

Media Release

PSBAA congratulates annual recognition award recipients

June 1, 2019 (Red Deer, AB) ... On behalf of the Public School Boards' Association of Alberta (PSBAA), President Cathy Hogg congratulated all of the winners of PSBAA annual recognition awards, presented today at the Association's spring general meeting in Red Deer.

A total of five awards were presented:

- The Dick Baker Legacy Award: Joan Trettler (posthumous), St. Albert Public Schools
- Special Contribution to Public Education Award: 360 Fitness, Red Deer
- Special Contribution to Public Education Award – Media: Black Press Media, Prairie Division, Mary Kemmis, President
- Special Contribution to Public Education Award – Media: Jo(e) Social Media, Red Deer
- Advancing Association Business and Initiatives Award: Rick Massini, Medicine Hat Public Schools

“Joan, as she was affectionately known, was a teacher, an administrator and then a five-term trustee. Education and students were her passion,” said St. Albert school board trustee Cheryl Dumont, who nominated Joan.

Joan was also PSBAA President from 2001-2005. Joan's husband, Ron, accepted the award on her behalf.

“360 Fitness approached our District to help improve the health and wellness of our community's youth. Brooke Einarson-Schaab, Vice President of Operations at 360 Fitness, said they had seen many adult community members come to their gym that were living unhealthy lives. They decided to take a proactive approach, target school-aged youth and instill healthy habits in them in hopes that they would see a decrease

in this trend,” said Red Deer Public Schools Director of Community Relations Bruce Buruma, who nominated 360 Fitness.

“Through the weekly focus that these publications put on public education, (Black Press Media) celebrate our schools and shed light on issues important to our students, staff and school communities. Such efforts enhance our connections to parents and the communities our schools serve,” said Pamela Hansen, Wolf Creek Public Schools Board Chair, who nominated Black Press Media.

Jo(e) Social Media “is leaving a lasting impact on thousands of students and their families in regards to digital citizenship and social media as they encourage an open dialogue between parents and their children. There are many opportunities for kids to be using social media in positive ways and good habits can generate a great digital history,” said Bruce Buruma, who also nominated Jo(e) Social Media.

“Rick has dedicated the majority of his working career to public education. He has served as a trustee for two and a half terms and has seen all in. He served as vice president in the last term and worked with the executive team to advance the business of our association. He continues to be an advocate for public education, second to none,” said Prairie Rose Public Schools trustee Pam Cursons, who nominated Rick Massini.

In presenting the awards Carol Picard, Director, PSBAA Executive Committee noted the importance of recognizing the significant contributions of public school trustees, administrators and members of the greater community, whose efforts further reflect the promotion of and support for public school education, locally, provincially and/or nationally. “Today we celebrate that which is unique, valuable and attractive about public school education.”

The Public School Boards Association of Alberta (PSBAA) is the voice of public school boards in the province. We believe public schools are the first choice in our communities, where children can go to learn and live the values of democracy together, reflecting our hope, and shaping the future of our communities.

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Background

Dick Baker Legacy Award: Sarah Joan Trettler (posthumous), St. Albert Public Schools

This award is in honour of Dick Baker – friend, mentor and dedicated advocate for public education in Alberta. Dick’s career in public education reflected his unwavering commitment to placing children first, and modelling respect for the stewardship of the public trust that is service as a locally-elected public school board trustee.

Integrity, compassion, respect and wisdom are the foundation of Dick’s legacy to public education and on behalf of the children, families, staff and communities that he served throughout his career. He was friend, colleague and mentor to many who have followed and will follow in his footsteps.

Sarah Joan Trettler’s work as a school board trustee modelled integrity in her work, compassion for children and families, respect for stewardship of the public trust reposed in trustees, mentoring of fellow trustees, leadership that results in a positive and lasting impact on public education and modelling leadership that puts children and families first. Mrs. Trettler was an educator and school board trustee with St. Albert Public Schools.

In nominating Joan, St. Albert school board trustee Cheryl Dumont said, “Joan, as she was affectionately known, was a teacher, an administrator and then a five-term trustee. Education and students were her passion. Joan was looked up to by all trustees for her ability to think through a problem or decision clearly, ask insightful questions and make successful arguments pertaining to the issues of the day. So many trustees across this province have told us that to this day they think, ‘What would Joan do or say in this situation?’ Joan was also PSBAA President from 2001-2005. Joan’s husband, Ron, accepted the award on her behalf.

Special Contribution to Public Education Award: 360 Fitness, Red Deer

This award is presented to a public school board, trustee(s), senior administrator or member of the public who has made a special contribution to public education.

In nominating 360 Fitness, Red Deer Public Schools Director of Community Relations Bruce Buruma noted the school board has had an ongoing partnership with the fitness organization for the past seven years. "360 Fitness approached our District to help improve the health and wellness of our community's youth. Brooke Einarson-Schaab, Vice President of Operations at 360 Fitness, said they had seen many adult community members come to their gym that were living unhealthy lives. They decided to take a proactive approach, target school-aged youth and instill healthy habits in them in hopes that they would see a decrease in this trend."

