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Recognizing Community Volunteers

AIRDRIE, AB - On April 22, 2009, community leaders, volunteer award nominees and their guests were invited to partake in the National Volunteer Week celebration at the Town and Country Centre for the bestowment of the Volunteers of the Year Award.

“It is so important to recognize volunteers who willingly sacrifice their time and energy, dedicating themselves to vital services in the community,” says Clay Aragon, Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) Coordinator, City of Airdrie. “Everyday someone in Airdrie is volunteering to make a difference. They volunteer because they believe in the importance of helping their neighbours, supporting causes they believe in, and contributing to their community.”

The theme for this year’s celebration was “100 Years of volunteering” recognizing present-day volunteers and Airdrie’s pioneer volunteers.

“2009 is Airdrie’s Centennial year. At the event, we wanted to capture the essence of Airdrie by presenting this year’s volunteers in a way reflecting Airdrie’s roots and highlighting its future. As well, we invited Volunteer Airdrie because we truly believe they will be instrumental in shaping volunteerism and community spirit in Airdrie,” says Aragon.

Hosted by Marty Lawrence of *the Range 106.1 FM*, members of the Community Services Advisory Board and Mayor Linda Bruce announced and presented art pieces to the following award winners:

1. **Shani Schierholtz – 2009 Recipient of the Leader of Tomorrow Award.** The Leader of Tomorrow Award recognizes a youth who have shown leadership in Airdrie through his/her volunteer involvement.
2. **Essrossini Tziganalis, Paros On Main – 2009 Recipient of the Ambassador Award** – An award conferred to an Airdrie Citizen (proprietor) or a business entity making an outstanding contribution in promoting Airdrie as a place for community and opportunity through volunteerism and philanthropy.
3. **Jennifer Ingram – 2009 Recipient of the Soul of Airdrie Award** – An award conferred to an Airdrie citizen who has made an outstanding contribution as a volunteer in the fields of art and culture, athletics, social and community services, and/or governance. This individual demonstrates a passion for helping others become resilient contributing members of the community.
4. **Airdrie Citizens On Patrol – 2009 Recipient of the Volunteer Advocate Award** – An award conferred to a not-for-profit organization, a volunteer-comprised grassroots committee and/or a community group demonstrating community leadership by engaging citizens through volunteerism.

This year’s event was made possible by the contributions of staff and volunteers and the funding supports of the City of Airdrie, Volunteer Alberta and the Wild Rose foundation.