

OPHA Annual Awards

Each year at its Annual Conference, OPHA recognizes outstanding contributions to the practice of public health in Ontario by conferring a prestigious roster of awards to deserving individuals. The awards are typically presented at a feature event at the President's Luncheon on the first full day of the Conference.

Below are the winners of the for the last three years.

OPHA Annual Award Winners - 2007

The 2007 **Dr. Sheela Basrur Scholarship** was awarded to **Jenna Allen**, a health promoter with the Peterborough County-City Health Unit who is pursuing a Masters in Public Health at the University of Waterloo.

The 2007 recipient of the **Life Membership Award** was **Cindy Scythes**. First elected to the OPHA Board of Directors in 1996, Cindy went on to serve in various capacities – secretary-treasurer, Vice-President and Member-at-Large — during fragile stages in OPHA's organizational evolution. As chair of the ad hoc Governance Committee Cindy worked tirelessly to review and rewrite the bylaws to support a new governance structure.

The 2007 **Honorary Membership Award** was presented to **Dr. Sheela Basrur** for her internationally recognized contributions to public health and excellence in leadership as Medical Officer in the City of Toronto, Chief Medical Officer of Health and Assistant Deputy Minister of Health. Her support for the mission and values of OPHA was consistently evident throughout her career.

OPHA Annual Award Winners - 2008



The 2008 Dr. Sheela Basrur Scholarship was presented to Ms. Nancy Lotecki of Peel Public Health. Ms. Lotecki has made many significant contributions during her nine years in Public Health. She designed and implemented an award winning Homeless Outreach Program which demonstrated her commitment to equality and her skills in advocacy, education and partnership building.

Nancy designed and implemented Peel Public Health's Surveillance Unit and participated in creating the Communicable Diseases Surveillance Network. (CDSN) with neighbouring health unit colleagues and others to promote surveillance knowledge sharing across the province. She served as Surveillance Lead during SARS and served as Project Manager for Peel Public Health's Pandemic Planning efforts, utilizing her skills in emergency planning. She participated in the Stop Transmission of Polio (STOP)

program in collaboration with the Canadian Public Health Association (CPHA), Centre for Disease Control (CDC), and the World Health Organization (WHO).

Nancy is starting a 5-year distance education Masters in Public Health program with the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. This scholarship reflects our confidence that Nancy will continue to emulate the example set by Dr. Basrur in helping to change the landscape of Public Health in Ontario.

The 2008 Recipient of the OPHA Life Membership Award is Ms. Nancy Day.



Ms. Day graduated from the University of Toronto in 1982 with a Masters of Health Science in Community Health and Epidemiology and started her career with the City of Toronto Public Health Department on contract as a health information analyst. At that time, only the Ontario Ministry of Health and two health units had positions for public health epidemiologists. Two years later, Nancy moved to the City of York Health Unit as Director of Health Studies creating the third Health Unit with an Epidemiologist. She started a “support group” of people interested in community health status information. As more Health Units created epidemiology positions, the group started focusing on issues facing public health Epidemiologists. In 1990, the Association of Public Health Epidemiologists of Ontario (APHEO) was born and Nancy was a founding member. Nancy joined OPHA’s Board of Directors in the late 1980s as a representative of its Standing Committee on Disease Control and Epidemiology.

- She was elected President of OPHA in 1992 and is fondly remembered for completing changes in governance that had been initiated some time earlier.
- In 2002, Nancy returned to the OPHA Board as the representative for OPHA’s new Constituent Society, APHEO for four years.
- She then served for two years as Vice-President and Secretary of the OPHA Board.
- Nancy recently participated on the Task Force that guided OPHA’s Governance transformation. She currently co-chairs the OPHA Task Force on Core Competencies for public health workers.

The 2008 PHRED Student Research Award was presented to Rebecca Ganann.



Rebecca's paper, "*Influence of Maternal Birthplace on Postpartum Health and Health Service Use*", presents the results of research she completed as an M.Sc. student in the Faculty of Nursing, McMaster University. Rebecca is currently studying towards a Ph.D.

The Honorary Membership Award.

This award is conferred at the discretion of the Board of Directors and was not presented in 2008.

OPHA Annual Award Winners – 2009

Dr. Sheela Basrur Scholarship

*Presented to **Ryan Alexander**, Brock University*

Ryan Alexander recently began his two-year Masters degree in Community Health at Brock University after completing his undergraduate studies in the same program. To complement his studies, Ryan volunteered as a Physical Activity Advisor while completing a co-op placement with Niagara Region Public Health. He contributed to Niagara's obesity strategy and to the injury prevention program implementing, an evidence-based motor vehicle collision prevention plan for youth. Ryan has distinguished himself as a dedicated volunteer and an exemplary public health practitioner. He has demonstrated an appreciation of values that are central to OPHA's mission and attributes which Dr. Basrur promoted throughout her career: a talent for fostering active and mutually rewarding partnerships, an understanding of the significance of voluntary service and a commitment to personal and professional development.

OPHA Life Membership Award

*Presented to **Ralph Stanley***

Public Health Inspector

Ralph Stanley has been an active and engaged member of OPHA for 30 years. He served on the Board of Directors on two consecutive boards in the late 1980s during the presidencies of Dr. Peter Cole and Dr. Trevor Hancock. Ralph has contributed immeasurably to our Environmental Health Workgroup, serving as Workgroup Chair in the 1990s. He has worked tirelessly to advance many of OPHA's policy concerns by serving as an author or a reviewer of numerous OPHA resolutions and position papers on environmental health. Ralph has represented the OPHA at many consultations with the Ministry of Health and Care and the Ministry of the Environment, and Health Canada. In the early 1990s OPHA proudly supported Ralph's appointment by the Minister of Health to the Ministry of the Environment's Advisory Committee on Environmental Standards. Ralph has distinguished himself as a wise counselor, well-respected by his peers. OPHA is proud of his accomplishments as we work together, Building for the Future.

