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COMMISSIONER ACKNOWLEDGES OUTSTANDING YUKONERS

WHITEHORSE – Commissioner Geraldine Van Bibber will present a number of exceptional Yukoners with awards at the annual Commissioner's New Year's Levee on January 1.

Ten Yukon students will receive the Governor General's Academic Medal. It is one of the most prestigious awards that a student in a Canadian education institution can receive. A medal is awarded to a Yukon student in each secondary school who graduates with the highest standing, as determined by the final marks on their grade transcripts.

"It is my pleasure to recognize these hard-working students for their achievements," Van Bibber said. "Honouring our next generation of scholars and future leaders is a New Year's tradition that I very much enjoy."

Two individuals will receive the Commissioner's Award for Public Service which is presented to Yukoners in recognition of their significant and lasting contribution to the economic, social, academic, political or cultural life in Yukon.

In addition, the Commissioner's Award for Bravery will honour two citizens who have demonstrated acts of courage and determination at great personal risk to save the life of another.

The Commissioner's Levee takes place January 1, from 2 – 4 p.m. at the Yukon Government Administration Building foyer, 2071 Second Avenue in Whitehorse.

"I'd like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a happy New Year, and to invite all Yukoners to participate in the New Year's Levee on Tuesday," Van Bibber added.

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Backgrounder: 2008 Commissioner's Levee Award Recipients

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Commissioner's Award Recipients

Annual Levee 2008

Recipients of the Governor General's Academic Medals:

Charles Brunner Vanier Catholic Secondary School, Whitehorse	Jennifer Bryn Knight F.H. Collins Secondary School, Whitehorse
Jessica Burien Robert Service School, Dawson City	Jordan Lutz Watson Lake Secondary School, Watson Lake
Chantalle Desroches Tantalus School, Carmacks	Staci Magnuson St. Elias Community School, Haines Junction
Lovejoy Fulton Del Van Gorder School, Faro	Morgan Traynor Porter Creek Secondary School, Whitehorse
Nicole Hutton J.V. Clark School, Carmacks	Erik Umbrich École Émilie-Tremblay, Whitehorse

Recipients of the Commissioner's Award for Public Service:

Judy Pakozdy - for her tireless work over two decades as a champion of people with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). Judy has been a source of ongoing support, information and inspiration to individuals with FASD and their caregivers. Her advocacy work in this field is unsurpassed and her unflagging energy in seeking resources for this cause is admirable.

Dave Stockdale - for his inexhaustible efforts over nearly two generations to promote, coach, and organize soccer and table tennis in Yukon. Dave has been a key contributor to numerous Arctic Winter Games and the 2007 Canada Winter Games. His enthusiasm and sense of fair play have helped to instill a love of sports in many individuals. In addition, Dave organized all aspects of the popular Yukon-wide Polar Games, a highlight for elementary school students in grades five and six. Through his efforts over many years, children from all Yukon communities have enjoyed an opportunity to gather together in friendship as well as sport. Dave's passion and dedication to the Yukon community is remarkable.

Recipients of the Commissioner's Award for Bravery:

Kimpton Gagnon and Louis Paul Courbron - for rescuing a child from drowning in the Yukon River in Whitehorse last August. Through their quick response and compassionate action, these men were successful in returning a young boy to his mother's arms.