

Distinguished Service Award 2016

Fellow Alberta/Northwest Territories members, members of the Board, CCPA members, and guests, it is with great honour that I get to write about someone who has had an impact on each of us here today in one way or another. As a long term member of CCPA, a Regional Director, contributing author in many books, edited collections, articles, briefs, courses and competency models, Dr. Blythe Shepard is an educator, a Past President of CCPA and the “mother” of the Alberta/Northwest Chapter. For in 2008 Alberta gained what BC lost—a champion for counsellors and counsellor education. Soon after arriving, Blythe proposed that an Alberta/Northwest chapter be formed and began seeking like-minded CCPA members. Both Nicole Imgrund and I answered that call and on September 14th, 2010 we held the first official meeting of the AB/NWT Chapter. Here we are, 6 years later and Blythe is still involved, volunteering as the National Board liaison to our Chapter Board. Today our Chapter is strong and vibrant with over 460 members—not bad considering that more than 50 of the Region’s members belong to one of the youngest regional chapters...all because one woman had a dream! Blythe not only birthed our chapter, she became our first ever elected President and served us well until having to step away to become the CCPA President-Elect, and later President. As such, Blythe served all of CCPA diligently and with grace and honour. She continued her work with the FACT BC group and helped design and validate the Counselling Competency Model, a model that may help shape the entry-to-practice for many counselling practitioners across the nation. Blythe also helped develop and launch the Canadian Certified Counsellor-Supervisor (CCC-S) program and recently edited and authored a book on Supervision of Counsellors and Psychotherapists in Canada; has contributed to the Ethics casebooks we have enjoyed; to the Standards of Practice for Counsellors; to the field of Career Counselling in Canada and the list goes on. Her contributions to the counselling profession has been so numerous, in 2011 she was honoured by CCPA for her outstanding Professional Contribution. In January of this year, she continued this diligence by guiding and assisting our Chapter to form a federation of 13 counselling associations, namely FACT Alberta, who worked hard to develop competencies, bylaws, standards of practice, a definition of counselling and counselling related activities so that an application for recognition and regulation could be presented to the current government in early September of this year. Again, without Blythe’s assistance and that of Barbara MacCallum, CEO of CCPA, as well as a number of dedicated AB/NWT Board members, we would not have been able to achieve this feat, let alone in 8 short months. Needless to say, Blythe has helped birth another baby for all counsellors in our region.

I could go on, as talking about Blythe is easy, she is simply a gift, a gift I am happy to have been able to share with each of you and the many, many counsellors and counselling professionals she has impacted over the years, but without further adieu, I would prefer to ask Blythe to come and receive a token of our great admiration and appreciation. Today, the current Board, on behalf of the membership of all in the region and most especially the Alberta/Northwest Territories Chapter would like honour Dr. Blythe Shepard as the recipient of our first ever Distinguished Service Award. As a special tribute to Blythe’s outstanding commitment to our Chapter and our region, this award from this day forward will be known as the Dr. Blythe Shepard, Distinguished Service Award. May you join me in thanking Blythe for all she has given—thank you Blythe!

Most respectfully submitted,

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