

NEWS RELEASE



NORTH VANCOUVER FITNESS PROFESSIONAL WINS PROVINCIAL AWARD

BCRPA presents Karen Harmon with award at annual conference.

Vancouver, BC (Saturday, September 15, 2018) – The BC Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA) has presented North Vancouver resident Karen Harmon with one of its prestigious annual Fitness Leadership Awards. Karen is the recipient of the Fitness Leader of the Year Award for her hard work and dedication as a fitness leader who inspires and motivates her class participants as well as her community as a whole.

Karen Harmon is the creator and instructor of North Vancouver's *Inclusion Works* program for special needs adults, and the *Active Living* program where she teaches free course to people of all ages living below the poverty line. Karen's transformative work with marginalized, homeless and hard-to-reach populations spans both her 30-year career as a Fitness Leader as well as 20 years of experience as a special needs training assistant in her community of North Vancouver.

In 2012, Karen was honoured with the "Healthy Community Hero" award from the City of North Vancouver and the North Shore Keep Well Society for her commitment to the health and wellness of vulnerable populations. Karen travels annually as a volunteer to Indonesia and Singapore to speak about youth health, has published articles in BCRPA's FitLife BC Magazine, presented at BCFit'17 and will be again presenting at this weekend's BCFit'18 conference.

Karen's unique ability to teach from multiple fitness areas to a people with a wide variety of skills and abilities has caused her classes to be in high demand. She is known throughout her community to create a sense of fun, camaraderie, safety and kindness, often in non-traditional exercise environments.

"Karen Harmon is a clear example of the powerful impact Fitness Leaders can have in their communities, notes BCRPA CEO, Rebecca Tunnacliffe. "The popularity of Karen's fitness classes is such a testament to her ability to engage, inspire and create a safe and nurturing space for all individuals to access wellness opportunities. We are thrilled to recognized Karen with this award."

The annual BCRPA Fitness Leadership Awards highlight the outstanding efforts of its top fitness professionals (Fitness Leaders) from around the province. The awards recognize professional commitment through community and industry involvement.

The awards were presented during the BCRPA's annual fitness conference, BCFit® on Saturday, Sept. 15, 2018 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 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.

Photos available upon request.

For more information contact:

Connie Mah
Administrator
BCRPA 604-629-0965 ext. 258
cmah@bcrpa.bc.ca

For more information, visit: www.bcrpa.bc.ca

BACKGROUND:

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. Ours is a story of creating community connectedness and individual well-being based on the knowledge and recognition that recreation and active living, as well as access to parks and the natural environment, have significant impacts on our physical and mental health.