



**University  
of Victoria**



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

January 23, 2008

### **LOCAL HEROES RECEIVE KUDOS *Winners of 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Victoria's Leadership Awards***

Exceptional leaders of our local communities were recognized today at the fourth annual Victoria's Leadership Awards fundraising luncheon and award ceremony. The awards program is a partnership between Leadership Victoria, the Rotary Clubs of Greater Victoria and the University of Victoria to honour local heroes who have contributed to the vibrant life of our city and inspired others to get involved in maintaining the wellbeing of our communities.

A total of 20 people were nominated for the six 2008 Victoria's Leadership Awards. The winners are:

- The Rotary Community Leadership Awards which recognize community leaders who meet the Rotary test for the highest level of ethical behavior and community leadership—**Mabel Jean Rawlins** and **Bob Skene**
- The University of Victoria Community Leadership Awards which acknowledge exemplary leadership in linking the University of Victoria and the community for greater public benefit— **Dr. Sibylle Artz** and **Dr. Bonnie Leadbeater**
- The Vancity Youth Award which acknowledges an emerging leader within our community—**Roselynn Verwoord**
- The Leadership Victoria Lifetime Achievement Award which honours outstanding long-term service in community leadership roles such as philanthropy, innovation, mentoring and career achievement—(previously announced) **Jane Heffelfinger**, OBC

Leadership Victoria has been providing comprehensive leadership training to community members since 2000. Information about all nominees for this year's awards, including biographies and photographs, is available on the association's website at [www.leadershipvictoria.ca/vaward.htm](http://www.leadershipvictoria.ca/vaward.htm).

*\*\*Photos of the recipients are available upon request\*\**

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#### **BACKGROUNDER ATTACHED**

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## BACKGROUNDER

**ROTARY COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AWARDS:** Mabel Jean Rawlins' collaborative leadership as executive director of the Community Council and the Quality of Life CHALLENGE is bringing about profound change in our community. Her passion for social justice and her innate respect for all individuals has been the catalyst for shared decision making and multi-sectoral cooperation as the way to tackle the complex social and economic challenges in our region including poverty, food security and housing affordability. She has inspired hundreds of people from every sector in this community to believe that we can bring about positive, sustainable change in the quality of life of all our citizens.

Bob Skene has pursued an extensive career in the advanced technology sector, holding senior positions with Computel, BC Systems, HTS High Tech Systems and VIATeC, which he helped to found. Throughout his career, Skene has been an extremely active volunteer. In Victoria, he has served on numerous boards including the Greater Victoria Chamber of Commerce, Greater Victoria Hospital Society, Association for Community Living, Victoria Airport Authority and Royal Roads University. He also served as acting president of Royal Roads University in 2006-07 on a volunteer basis while continuing as chancellor and chairman. Skene has been happily married to Judy for 44 years. They have three children and eight grandchildren.

**UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AWARDS:** Dr. Sibylle Artz, professor in the School of Child and Youth Care at UVic, has more than 21 years of front-line experience. Her research interests include the challenges of practice in Child and Youth Care, the constructive use of emotion in direct practice, violence and homelessness and youth violence, with a specific focus on violence among adolescent females. She has published two books and is working on a third. In 1998 she was chosen as Academic of the Year by the Confederation of University Faculty Associations of BC. In 2000 she was selected as one of BC's 50 most important current intellectuals for her contributions to violence prevention research.

Dr. Bonnie Leadbeater joined UVic's Department of Psychology in 1997. She is the director of UVic's Centre for Youth and Society and co-director of the BC Child and Youth Health Research Network. Through her leadership, UVic researchers and their community partners including the Rock Solid Foundation, Prostitutes' Empowerment Education Resource Society and Greater Victoria School District, are working together to improve the wellbeing of young people. Individually, she has taken the lead in developing and evaluating the WITS programs for the prevention of peer victimization in elementary schools. She also served as a member of the Victoria mayor's expert panel on homelessness.

**VANCITY YOUTH LEADERSHIP AWARD:** Roselynn Verwoord, currently a Bachelor of Education student at UVic and a Leadership Victoria participant, has a passion for education, equality and social justice. Volunteering with the Victoria Native Friendship Centre, she introduced Little Ravens Reading Hour in 2003, a culturally relevant Aboriginal preschool reading program. She received a Raise a Reader grant to purchase books for the program. She volunteers internationally, with an NGO in New Delhi, India, and has raised substantial funds to open a school to provide basic education for children. Verwoord has also volunteered with numerous community organizations including the Women in Need Society, Canadian Red Cross, Big Brothers Big Sisters, and Mines Action Canada. She currently sits on the UVic senate.

**LEADERSHIP VICTORIA LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD:** Jane Heffelfinger's passion for the performing arts and outstanding record of volunteer leadership has inspired and motivated many people to join her in supporting health care, the arts and broadcasting in Victoria. The epitome of a fundraising dynamo, she is a tireless volunteer and community activist who has raised millions of dollars for charity. She chaired the Greater Victoria Hospitals Foundation's Better Together \$12 million campaign. As the co-founder and past president of Pacific Opera Victoria, her dedication to showcasing Canadian talent changed opera. Her leadership and volunteer fundraising brought new standards to Canadian opera and meant Pacific Opera Victoria recorded close to thirty years of financial stability, something few arts organizations achieve. Heffelfinger served as a governor for the Victoria Commonwealth Games, was a director of the Board of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and a governor of Lester B. Pearson College of the Pacific. She is currently a member of the TELUS community board and a judge of the Top 40 Under 40 Awards.