



R.A.Y. Recognition Award For Youth

R.A.Y. Award Ceremony

HMC is pleased to announce the 5th Annual R.A.Y. Award winner, Andrei Biltan. As a senior student at Robert Bateman High School, Biltan exemplifies the qualities of leadership, commitment to social justice and action - qualities that are synonymous with the late Sergeant Ray Hendry.

Created to honour the lifetime work of Sergeant Ray Hendry who served the Halton Regional Police Services and as Vice-President of HMC's Board of Directors, the R.A.Y. Award was open to students in grades 11 and 12. Students were invited to submit an entry of a creative piece to capture the significance of International Human Rights.

Chief Gary Crowell, Halton Regional Police Services, Diane Hendry, HMC President Trivi Mehendale and HMC Executive Director Joanna Matthews presented the award to Andrei on Friday December 11th, 2009 at Robert Bateman High School.

The award coincides with International Human Rights Day. It marks the anniversary of the Assembly's adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948.



Diane Hendry, Andrei Biltan and Chief Gary Crowell.

R.A.Y. Award Submissions

All entrants displayed outstanding talent and dedication to International Human Rights which made the selection process extremely difficult.

HMC applauds ALL of this years applicants for their commitment to human rights, community leadership, and academic achievement. We hope they will continue to carry forward their message of hope and community work to others.

Award Recipient

Andrei Biltan



“As a new Canadian, I was able to experience firsthand some of the gaps that were missing in my community, therefore, I

became eager to get involved in opportunities that would enable me to promote multiculturalism, acceptance and a youth voice.”

Biltan submitted a video illustrating the significance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. His video is a call to his peers to become more involved and enforce human rights in their own communities.

His contributions focus on youth engagement and national decision making. These include the following: Halton Regional Youth Advisory Council,

Youth Net Halton, Robert Bateman Diversity Council, Young Decision Makers and Smoke Free Ontario.

Biltan's vision and leadership led to the establishment of The New Mentality in Halton Region. The project challenges social stigmas associated with mental health. Biltan has not only managed the production of a mental health awareness magazine but has also founded the first youth led mental health awareness conference in the Halton Region.

Biltan cites his experience as a new Canadian as motivation for his involvement.

View submission pieces online at www.halton-multicultural.org

Honourable Mentions

Sonu Lall

Sonu Lall, a grade 12 student at Iroquois Ridge High School, submitted a poem featuring an illustration titled, “One Child.” It depicts two experiences of a child – one of innocence; the other afflicted by war. It evokes a feeling of hope and the human capacity to “change the world, our world, their world.”

Sonu is an advocate for human rights and cultural awareness, in his school and local community. As co-founder of Iroquois Ridge's World Council, he has been instrumental in running several events and conferences, including the annual multicultural show – Cultureshock. His commitment to both leadership and philanthropy are evident in his involvement as a Senator in the Halton District School Board, as well as an executive member of Iroquois Ridge's Pink Campaign - where over \$20,000 was

raised towards breast cancer research.

Vivian Leung

Vivian Leung, a grade 12 student at Abbey Park High School, showed a strong commitment to empowering women to discover their passions and take action led her to found the Abbey Park Young Women in Leadership Club. Her submission piece, an article entitled "Afghanistan Human Rights Crisis", informed students how to get involved in efforts to support Afghan Women.

Her passion for International Human Rights inspired her to spearhead notable causes including, Pencils for Kids (P4K). Her "Wear a Pencil" campaign raised funds for school supplies in Liboré and Niger. She has also raised funds for Ryan's Well Foundation to build a well in Haiti, as well as the Stephen Lewis Foundation.

Notable Mentions

Bismah Haq - Grade 11, Iroquois Ridge High School Submission Piece: "If Only"

Bismah is co-leader of the Amnesty International group at Iroquois Ridge High School. She is also involved in the annual multicultural show – Cultureshock and Interfaith Conference. Additionally, Bismah has served on the Halton Youth Advisory Committee and Oakville Public Library Teen Advisory Group.

Her submission piece, a poem, entitled, "If Only" depicts a child working hard to achieve her education while supporting her family. It reminds us to not take our own opportunities for granted.

Noor Mohamed Ali - Grade 12 M.M. Robinson High School Submission Piece: "Humanity: May We All Live?"

Noor demonstrates leadership as the founder of MOSAIC - a multicultural club at her high school. She is also the

founder of a student activist group called, M.M. United. This involves fundraising for the purpose of creating positive change in the community. Noor also volunteers for the City of Burlington SNAP Camp.

Her submission piece, a short story, entitled, "May We All Live," depicts a boy struggling to survive in a developing nation. It is a personal portrayal of human rights challenges.

Annual Toy Drive

HMC's Annual Toy Drive was held on Tuesday December 15th, 2009. It is always a highlight to the agency as it is a great opportunity to brighten our clients holiday season. With the assistance of the Salvation Army and the Living Mosaic Church, HMC provided new gifts to over 400 clients

The Toy Drive would not have been possible without the assistance of the Oakville Salvation Army, our dedicated volunteers, staff members and Living Mosaic Church.

Living Mosaic Church provided a gift of a free dinner and professional photography session for our clients.

With another successful holiday season behind us we look to the upcoming year with excitement and with gratitude. Thank you to all participants who made the 2009 Annual Toy Drive a success!



Volunteer Nadia Bhatti with HMC Board Member Nava Sarooshi and former HMC President Laila Eiriksson.



ELT Coordinator Enid Jorsling.

Upcoming Events:

- New Years Around the World**
 Thursday February 25th, 2010
 4:00-6:30 p.m.
 1092 Speers Rd. Oakville.
 Free Entertainment, New Year Displays and Food/Refreshments.
 Contact Heather Hogan for details
 905-842-2486 ext. 248 or hhogan@halton-multicultural.org
- First Annual Community Leadership Award**
 in honour of our founding president, Bill Allison.
Awarded to a business, agency or organization who is a champion of diversity, equity and inclusiveness.
 Submission Deadline: Monday March 1st, 2010
 Download applications on our website:
www.halton-multicultural.org
 Contact Elise Ahenkorah at 905-842-2486 ext. 352 or eahenkorah@halton-multicultural.org
- HMC Annual Fundraising Gala - Halton Meets Latin America**
 Saturday April 24th, 2010
 OE Banquet Hall and Conference Centre
 2245 Speers Rd., Oakville
 6:00 p.m. – 12:00 a.m.
 Tickets \$60.00
 Sponsorship and Advertising Opportunities
 R.S.V.P. by Monday April 16th, 2010
 Contact Elise Ahenkorah at 905-842-2486 ext. 352 or eahenkorah@halton-multicultural.org
- 6th Annual: For the Love of the Arts Festival**
 Sunday, May 16, 2010
 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
 Oakville Town Hall
 Free family event featuring performances, art exhibits, and activities!
 Multicultural groups are invited to participate
 Contact info@communityartsspace.ca