

The Peter Gzowski Literacy Award of Merit

The Peter Gzowski Literacy Award of Merit was developed by ABC CANADA Literacy Foundation, in honour of broadcaster and journalist Peter Gzowski - to acknowledge the great contribution made by a Canadian journalist, in any media, in raising awareness of the adult literacy issue in this country.

By honouring journalists for truly outstanding achievements in enhancing public understanding, support for, and awareness of, the adult literacy cause, The Peter Gzowski Literacy Award of Merit memorializes Peter's remarkable work in this field, and his strong belief that such understanding is critical to moving this issue forward and, ultimately, to improving the lives of adult Canadians with low literacy.

Eligibility Requirements

The competition is open to all professional journalists working and residing in Canada. Journalists may submit their own work, or nominate the work of a fellow journalist. Entries may be of either a local or national interest, and may be based on reporting analysis, commentary, special section, feature or series. Entries will be accepted from the following categories:

- * Newspaper (daily, community, regional or national)
- * Magazine
- * Television News
- * Television Feature (news magazine/talk show)
- * Radio Interview
- * Internet

All types of articles and broadcasts related to the adult literacy issue qualify for consideration. Barring exceptional circumstances determined by the judging panel, only one award will be presented each year. Entries for the 2009 competition must have been published, broadcast or posted online between January 1, 2008 and December 31, 2008. The award may also be presented to a journalist whose long-standing contribution to the cause of adult literacy, through work over a period of more than a year, is being recognized.

Nomination Procedures

Nominations may be made by journalists, or by a separate nominator such as an employer, a colleague, industry-related association representative, an ABC CANADA Board or Committee member, regional literacy coalitions or networks, national literacy organizations or anyone employed in, or working with, the Canadian literacy field.

Journalists may submit their own work, or nominate the work of a fellow journalist. In the case of those nominating other people's work, the entries must be submitted with the knowledge and consent of the journalist.

Entry Format

Attach a completed entry form to each entry. Two hard copies of all the elements needed for each entry are required.

- Newspaper and magazine articles should be submitted as a PDF of original, published form (but photocopies are acceptable).
- Internet articles must be submitted as a screen capture electronic copy.
- Television entries must be submitted in a digital format or DVD format.
- Radio entries must be submitted in digital format.

ABC CANADA is not responsible for loss or damage to any entry submitted. When articles or broadcasts are produced as a series, all parts must be submitted as one entry. A journalist may enter more than one work. Entries must be accompanied by a letter describing where and when the work was broadcast or published, the nature of the entry, the resources that went into creating it and its impact, if this is known.

A brief, biographical sketch of the journalist must accompany each entry. Entries will not be returned. Entrants are requested to keep copies of their entry. If the entry is not submitted in the proper format, the entry will be disqualified. The selection committee may ask the journalist to provide additional support material. Applicants, by their submission or consent to a submission by a third party, grant reproduction rights of their entries to ABC CANADA Literacy Foundation.

Please submit entries to:

ABC CANADA Literacy Foundation
Attention: PGLAM
4211 Yonge Street, Suite 235
Toronto, ON M2P 2A9

Please note that submission guidelines and a copy of the entry form are also available on our website at www.abc-canada.org

Deadline for Entries

Entries must be postmarked or received by ABC CANADA no later than June 26, 2009. Submissions received after this date will not be considered.

Judging

The selection committee will consist of a panel of ABC CANADA Board and Committee members and past recipients of The Peter Gzowski Literacy Award of Merit. In order to ensure impartiality, if a member of the judging committee chooses to nominate a journalist for this award, he/she agrees to excuse himself/herself from the selection process. The selection committee will evaluate each article or broadcast based on the following criteria:

- accuracy of information and balanced reporting on subject matter;
- completeness of the story;
- thoroughness of analysis;
- quality of research, writing and presentation;
- interest, originality and journalistic style;
- the importance of the commentary in generating awareness and/or “heat” on the adult literacy issue;
- the resulting impact the entry has made in moving the adult literacy issue forward.

The selection committee is not required to select a winner if the quality of the entries does not meet the criteria. This committee’s decision is final and cannot be appealed.

Award Recipients

The winner will receive a personalized plaque and a \$1,000 donation will be made, in their name, to a literacy organization of their choosing in their community. The winner will also be named in a nationally distributed media release that will be distributed via Canada NewsWire, sent to a number of Canadian journalist organizations, and included on the ABC CANADA website.