360 Fitness has done this in many ways, including hosting a Health Action Day where they teach students healthy habits, including snacks, exercise and lifestyle tips, wellness sessions for staff, an annual gala fundraiser that raises money for the school jurisdiction's breakfast programs, new physical education equipment and new equipment to support school cafeterias in making healthier meals for students and staff.

"Last November, 360 Fitness raised just over \$16,000 at their gala to put towards a new program called The RISE (Recognizing Inner Strength and Energy)," said Buruma. "This program is a team effort of 360 Fitness, Red Deer Public Schools, partners in the community and volunteers to make this happen. 40 youth in Grades 6-12 (were) nominated for the program, which r(an) until the end of May. Through physical activity, healthy lifestyle promotion and education, counselling support, mentorship, and the building of healthy relationships, the overall goal of the RISE program is to help youth recognize their own inner strength and energy so that they may go on to live healthy lives. This initiative is intended to promote health, wellness and positive connections with peers and adults," added Buruma. 360 Fitness has also run 21-day challenges for staff, that encouraged them to get fit and lose weight, which resulted in increased energy, reduced staff sick days and better overall staff productivity.

Special Contribution to Public Education Award – Media: Black Press Media, Prairie Division, Mary Kemmis, President

This award is presented to individuals engaged in the media and/or media outlets including – but not limited to – social media, newspapers, reporters, and other media sources who have made a special contribution to public education.

Black Press Media’s Prairie Division news outlets include the *Ponoka News*, *Eckville Echo*, *Rimbey Review* and *Lacombe Express*.

In nominating Black Press, Pamela Hansen, the Board Chair of Wolf Creek Public Schools (WCPS) said, “Through the weekly focus that these publications put on public education, they celebrate our schools and shed light on issues important to our students, staff and school communities. Such efforts enhance our connections to parents and the communities our schools serve. They give an intimate look into the halls, classrooms, and gymnasiums of our schools.

“Every week student success, academically and athletically, is featured. Student and staff commitment to community and social justice is given coverage, spreading the good works of our schools and truly telling the stories of the citizens our students are.

“The journalists in the communities that WCPS serve have created a strong working relationship with the division, based on fair coverage in order to cover issues important to parents, but that also strengthen the awareness of quality public education in our communities. Additionally, with the greater emergence of social media in communication efforts for both school divisions and media, the sharing of critical and timely information in cases of emergency enhances our reach.

“The Board values this relationship, and the commitment and support for public education that comes from the Black Press Media, Prairie Division,” concluded Hansen.

Special Contribution to Public Education Award – Media: Jo(e) Social Media, Red Deer

This award is presented to individuals engaged in the media and / or media outlets including but not limited to social media, newspapers, reporters, and other media sources whom have made a special contribution to public education.

In nominating Jo(e) Social Media, Bruce Buruma noted, “Jo(e) Social Media is leaving a lasting impact on thousands of students and their families in regards to digital citizenship and social media as they encourage an open dialogue between parents and their children.

“Fact is, there are many opportunities for kids to be using social media in positive ways and good habits can generate a great digital history. Joe Whitbread and Jo Phillips, Co-Founders of Jo(e) Social Media help quell suspicions, steer positive conversation and get kids and adults on the same page to start using social media safely, positively and with a powerful voice. It's imperative that kids start writing their positive digital history, and that parents become aware of their impact on their kids' history.

“Whitbread and Phillips have made it a priority to talk to as many youth in Central Alberta as possible regarding the highs and lows of social media. Since 2015, they have been offering a number of school presentations to school districts across the province from Fort McMurray to Southern Alberta, free of charge, allowing them to speak with over 15,000 students.” Their programs include:

- **Digital Citizenship and Social Safety (Grades 5-8):** We help get kids and adults on the same page to use social media safely and with a powerful voice. It's important to teach kids how to protect their hearts, minds, and physical safety, and how to broach the challenges of a social world with mom and dad.
- **Digital Citizenship and Mental Health (Grades 9-12):** These are very real problems that teens are experiencing, without an understanding of what they can do about it, how to handle it, and how their decisions might impact their life, past high school.
- **Personal Branding (Grades 9-12):** We talk about personal branding elements of social media allowing kids to start writing a positive digital history. We'll talk about awareness of the potential impact of your posts,

the legalities of unsolicited messages and requests, and protecting mental health.

- **Social Media For Parents:** just say no doesn't work So, let's talk about how to start a social conversation with your kids. What "safe" looks like in a social world, and how to guide your kids, and yourself, in a positive manner.

Advancing Association Business and Initiatives Award: Rick Massini, Medicine Hat Public Schools

This award is presented to individuals whose significant contributions to the important work of the Association should be recognized. For Association members, this may include, but is not limited to:

- Work on standing committees of the Association
- Work on ad-hoc committees of the Association
- Assisting with the organizing and hosting of Association business meetings
- Assisting with the work of special projects, initiatives and/or Association events

In nominating Rick Massini, Pam Cursons, trustee with Prairie Rose Public Schools said, "Rick has dedicated the majority of his working career to public education. He has served as a trustee for two and a half terms and has seen all in. He served as vice president in the last term and worked with the executive team to advance the business of our association. He continues to be an advocate for public education, second to none."