



Medal for Exceptional Contributions 2006

MAKING LIFE BETTER FOR FAMILIES

This year, the Centre of Excellence for Early Childhood Development (CEECD) honours one political leader and two foundations for their outstanding work and dedication in supporting research, programs and policies to promote the healthy social and emotional development of young children. Thus, the Honourable Tim Sale, the Norlien Foundation and the Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research have been awarded the 2006 Medal for Exceptional Contributions to Early Childhood Development.



THE HONOURABLE TIM SALE

"When we get it right for kids, we get it right for all of us."

The Honourable Tim Sale

To many, Tim Sale is the grandfather of Healthy Child Manitoba. In March 2000, Premier Gary Doer appointed Tim Sale the founding Chair of the Healthy Child Committee of Cabinet. To date, this is the only standing cabinet committee in Canada dedicated to the healthy development of children, especially in their earliest years.

Sale was first elected to the Manitoba legislature in 1995. From 1976 to 1985, he was CEO of the Social Planning Council of Winnipeg. He also taught at both the universities of Manitoba and Winnipeg in the fields of economics, health policy and management, and served as a minister with the Anglican Church of Canada.

As Chair of Healthy Child and in his various departmental roles—from Family Service and Housing Minister, to Energy, Science and Technology Minister, to Health Minister— Sale promoted science-based

policy, innovative prevention and population health approaches (including Canada's first prenatal benefit), both among his fellow ministers in Manitoba and in other governments across Canada and worldwide. Over the years, he was the foremost champion for young children in the Manitoba government, showing the power and potential of authentic political will in putting children at the top of the policy agenda.

Across Canada and internationally, the Healthy Child Manitoba Strategy has become a model of cross-sector collaboration, elevating early childhood development to the highest levels of government while anchoring it in the grassroots of community.

Although he has retired from political life, Sale plans to continue his work helping communities grow and supporting their citizens—especially the youngest ones.



The Honourable Tim Sale (left) receives the CEECD Medal from Mr. Richard E. Tremblay (right), CEECD Director.

NORLIEN FOUNDATION



Ms. Nancy Mannix, of the Norlien Foundation (right) receives the CEECD Medal from Dr. Margaret Clarke, of The Fraser Mustard Chair in Child Development (left).

“There is a pressing need to find better ways to deliver comprehensive services to children and their parents.”

Dr. David Elton,
President of the Norlien Foundation

Since its creation in 1998, the Norlien Foundation has played an important role in establishing local and provincial early childhood development strategies. One of its major program areas is family well-being. With its Family Wellness Strategy, the Foundation works to support major initiatives that contribute to the well-being of Albertans. By supporting projects such as the One World Child Development Centre and programs that encourage healthy prenatal development and the prevention of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, the Foundation works to help vulnerable children and families.

“We are honoured to be part of a growing group of individuals and organizations that are identifying innovative approaches to improving the quality of life for children, regardless of their circumstance,” said Norlien Foundation President Dr. David Elton. *“Demonstration projects such as the Calgary Urban Project Society One World Child Development Centre give all of us an opportunity to put into practice holistic approaches to early childhood development.”* Located in Alberta, this early intervention education centre operates with the philosophy of providing a nurturing, caring, educational environment to help children and families reach their full potential. Its services include preschool and kindergarten, parent education, drop-in childcare, family support and counselling, nutritional meals, and health care.

In 2006, the Norlien Foundation created the Fraser Mustard Chair in Child Development at the University of Calgary. The goals of this new chair are to help develop world-class interdisciplinary research in the field of childhood development, to promote collaboration between programs and services, to attract graduate students in the field and to develop community outreach initiatives.

THE ALBERTA HERITAGE FOUNDATION FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH



Ms. Gail Surkan, from The Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research (AHFMR) receives the CEECD Medal from Mr. Richard E. Tremblay, CEECD Director.

“Ensuring every baby has a healthy start in life is a global priority.”

Dr. Kevin Keough,
President and CEO of the Alberta Heritage
Foundation for Medical Research

Established by the Government of Alberta in 1980, the Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research (AHFMR) supports a community of researchers who generate knowledge, with a goal to improve the health and quality of life of Albertans and people throughout the world. Its long-term commitment is to fund health research based on international standards of excellence and carried out by new and established investigators and researchers in training.

Over the years, the AHFMR has provided funding for many investigators involved in early childhood research. Its outstanding support and proactive initiatives have shown its dedication to improve knowledge and collaboration in this field.

One such initiative was the 2005 Inukshuk Conference, a first-time event that brought health researchers, philanthropists, social scientists and policy-makers from around the world to Alberta to discuss a wide range of factors contributing to the optimal health of fetal and childhood development. Conference participants heard presentations on fetal origins of disease, social and economic determinants of health, the health and social well-being of Australia’s aboriginal children, physical aggression during early childhood, and economic arguments for investing in children. The interdisciplinary nature of the conference created an exceptional opportunity for participants to build contacts outside their own areas of focus, and to develop a more comprehensive understanding of early-childhood health.

“The Inukshuk Conference was a high point in our 25 years of research and experience,” said Dr. Kevin Keough, AHFMR President and CEO. *“We look forward to greater strengths in this area provincially in terms of research and policy-making.”*

PHOTOS: DIRK FONTAINE