



Women of Distinction Honourees Announced for Event's 25th Anniversary

The YMCA-YWCA of Guelph announced 16 honourees for the [25th Anniversary of the Women of Distinction](#) event.

"The beauty of Women of Distinction is the endless source of inspiration from the women who've broken ground before us, those who are leading in their fields today and the young women who are right behind them," said the event's Honorary Chair, Dominique O'Rourke. "Every year it sparks new relationships and reignites the fire to do even better."

The 25th Anniversary Women of Distinction honourees embody the event's theme—Breaking Ground and Raising Community:

- Chantalle Asselin - entrepreneur, yoga teacher, writer and champion for maternal wellness
- Melinda Burns - psychotherapist and creator of The Writer's Way workshops in fiction, poetry and memoir for the past 19 years
- Dr. Andrea Bradford - internationally recognized Water Resource Engineer, Associate Professor with University of Guelph's School of Engineering
- Charmaine Collins - Realtor, volunteer Fire Fighter, creator of Mask OFF Guelph in support of Mental Health
- Anne Day - Rotarian, Author, breast cancer survivor, founder of the Company of Women
- Katherine Gibson - Geoscientist, active volunteer and Chair of the Board for Habitat for Humanity
- Rachel Guthrie - singer, advocate for the Arts, mentor
- Sarah Haanstra - Manager, Toward Common Ground and active community volunteer
- Jennifer Harrison - Facilitator of Rainbow Day Camps, avid volunteer with Stanley Stick Hockey, Guelph Little Theatre and 100 Women Who Care
- Leslie Howarth - founding partner of Guelph Midwives, Adjunct Professor with the College of Family Medicine at McMaster University
- Barb McPhee - board member at Guelph Neighbourhood Support Coalition, manager of North End Harvest Market, avid volunteer 40-50 hours per week
- Merrill Pierce - teacher, fitness advocate, avid volunteer with both Harcourt Memorial United Church and Chalmers Community Services Centre
- Crista Renner - Business Advisor at Velocity Incubator, teacher, Rotarian, corporate culture and communication specialist

- Sharon Rice - Executive Director Children's Wish Fund for Guelph, Board Chair of the Elora Festival, avid Rotarian
- Pat Smith - long serving Royal Canadian Legion member and volunteer for 46 years
- Ingrid Von Cube – past owner of Appetizingly Yours catering company and creator of Taste of Guelph collaborative fundraising event

The Women of Distinction event raises funds for several Guelph Y programs including the [Teenage Parents Program \(TAPPs\)](#). TAPPs supports the personal growth and development of pregnant and parenting teens and their families.

A TAPPs program participant will be recognized as this year's Turning Point Award Winner. Maddison Ford is a 20-year-old Mom to her three-year-old daughter, and she's currently a full-time nursing student at Conestoga College. Maddison has been a part of the TAPPs program since learning she was pregnant and continues to come to the program twice a week.

"Being recognized for this award is very exciting, and means so much to me to be acknowledged. My daughter turned my life around, having her gave me the drive and perseverance to excel to be a better person," says Maddison. "TAPPs has been a consistent part of my life since 2017, it has been an outlet to learn new skills and make new friends whom I share common experiences with. Many of which I now consider more like family. TAPPs has helped me grow as an individual and a parent, and provided my family with support."

The gala is May 7 at the River Run Centre. Tickets are \$70 for adults and \$40 for students aged 13 to 17 and will be on sale starting March 5, 2020. On that day, they can be purchased online at guelphy.org.

Ticket sales for the Women of Distinction event will launch in conjunction with the International Women's Day event on March 5, 2020. Both individual tickets and subsidized tickets will be available for purchase at the Guelph Y or [online](#).

Media questions or requests:

Shum Attygalle
Vice President, Marketing and Communications
shum.attygalle@ckw.ymca.ca

Event questions:

Jodi Petitpas
Manager of Development
jodi.petitpas@guelph.ymca.ca