



The YMCAs of Québec Peace Medals 2014
Presentation of laureates by category

Honorary laureate

SIMPLE PLAN

RENOWNED INTERNATIONAL ROCK BAND

On December 2005, at Simple Plan's first show at the Bell Centre in Montréal, the band members—Pierre Bouvier, vocals; Chuck Comeau, drums; David Desrosiers, bass; Sébastien Lefebvre and Jeff Stinco, guitars—announced the creation of the Simple Plan Foundation.

The foundation's goal is to help young people in need, by easing their often difficult passage to adulthood and by supporting children with life threatening illnesses and disabilities, or those who are victims of war. The foundation also believes that music can be used as a means for youth to express themselves and discover what they are passionate about, thus minimizing at-risk behaviours. In addition, the band lends its support to music therapy programs that come to the aid of youth at risk.

Today, the foundation has become a part of who Simple Plan is as a band and as people. With their songs reaching fans all over the world and upon learning how their music helped people through some of the toughest times of their lives, the band felt they had to get more involved and give back to the community through its many exemplary philanthropic initiatives. Whether helping children affected by war through *War Child Canada*, providing crisis support including violence and suicide prevention through *Kids Help Phone*, or preventing bullying through support of the *Peace Grantmakers Network's* symposiums, the group strives to create a more harmonious society, healthier relationships and increased well-being for our youth.

This year, the foundation will surpass the \$1.5 million mark in donations! In recognition of their community involvement via the Simple Plan Foundation, the band was honoured with the *Allan Waters* Humanitarian Award received at the JUNO awards ceremony on March 31, 2012, and the *Allan Slaight* Humanitarian Spirit Award received in March 2013 during Canadian Music Week. Simple Plan was also named the 2012 Personality of Year by La Presse/Radio-Canada.

Youth Peacemaker

Cynthia Silvestriadis

As an educator of children aged 5 to 12 at the Dawson Community Centre in Verdun, Cynthia Silvestriadis is dedicated to promoting children's rights through the Play It Fair! program, which she herself attended as a child. Developed by Equitas, this program reaches over 100,000 Canadian children each year. Cynthia teaches children key concepts about conflict resolution and leadership. She also provides them with concrete opportunities to address issues like discrimination, exclusion and bullying, which in turn fosters harmony and peace within this age group. At only 25, Cynthia's endeavors confirm that a person's worth is not measured in years.

Volunteer Peacemaker

Annick Lavogiez

As a volunteer for the Cercles de soutien et de responsabilité du Québec, Annick Lavogiez works with sex offenders who are at a high risk of reoffending. By lending these men an ear and offering them her continued support, she helps them take responsibility for their actions and regain their dignity before they re-enter society, thereby making communities safer with fewer victims of crime. By raising public awareness about this cause, she also contributes to maintaining social peace within our community.

Local Peace Initiative

Youth Fusion – Northern Québec

Youth Fusion, through its Northern Québec project, sends university students to work as project coordinators in targeted Aboriginal schools. They implement and support projects that motivate at-risk youth to find creative ways of succeeding, encourage them to get more involved in their school and give them a sense of belonging. These projects often involve themes related to peace, including initiatives against bullying in schools and family violence. Youth Fusion works with over 1,500 aboriginal teens and reaches 10,500 at-risk young people throughout Québec.

International Peace Initiative

Doctors Without Borders

Founded in 1971 and awarded a Nobel Peace Prize in 1991, Doctors Without Borders (Médecins Sans Frontières – MSF) provides emergency medical care in situations such as armed conflicts, natural disasters, epidemics and malnutrition crises. Many Quebecers participate in MSF efforts, including providing long-term relief to refugees and displaced persons during times of extended conflict and chronic instability or after a natural disaster. Through their actions, MSF witness the devastating conditions affecting the populations they serve every day and try to alleviate human suffering, to protect life and health, to restore and ensure respect for human beings and their dignity.

Coup de coeur

Fatima Saya

Whether it is through her own work or voluntary action, Fatima Saya is tirelessly committed to advancing respect for diversity and all human rights. As a facilitator for the Tolerance Caravan, a project run by ENSEMBLE for the respect of diversity, she gives workshops to high school students on respecting diversity in all of its forms and on confronting bullying. She is now in charge of the Imprint project, which raises awareness among students about bullying and discrimination and involves them in finding solutions to these problems. Fatima's charm and enthusiasm encourages open and peaceful discussion.