



Lieutenant Governor of Alberta

News release

May 3, 2011

Best of Alberta honours for six dedicated citizens

Edmonton... Six Albertans have been selected this year for membership in the Alberta Order of Excellence. The new members for 2011 will receive the province's highest honour in recognition of their longstanding service to a wide range of local, provincial and national endeavours.

"These great Albertans truly understand the importance of service above self," said His Honour, Col. (Ret'd) the Honourable Donald S. Ethell. "They are leaders and innovators who have directed their considerable gifts toward the goal of strengthening the lives of people both here at home and around the world."

The new members chosen for investiture in 2011 are **Patricia Blocksom** (Calgary), **Martin Cohos** (Calgary), **Bruce Hogle** (Edmonton), **Walter Paszkowski** (Sexsmith), **Eric Rajah** (Lacombe) and **Aritha van Herk** (Calgary).

"All Albertans can be proud of the work these remarkable citizens have accomplished," said Premier Ed Stelmach. "They deserve to be honoured for their many contributions to our province, along with our sincere thanks for their service as distinguished ambassadors of the Alberta spirit."

The Lieutenant Governor of Alberta serves as Chancellor of the Order. He will preside over the investiture ceremony in Edmonton on Wednesday, October 19. This will bring the total AOE membership to 115.

Full biographies and portraits of the new members will be available closer to the investiture. More information about AOE is at www.lieutenantgovernor.ab.ca/aoe/.

Attachment: Biographical summaries - Albertans chosen for 2011 investiture in Alberta Order of Excellence

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Media inquiries may be directed to:

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Biographical summaries - Albertans chosen for 2011 investiture into the Alberta Order of Excellence

Patricia Blocksom (Calgary)

Patricia Blocksom is one of the country's most respected family lawyers. She is regarded for her strong leadership in the field of mediation and her considerable success as a champion of positive change for women in the legal profession. Her record of charitable and humanitarian work to date includes contributions to local and provincial organizations as well as service with *Partners in the Horn of Africa*, which aids impoverished women and girls in Ethiopia, and *Future Generations Canada*, which supports community based health, education and rebuilding programs in Afghanistan.

Martin Cohos (Calgary)

Martin Cohos' contributions as a visionary architect and his tireless service as a community leader and volunteer have literally and figuratively helped to shape the Calgary skyline. In addition to creating landmark buildings, Martin has made extensive contributions to post-secondary education including distinguished service to SAIT and the University of Calgary as well as the establishment of numerous significant provincial and national scholarships in architecture and engineering. His resume of community service also includes work as a leader and mentor for various arts, heritage and religious organizations.

Bruce Hogle (Edmonton)

Bruce Hogle is an Alberta media and broadcasting pioneer. Throughout his distinguished career, which included 30 years with Sunwapta Broadcasting in Edmonton, Bruce served as a passionate and reasoned advocate for positive social change. This includes his highly successful regular feature on CFRN TV, *Wednesday's Child*. Over the years, he has also shared his enthusiasm and leadership strengths with a number of charitable causes. He is founder of the Good Neighbour Fund and has served as a booster and volunteer for a range of organizations including the Lifesaving Society, the Salvation Army, Goodwill, and the Canadian Association of Shriners.

Walter Paszkowski (Sexsmith)

Walter Paszkowski has dedicated his career to strengthening the quality of life and the opportunities enjoyed by his fellow Peace Country residents and all Albertans. His distinguished record of public service includes successful tenures as Mayor of Sexsmith, as a Member of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta and as Cabinet Minister of a number of key portfolios. He has been particularly successful in his efforts to encourage excellence and innovation in the province's agricultural sector and to foster the well-being of rural Alberta communities.

Eric Rajah (Lacombe)

Eric Rajah is the co-founder of *A Better World*, an Alberta-based and volunteer-run organization that works to fund education, infrastructure, health, food security and other projects in Third World nations. Eric's commitment, determination and compassion have served to motivate thousands of fellow citizens to join him in the cause since the organization began 20 years ago. Under Eric's guidance, *A Better World* has delivered life changing encouragement and support to people in need around the world.

Aritha van Herk (Calgary)

Aritha van Herk is a critically acclaimed author who has made significant contributions to the canons of Alberta and Canadian literature. Through her prolific output of fiction and non-fiction works to date, she has explored Canadian history, illuminated what it means to be an Albertan and a Canadian, and enriched the lives of readers across the country and around the world. Aritha is also regarded for her academic service as a professor and mentor who has helped to shape a generation of Alberta writers.

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