OPHA Honorary Membership Award

*Presented to **Ms. Paulina Salamo**, Ministry of Health
and Long-Term Care Public Health Division*

The OPHA's Board of Directors honors the outstanding contribution to public health in Ontario made by **Paulina Salamo** for her leadership in the development of the new Ontario Public Health Standards and Protocols. The adoption of the new Standards and Protocols by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care marked a significant milestone in the provincial government's strategy to renew public health in Ontario. Ms. Salamo and her team spearheaded a complex process which included a Program Standards Technical Review Committee, Writing Teams and Protocol Development Teams. Ms. Salamo's leadership and negotiation skills and unfailing commitment to public health

resulted in gathering the strategic and technical advice that guided the development of new standards and protocols. Ms. Salamo facilitated ongoing consultations with the public health sector in Ontario over a two year period. Ms. Salamo has been championing public health policy and practice issues since she was involved in the development of the Operation Health Protection strategy which was launched in 2004. Her long-term view and commitment to developing public health policy in Ontario is exemplary. OPHA is proud to honour Ms. Salamo's contributions to public health

The PHREDStudent Research Award

*Presented to Carolyn Hureau,
University of Western Ontario*

Carolyn Hureau, BHSchons (University of Western Ontario), is pursuing a degree at the School of Kinesiology and Health Studies at Queens University. She is interested in physical activity promotion, environmental factors associated with physical activity, and community-based participatory research. Carolyn is also keen to investigate the translation of knowledge from health research to practice. Currently, she is working in collaboration with Kingston Gets Active to increase physical activity levels among grade 10 students in Kingston and surrounding areas.

OPHA Award of Excellence

*Presented to Moira Welsh in recognition of her
contributions to Public Health as a journalist.*

The Board of Directors of the Ontario Public Health Association is proud to honour the significant contributions made by **Moira Welsh** — a journalist and a champion of public health for the people of Ontario. As a writer with the Toronto Star, Moira successfully focused public attention on poverty and access to dental care. In 2007-2008 Moira was a reporter in charge of a special Toronto Star series on poverty.

Moira recognized the need to bring clarity and pathos to the reality that for many poor Ontarians, smiling isn't simple. A mouth with blackened and missing teeth puts a life of poverty on public display. This led to a series of stories about a young man who'd lost all his teeth by the age of 25, a shop owner who went blind from an untreated tooth infection, and other hardships faced by Ontarians who couldn't afford to see a dentist.

Moira's stories successfully exposed the inequities in access to dental care to the public and to politicians and other policy makers. As a result, the government promised to introduce a dental plan for the working poor. In the 2008 budget, the government promised \$ 135 million to implement a dental program for working poor families. As part of this strategy, the Children in Need of Treatment Dental program was expanded to include adolescents up to age 18 years.

For many years public health units and OPHA had been advocating for this expansion. Moira made it possible for Canadians to understand the pervasive impact of the social

determinants of health on the quality of their lives. As a Constituent Society of OPHA, the Ontario Association of Public Health Dentistry (OAPHD) is particularly proud to participate in this honor. In presenting this special award, OPHA recognizes the need for Moira, as a journalist, to remain neutral in order to effectively and credibly hold all societal actors—including OPHA—to account. OPHA values the contribution that journalists can make in bringing public health issues to popular attention in an easily accessible and poignant way.

OPHA's 60th Anniversary Essay Contest for Students of Public Health & Related Disciplines

*Presented to **Megan Misovic**
Grand Prize Essay Contest Winner*

OPHA congratulates **Megan Misovic**, a graduate student in Health Sciences at the University of Toronto's Dalla Lana School of Public Health the Grand Prize Winner of our competition. Megan's bold and iconoclastic approach to the contest serves as a reminder, in building for the future, that public health needs courageous leaders who are willing to question established norms and practices as they devise strategies to meet the challenges of the day. OPHA is proud to present Megan's essay in the Fall 2009 issue of *Public Health Today* magazine.

*Presented to **Michele Cleghorn**
Essay Contest Winner*

OPHA congratulates **Michele Cleghorn**, a graduate student in Health Sciences at the University of Toronto's Dalla Lana School of Public Health, on the excellence of her entry in our 60th Anniversary Essay Contest for Students. Michelle's essay demonstrated a sophisticated understanding of a significant public health challenge, articulated a strategic approach to the issues involved and expressed a personal commitment to working in interdisciplinary collaboration towards Building for the Future. OPHA is proud to present Michelle's essay in the Fall 2009 issue of *Public Health Today* magazine.

Video Essay Winners

Carly Heung & Kenny Wong

OPHA is proud to recognize the interdisciplinary collaboration between **Carly Heung**, a graduate student in the Master of Public Health program at the University of Waterloo and **Kenny Wong** a graduate student in epidemiology at the University of Toronto's Dalla Lana School of Public Health. These students rose admirably to the challenge of poignantly encapsulating, in two-minutes, the subtle ways in which public health concerns pervade the details of life. This video presentation, accessible on the OPHA website, points, with intelligence and humor, to the need to galvanize public interest in the many silent contributions made by public health practitioners and policy makers to the quality of life in their communities. Their video can be [viewed on YouTube](#).