

For Immediate Release**Ombudsman Honours Outstanding Employees of City of Toronto****Toronto – September 25, 2013**

A public servant who cut through red tape, a City employee who helped a woman visit her mother in hospital, and an entire division of the City of Toronto are among the winners of this year's Ombudsman Award.

The six winners were announced this morning by the City of Toronto Ombudsman, Fiona Crean.

The Ombudsman Awards are given annually to city staff who provide residents with outstanding assistance in resolving their complaints made to the Ombudsman about city services.

"This is when I can shine a light on staff who make the extra effort to solve residents' problems," says Fiona Crean. "They are the everyday heroes who put the person ahead of the process, and who show their colleagues that the most important part of public service is the word "service."

The winners of the City of Toronto 2013 Ombudsman Awards are:

- Phillip Abrahams – General Manager - Shelter, Support and Housing Administration
- Denise Andrea Campbell – Director Community Resources - Social Development, Finance and Administration
- City Clerk's Office
- Trish Horrigan – Policy Planning and Project Consultant - Shelter, Support and Housing Administration
- Pamela Ludgate – Supervisor - Water and Parking Tags, Revenue Services
- Joan Taylor – Chief of Staff - Toronto Transit Commission

Pam Ludgate helped a woman get \$878 in parking tickets cancelled on compassionate grounds. The woman, on social assistance, was driving over 160 kilometres every day to visit her mother in hospital.

Trish Horrigan cut through the red tape of three City departments to find housing for a homeless man, despite his outbursts of often abusive behaviour.

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For the first time, a City division is getting an Ombudsman Award this year.

“The Clerk’s Office was the first to create a complaints system to respond to residents’ complaints,” says Crean. “Since then, it has shown consistent leadership in taking the lessons from Ombudsman reports and championing them to improve public administration wherever they can.”

The winners were chosen by a jury of seven community leaders including Sabina Ali, Rahul Bhardwaj, Angela Coke, Gord Nixon, Winnie Ng, John Tory and Carol Wilding.

“These public servants make sure the individual does not get lost in the system,” says Rahul Bhardwaj of the Toronto Community Foundation. “They take responsibility, work late, and don’t let the rules stop them from fixing the resident’s complaint. They are paradigms of professionalism.”

Information about the nomination criteria for *The City of Toronto Ombudsman's Award* is available at www.ombudstoronto.ca

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Toronto’s Ombudsman is an impartial and independent officer of City Council, providing an appeal of last resort for residents who feel they have been adversely affected by a decision, act or omission of City Administration. The Ombudsman also undertakes investigations into systemic problems that cause equitable, substantive and procedural unfairness in City administration.