

For immediate release:

**B.C. Principals' and Vice-Principals' Association
Celebrates Exceptional School Supporters
with 2019 BCPVPA Partnership Awards**

(VANCOUVER, BC) Thursday May 9, 2019 – On Friday May 3, the B.C. Principals' & Vice-Principals' Association recognized six remarkable groups and individuals who have made a substantial difference in their local public schools. For more than two decades, the **BCPVPA Partnership Awards** have been presented in recognition of the invaluable time, energy and expertise that local people dedicate to supporting students and schools in B.C. Nominations are submitted by the BCPVPA's sixty Chapters that provide professional support to Principals and Vice-Principals across the province.

The 2019 Partnership Award recipients have supported many facets of contemporary school life, from the critical care of after-school programs and the Starfish Backpack program, to the warmth infused by a school lunch program and the language of music, to work involving youth in the outdoors and a scope of support that pays forward to families and futures.

The Honourable Rob Fleming, Minister of Education, was in attendance and acknowledged the work of the Partnership Award recipients. "We are focused on putting students at the centre of everything we do, and B.C.'s Principals and Vice-Principals play a key role in developing community partnerships to better support students," said Minister of Education Rob Fleming. "These six innovative partnerships recognized today are making a difference for students throughout B.C."

BCPVPA President David DeRosa was honoured to present the Awards as part of the Association's Spring Chapter Council. "When we meet the Award recipients each year and hear about the magnitude and impact of what they have quietly accomplished, it underlines how complex schools are and the many opportunities that exist to enhance the learning experiences of B.C. students. These individuals and organizations are recognizing where there is specific need and they are stepping up to fill that gap, or they are coming to a Principal and saying 'Here I am: what can I do and what do you need?' When the community wraps its arms around a school like that, it's a pivotal moment in the life of that school and the authentic relationships that are born from that support are significant."

Dave Sandsmark, nominated by Nechako Lakes Chapter (School District #91)

A business owner and carpenter in Burns Lake, Dave has been involved with Project Trails for more than seven years, lending his expertise, tools and time and building pride in high school students as they learn trail building and trail maintenance. Dave also supports the high school mountain bike team, and most recently mentored an Independent Study student in learning bike maintenance.

Kamloops Food Bank, nominated by Kamloops Thompson Principals' and Vice-Principals' Association (School District #73)

The Kamloops Food Bank, in collaboration with the Rotary Club, the United Way and School District #73, has supported the Starfish Backpack program from the original 10 weekly backpacks to the current 122, and from one elementary school to ten schools in the district. Conceived by Christopher Seguin, the program ensures that hungry students are provided with snacks and easy-to-prepare meals throughout each weekend of the school year.

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Jannette Loosdrecht, nominated by Chilliwack Principal Vice Principal Association (School District #33)
Jannette, in conjunction with City Life Church, started an afterschool program – Afternoon Adventures – at Bernard Elementary in Chilliwack. In eight years, the program has grown from 26 to more than 80 students. In 2015, Jannette spearheaded the program’s expansion, and Afternoon Adventures is now part of seven Chilliwack schools and seven Chilliwack churches, with more than 177 students and families supported by more than 125 volunteers.

Mighty Hughs, nominated by Victoria Principals’ and Vice-Principals’ Association (School District #61)
The Mighty Hughs is a musical band of five who volunteer weekly in an inclusive learning classroom for students with special needs at Reynolds Secondary School. The students participate in the sessions by using various musical instruments, and often singing along and dancing. The enthusiastic musicians have fostered a love of music in the classroom.

Rotary Club Port Coquitlam Centennial, nominated by Coquitlam Principals’ and Vice-Principals’ Association (School District #43)
The PoCo Rotary Club’s relationship with Port Coquitlam schools began with the personal delivery of dictionaries for all grade 4 students at Ecole Irvine Elementary, and grew to an annual donation of grocery gift cards to support vulnerable families, the introduction of the Starfish Backpack program in PoCo elementary and middle schools and a \$1000 bursary to Riverside School and Terry Fox Secondary.

Squamish Helping Hands, nominated by Sea to Sky Principals and Vice-Principals’ Association (School District #48)
Squamish Helping Hands provides lunches for Squamish students who need a lunch program: the daily Brown Bag Lunch program provides approximately 350 lunches per week to elementary and high school students. Annually, that’s more than 18,000 nutritious lunches in Squamish schools, supporting each student’s ability to perform, learn and grow both physically and mentally.

High resolution photographs of each winner with the Honourable Rob Fleming can be downloaded from bcpvpa.bc.ca/bcpvpa-partnership-awards

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The B.C. Principals’ & Vice-Principals’ Association is a voluntary professional association representing more than 2500 school leaders in B.C.’s 60 public school districts. The BCPVPA provides its members with the professional services and support they need to provide exemplary leadership in public education.

For more information on the BCPVPA, or to speak with President David DeRosa and hear the stories of Principals and Vice-Principals in B.C. please contact:

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