

MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday, May 8, 2025



CITY OF BURNABY WINS BCRPA PROGRAM EXCELLENCE AWARD

Harmony for All Honoured with Award for Program Excellence

Whistler, BC (May 8, 2025) — The BC Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA) proudly announced today that the City of Burnaby has received the 2025 Program Excellence Award for their innovative "Harmony for All" initiative (www.bcrpa.bc.ca/membership/provincial-awards).

The Program Excellence Award recognizes innovative programs that were successful in improving individual and community-level social and physical well-being and serve as a model for other local governments and organizations to enhance their services.

Harmony for All removes barriers to music education and participation by providing free musical instrument loans, no-cost music education scholarships, and community-based musical outreach experiences. Since its launch in 2022, the program has helped more than 4,500 Burnaby residents access the benefits of music, including newcomers, youth, seniors, low-income families, and individuals with diverse abilities.

Through creative partnerships with community-serving organizations, Harmony for All brings music directly to residents facing barriers, fostering inclusion, wellness, and social connection. Its multi-pronged approach — instrument lending, scholarships, and outreach — is the first of its kind in Canada, offering a transferable model for building community through the arts.

"Harmony for All is a shining example of how recreation and cultural programming can break down barriers and create opportunities for connection, healing, and joy," said Katie Fenn, CEO of BCRPA. "The City of Burnaby has created a program that truly embodies accessibility, innovation, and community spirit."

The Program Excellence Award, sponsored by RC Strategies, is one of six Provincial Awards of Excellence presented during BCRPA's annual Symposium, held this year in Whistler. Each award is presented on behalf of BCRPA's more than 5,200 members across the province who work to enhance the physical and mental health, wellness, connectedness, and quality of life of their communities.

The District of Saanich also received an Honourable Mention in this category for their Cedar Hill Second Chance Café - Cridge Centre for the Family Brain Injury Partnership Program.

For more information:

Connie Mah

Manager, Operations and Sustainability, BCRPA

604.629.0965 ext. 258 cmah@bcrpa.bc.ca

BACKGROUND

BCRPA: Inspiring and connecting professionals to build healthy and resilient communities through the power of recreation and parks.

The British Columbia Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA), a not-for-profit organization, plays a central role in leading the enrichment and improvement of the quality of life of British Columbians and their communities. We do this by championing the power of recreation and parks.

Our story is one of creating community connectedness and individual well-being based on the knowledge that recreation, active living, and access to parks and the natural environment have profound impacts on physical and mental health.

Since 1958, BCRPA has provided leadership, training, and support, fostering the principles of accessibility and inclusiveness to help members meet provincial and local priorities that improve quality of life for all British Columbians.

www.bcrpa.bc.ca/about-us/