Award Presentation

ABC CANADA will assist the winner in making travel arrangements to the award presentation, being held in Toronto on Wednesday, October 7, 2009, including pre-paid coach airfare and hotel accommodation (for out-of-town winners only). In the event of multiple bylines or producers, expenses will be paid for up to two (2) individuals. Entrants agree to make every possible effort to attend the award presentation. If a recipient is unable to participate in the award presentation, no cash equivalent for the airfare and hotel accommodation will be provided. All incidental travel expenses will be the winner’s responsibility.

Entry Checklist

- Entry form
- Covering letter from journalist or individual nominating the journalist (required)
- Electronic copies of each entry (required)
- Brief biographical sketch of the journalist (required)
- URL site (for online entries only)

For more information, please contact:

Anthony Alfred,
Director of Communications
Tel: 416-218-0010, ext. 126
email: aalfred@abc-canada.org

The Peter Gzowski Literacy Award of Merit Winner's Circle

Since the Peter Gzowski Literacy Award of Merit was established in 1993, ABC CANADA has recognized the following journalists:

2008 - Karen Kawawada, Waterloo Region Record was selected as the 2008 recipient of the PGLAM because of her feature story *Books and Beyond*, which details the challenges faced by adult learners. The article was particularly compelling because it showed the intergenerational impact of low literacy on families. In addition to naming Kawawada the 2008 PGLAM recipient, ABC CANADA will make donations in her name to The Literacy Group of Waterloo Region. She has been a reporter with the Waterloo Region Record since 2004.

Prior to starting at The Record, she worked for two years as a video journalist for CBC Newsworld/ Réseau d'Information's bilingual program *Culture Shock/Culture-choc*. Kawawada also held summer internships at the Hamilton Spectator and at CBC Television (Toronto).

2007 - Alex Shprintsen, an 18-year print and broadcast veteran and a producer at CBC-TV's *The National*, for his series of two documentaries, entitled *Canada's Shame*, which aired May 23 and 24, 2006 on both *The National* and *CBC News: Sunday*. His work profiled Jacques Demers, former coach of the Montreal Canadiens who had lived with the challenge of low literacy all his life, and Lynda Richards, a Saskatchewan learner whose literacy acquisition provided her the skills and confidence that enabled her to realize personal and professional dreams. The series also addressed Canada's literacy levels relative to those of other countries.

2006 – Two recipients this year. Mike Aiken, reporter for the Kenora Daily Miner & News and the Lake of the Woods Enterprise, for his ongoing coverage of social and literacy issues in the Kenora, Ontario-area Aboriginal community. Through his regular political and social reporting and in his commentaries in "Mike's Musings," Aiken has, variously, addressed the social realities of Native people, where literacy and numeracy challenges play a pivotal role; upbraided or congratulated, as the case may be, the actions of politicians and policy-makers; and chronicled the successes of a community overcoming unique barriers.

Irene Davis, a Toronto-based freelancer, was recognized for her commentary in the November 22, 2005 *Facts & Arguments* section of *The Globe and Mail*, where she reflected on her more than 15 years volunteering as a tutor at the Toronto Public Library Adult Literacy Program. It is an impassioned account of individuals transforming their lives, doubtless a revelation to many readers who would be unfamiliar with the reality of low literacy, and a compelling argument for becoming a volunteer tutor.

2005 - Sean Fine, editorial writer for The Globe and Mail, for his editorials addressing various issues related to literacy, including calling on Canada at the end of 2004 to reach the goal of 'most literate nation.' In that piece ("Here's to a new goal: most literate nation," December 31, 2004), he ably stick-handled a hockey metaphor to make his point. An avid reader who describes his home as "one big uncatalogued library," Mr. Fine has an abiding interest in literacy, encouraged in no small way by his being a father. "You want to make sure your kids are literate, especially with [sons] — it seems boys are having a particularly difficult time with reading, with our culture sending the wrong messages about reading 'not being cool.'"

