

2009 PEACE MEDAL AWARDS RECIPIENTS



HONORARY MEDAL - Senator Roméo Dallaire. A respected member of the international community, he had a distinguished career in the military before becoming Assistant Deputy Minister (Human Resources) in the Department of National Defence in 1998. In 1994, General Dallaire commanded the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR). His courageous book on his experiences in Rwanda, entitled *“Shake Hands with the Devil: The Failure of Humanity in Rwanda”*, was awarded the Governor General’s international literary awards, and is the basis of a full-length feature film released in September 2007.

LOCAL INITIATIVES / INDIVIDUALS – Halal Al-Ubaidi, makes invaluable contributions to the Notre-Dame-de-Grâce community. She has worked with various local focus groups, and has helped make them stronger and more dynamic. With her open mind and belief in democracy, Halah brings a new and fresh perspective to her neighbourhood’s issues. Inclusion is always at the forefront of her actions. An excellent communicator and an extraordinary agent of peace in Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, she is an inspiration to us all.

LOCAL INITIATIVES / GROUPS – Youth and sexuality project: This YWCA program offers innovative intervention approaches to the young girls of Montreal face with the growing phenomenon of hypersexualization; an alarming trend that promotes a culture of violence against women in the media, in organizations, and interpersonal relationships. Through dynamic and empowering learning activities, the project inspires girls of all ages and backgrounds. The YWCA has given numerous conference presentations on this matter to parents, professionals, and the general public. Organizations from five countries have expressed an interest in the YWCA’s project; its leaders are true ambassadors of peace.

INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES / INDIVIDUALS - Noreen Majeed is a young lawyer, passionate about her idealism and faith in humanity. Having taken action against racism and a founding member of a women’s Christian-Muslim dialogue group, Noreen helps women and society better understand the challenges tied into religion and stereotypes in pluralist society. Recently, she joined a humanitarian mission to Iraq in order to tackle the issues affecting a society torn apart by civil war. An active player in international for a, Noreen is attempting to change the mentalities that taint the structures and operations of local and global communities.

INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES / GROUPS - Exeko supports or carries out projects that combine social and cultural action. Exeko’s initiatives impact education, arts and culture, and health. Some of its initiatives include and educational program for inmates, social and cultural intervention projects for Natives, therapeutic humanitarian efforts, a documentary on Africa, an eco-project in the village of Mali, and collective educational and creative programs for troubled youth. By combining the cultural with the social, Exeko implements creative solutions to various issues, lends a voice to those who do not have one, and provides hope to the less fortunate.

YOUTH INITIATIVES - Claudine-Michèle Desjardins has lived in Mali in order to help women start a micro credit organization and an organic fair-trade cotton and karite coop. Founder of the Association des simulations de l’ONU for students, intern-member of the Montreal YWCA’s Board of Directors, and coordinator of a school tour to discuss globalization and North-South inequalities, Claudine is fervent advocate of cooperation. With a Master’s degree in International Development and studies in public management, she fuels passion by helping other women assert themselves and develop their autonomy despite limiting cultural contexts.