

NEWS RELEASE



AWARDS GIVEN TO BC'S TOP FITNESS PROFESSIONALS

Fitness professionals from Richmond, Delta & Vancouver win awards.

Vancouver, BC (Saturday, September 16, 2017) – Three of BC's top fitness professionals (Fitness Leaders) have been honoured for their outstanding efforts in getting people physically active and healthy. The BC Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA) presents its Fitness Leadership Awards annually in the following categories: Fitness Leader of the Year, Educator of the Year, and Program Manager/Director of the Year.

The 2017 award recipients are:

Fitness Leader of the Year – Lynn Walters of Richmond

As a long-time Richmond resident and recently retired nurse, Lynn Walters has been a change maker in her community. An avid volunteer, Lynn started a weekly running and walking group, the Richmond Spirit Runners, which is now celebrating its 20th year. She enjoys leading the warm-up for numerous annual fun and charity runs, organizing marshals for various running events, and with her exceptional choral skills, she has been known to sing the national anthem at many opening ceremonies and special events. This wife and mother of three has completed 26 Marathons, including the Boston and New York marquee events, and has presented wellness workshops at national conferences. The continued waiting lists for her immensely popular fitness classes is a testament to the enthusiasm and commitment she brings to all that she is involved with.

Educator of the Year – Debbie Cheong of Delta

Debbie Cheong is a champion of older adult physical activity which manifests itself through her passion and delivery of Osteo-fit, a BC Women's Hospital + Health Centre certified exercise, education and falls prevention program for individuals recently diagnosed with osteoporosis, low bone density or who are at risk of falls and fractures. Under her stewardship, BC has become an international leader in senior's fitness. She is a sought after workshop presenter and facilitator throughout the province, Canada and internationally – engaging her students and conference attendees with innovative strategies that inspire and enhance retention of complex materials. Currently, Debbie organizes both the Osteofit and Get Up & Go! Programs, she co-authored three editions of the BCRPA Osteofit training manual, trains and evaluates instructors, attends Health Fairs, and organizes Osteofit programs in other languages.

Program Manager/Director of the Year – Melanie Osmack of Vancouver

Melanie Osmack is the owner of Fit 4 Two® and an exceptional Pre and Postnatal Fitness Specialist (PPFS) who currently leads a motivated and engaged team of 9 franchisees and 36 instructors. Her leadership abilities and accomplishments include encouraging and motivating her team through Wellness Challenges; initiating a perinatal fitness professionals' social networking group; and creating Pregnancy and Exercise Awareness Month to connect and interact with other PPFS Instructors and Health Care Providers. Melanie has made significant contributions to the professional credibility of the perinatal fitness specialization through her facilitation of educational courses and workshops. She also promotes ongoing professional development within her specialization through the Fit 4 Two® PPFS Conference that she produces every other year.

The BCRPA Fitness Awards recognize professional commitment through community and industry involvement. BCRPA Chief Executive Officer Rebecca Tunnacliffe says the work of these professionals is inspiring. "Every day, our Fitness Leaders are making significant contributions to the health of our province. They're supporting the efforts of people who want to be physically active and lead healthier lifestyles. BC has been cited as one of the healthiest provinces in Canada and the work these leaders do is helping us stay that way. Congratulations to this year's Fitness Award winners and to all of our leaders who every day make a difference in people's lives!"

The awards were presented during the BCRPA's annual fitness conference, BCFit®, on Saturday, Sept. 16, 2017 at the Delbrook Community Recreation Centre. The conference brings together hundreds of Fitness Leaders from across BC to provide them with valuable professional development, and the opportunity to discuss and learn about fitness and health-related trends, issues and hot issues and trends.

There are currently over 4,000 BCRPA registered Fitness Leaders throughout BC. BCRPA registered leaders have met the highest fitness training standards in BC and Canada. They work in public and private fitness settings, including community recreation centres, gyms, pools, health clubs and spas, and outdoor settings. They assist individuals and groups in reaching their health and fitness goals, and promote active healthy living.

BACKGROUND:

The British Columbia Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA) is a not for profit organization dedicated to building and sustaining active healthy lifestyles and communities in BC. Established in 1958, the Association is a central resource agency for members and stakeholders of the parks, recreation, physical activity and culture industry, providing leadership, training and support to help meet national, provincial and local priorities. The BCRPA identifies and promotes the highest professional standards for fitness leaders in BC through its Fitness Program. The program is the sole provider of the National Fitness Leadership Alliance (NFLA) nationally recognized fitness leadership performance standards in BC. Through a diverse network of partners and extensive programs and services, the BCRPA actively advocates accessibility and inclusiveness to recreation and physical activity.

Images available

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