2004 - Paul-Émile Cormier, Journal l'Étoile, New Brunswick, for his outstanding achievement in enhancing public awareness of the literacy issue in his community. The first Francophone to receive this award, Mr. Cormier has written a weekly literacy column for the French-language newspaper since 2001, with subjects ranging from profiles of local literacy programs and adult learners, to highlighting the socio-economic consequences of low literacy skills and lobbying local and provincial governments to put literacy on the political agenda. His support for literacy began more than 20 years ago, organizing evening literacy classes for adult learners.

2003 - Alan White, Telegraph-Journal, for numerous articles written on literacy and education issues in New Brunswick since 1996. In particular, Mr. White's articles have focused on the impact of low literacy skills, informing the public on New Brunswick's low literacy rates, improving the education system, and promoting local literacy programs and literacy advocacy.

2002 - Joel Jacobson, The Halifax Herald, for his decade-long commitment to promoting literacy throughout Nova Scotia. Over the past 12 years, Mr. Jacobson has written numerous articles promoting the importance of literacy in his community, with a particular focus on positive literacy success stories. Mr. Jacobson's column, entitled Bright Spot, profiles outstanding individuals, events and organizations across the province. Among other issues, Mr. Jacobson's articles have highlighted the role that literacy plays in improving educational opportunities, maintaining a healthy lifestyle and creating a stronger workforce.

1996 - Peter Calamai, Toronto Star, for his career-long commitment to the literacy issue. In 1987, Mr. Calamai directed a six-month study of literacy in Canada for Southam Inc. This study included the first measurement of literacy levels among Canadian adults. He also wrote a 40-part series of articles about literacy that appeared in more than two dozen newspapers coast to coast. This initiative awakened the general public and the government to the serious literacy problems in Canada. Literacy advocates across the country used the survey and articles to bolster their cause and educate decision-makers in government and in the private sector.

1993 - Denise Donlon, MuchMusic, for her creation of the “Rock’n’Roll’nReading” programs that invited prominent rock musicians to talk about reading and encourage young viewers to read. This program, which became a highly popular two-hour video series, received significant media coverage that helped shine the media spotlight on literacy at both a national (The Globe and Mail) and local level (Edmonton Journal, Toronto Star, Vancouver Province, Montreal Gazette).

In 2008 ABC CANADA presented Shelagh Rogers with a special PGLAM for her outstanding body of work — past, present and future. Shelagh Rogers, who has promoted stories about literacy for more than 20 years. Rogers picked up where Peter Gzowski left off and has helped ensure the awareness of literacy programs across the country. She began her career in the early 1980_s and 1986, she interviewed Peter Gzowski about his plans to raise money for literacy. Peter then invited her to read the listener mail on Morningside.

It was the beginning of a beautiful friendship. For ten years, she was host of The Arts Tonight, part of the wildly popular Humline Trio on Basic Black and sidekick to the inimitable Max Ferguson. In 1995, Peter Gzowski created a new role for Shelagh: Deputy Host of Morningside. In September of 2000, Rogers began two years as host of CBC Radio’s flagship current affairs program This Morning. Her morning time slot morphed into Sounds Like Canada, which is now based out of Vancouver.

About Peter Gzowski

The late Peter Gzowski, journalist, broadcaster and longtime Board member of ABC CANADA, was a dedicated supporter of the literacy cause. Peter grew up in the small town of Galt, Ontario. At the University of Toronto, he edited *The Varsity* and acquired a passion for journalism which took him to jobs in Timmins, Moose Jaw and Chatham. In 1962, he became managing editor of *Maclean’s*. Peter also worked as entertainment editor of the *Toronto Star*, editor of *Star Weekly* and editor of *Maclean’s*. He became a household name as the host of CBC Radio’s *This Country in the Morning*. An accomplished author, he wrote several nonfiction books before returning to CBC Radio as host of *Morningside* in 1982. A project Peter took great pride in was the series of golf tournaments which he founded in aid of literacy. In 1986, Peter vowed to raise \$1 million in his lifetime to benefit community-based literacy organizations. To date the PGI Golf Tournaments for Literacy has raised more than \$10 million net, making this initiative the most successful fundraiser for literacy in Canada.

About ABC CANADA

ABC CANADA Literacy Foundation is Canada’s private-sector voice championing adult literacy. The national charity envisions a Canada where individuals, regardless of their circumstances, are provided the opportunities to increase the skills that prepare people for realizing their full potential at work, at home and in the community. To learn more, visit www.abc-canada.org.