, sick buildings, food security and mental health amongst undergraduates. They worked with members of the Healthy U of T Interest Group to select research topics, and for input into their survey and focus group designs. The research data they compiled was then consolidated into a report along with a list of recommendations.

The other winner in the group category, the USWA Local 1998 Health and Safety Committee, was recognised for their commitment to health and safety issues on the University of Toronto campus that affect not only staff, but all members of the campus community. Since their inception, they have addressed and monitored issues from ergonomically incorrect workstations to air quality, radiation exposure and unsafe working conditions.

1999

In 1999, one Award was presented in the Group category to the **Food Issues Action Group**, represented by Brett Kennedy. Food Issues Action is part of the Ontario Public Interest Research Group. In the 1998/99 academic year the Food Issues Action Group worked hard to open a vegetarian café on the St. George campus. Students, staff and faculty have long complained about a lack of healthy, affordable vegetarian food on campus. "The Vegetarium Café" opened in the fall of 1999, and is a non-profit, student-run, collective management structure that uses ethical purchasing policies and offers food for vegan, halal, and kosher diets.