



The YMCAs of Québec Peace Medals 2012 **Presentation of winners by category**

Honorary laureat

Michèle Thibodeau-DeGuire

A graduate of *École Polytechnique* in 1963, Michèle Thibodeau-DeGuire was the very first female civil engineer in Québec. After a 20-year career as a structural engineer, she was named Québec's delegate to New England.

Upon her return to Québec, she offered her services to her alma mater, *École Polytechnique*, as Director of Public Relations. During her six years in this role, she broke many records by raising large sums of money for the *École Polytechnique*, and also witnessed the terrible tragedy that took place on December 6, 1989.

In 1991, she took the helm of Centraide of Greater Montreal. She turned to her network of contacts and that of Centraide to successfully rally all of the community stakeholders around the organization's mission: to fight poverty and exclusion.

It is this pooling of ideas and knowledge that ensures the strength and development of this widespread movement of community support and solidarity. Under her leadership, Centraide of Greater Montreal underwent significant transformations which further consolidated its role as a philanthropic and social leader and unifier of people at both the local and national levels.

Thanks to the Centraide campaign, today over half a million vulnerable people receive the assistance and comfort needed to get by.

Mrs. Thibodeau-DeGuire has received several honorary awards, including *Honoris Causa* doctorates awarded by Montréal's four universities and, most recently, by the University of Ottawa. The Laval Chamber of Commerce and Industry also presented her with the 2012 Gala Dunamis honorary award. She is a Fellow of Engineers Canada, a Knight of the *Ordre national du Québec*, a member of the Canadian Academy of

Engineering, a member of the Order of Canada, and was named a Great Montrealer by the Academy of Great Montrealers.

Youth Peacemaker

Alexandre Vidal

An engaged citizen since the age of 18 on issues pertaining to war and peace, 5 years ago Alexandre Vidal launched a campaign against military recruitment in schools. This campaign, which sparked debates and generated an extensive review of policies outside Canada, resulted in many schools banning this sort of recruitment on their premises. Alexandre is currently a member of the Board of Directors of the *Centre de ressources sur la non-violence* where he is responsible for the war and peace dossier.

Volunteer Peacemaker

Laurence Gu nette

An activist involved with the *Accompagnement Qu bec-Guatemala* project since 1996, in 2012 Laurence Gu nette participated in the writing of a report on the discrimination against Aboriginal women in Canada which was presented to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, and also wrote another report on non-violence and student demonstrations. On a different note, she has also been able to use her ability to rally others by mobilizing several people on the front lines to support access to justice and put an end to impunity in Guatemala.

Local Peace Initiative

Fondation Jasmin Roy

The mission of the *Fondation Jasmin-Roy* is to fight bullying, discrimination, and violence against children in elementary and high schools. This is achieved through various initiatives aimed at promoting better interventions for victims and bullies. The *Fondation* implemented an anti-bullying pilot project in four schools which has already been crowned a success. By providing victims, their loved ones, and public figures with the opportunity to express themselves, it has shown that it is possible to break the silence.

International Peace Initiative

Flora Terah

Running for parliament in the Kenyan elections, Flora Terah was abducted, tortured, and abused for posing a threat to the country's elite males. Following the elections, she launched a campaign called "Terah against Terror" which aimed to provide alternatives to violence. Forced to flee Kenya, she settled in Canada where she began to teach youth

peaceful ways to foster social change. Inspired by her interventions, many Canadian organizations – such as the Stephen Lewis Foundation – have currently launched peace projects in Kenya.

Coup de coeur

The Honourable Louise Otis

Known as the mother of mediation in Québec, judge Louise Otis has demonstrated exceptional commitment to peace at the local, national, and international levels. Founder of the International Conference on Mediation for Justice, she was also the driving force behind a wonderful mediation and conflict management project for *Déclis*, an organization that lends support to youth during their social and school reintegration process. Her efforts to foster peaceful relations among youth experiencing difficulties are part of the development of a culture of peace.