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# Press Release

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## **PRIX RONALD-DUHAMEL – RONALD DUHAMEL AWARD WINNERS FOR 2019**

**WINNIPEG, MANITOBA, March 14, 2019** – The *Prix Ronald-Duhamel – Ronald Duhamel Award* was presented today to the staff of the St. Boniface Library for their delivery of services, programming and resources to their clientele throughout Winnipeg, but particularly within St. Boniface and the Francophone community.

Over the last number of years, staff from the St. Boniface Library have been innovative, reaching out into the community to reach those who need it most, as attracting new users through engaging and creative programming. The library offers programs for all ages, year-round, focusing on programs in French on a range of topics that celebrate and encourage learning French language, literature and culture. All library programs are free to attend to ensure equal access for all. In fact, staff at the St. Boniface library deliver almost 200 programs in service to the community, many of which extend beyond the library's walls and are in partnership with community stakeholders and organizations.

The *Prix Ronald-Duhamel – Ronald Duhamel Award* is a joint initiative of the Société de la francophonie manitobaine (SFM), Manitoba's Federal Network of Official Languages, the Manitoba Francophone Affairs Secretariat, and the Manitoba Association of Bilingual Municipalities (AMBM). It was created to recognize an employee or a group of employees of a governmental or quasi-governmental body at the federal, provincial or municipal level for distinguished service to Manitoba's Francophone community.

Officially launched in March 2005, the Award was named in honour of Ronald Duhamel and his significant contributions, first as a senior public servant in the Government of Manitoba and then as a federal MP, minister and senator. During his career, Mr. Duhamel did much to promote the cultural, educational, economic and political development of the Franco-Manitoban community. He also supported a number of minority Francophone community initiatives at the national level.

"The St. Boniface Library is an important institution for Winnipeg's francophone community" says Daniel Boucher, Executive Director of the Société de la francophonie manitobaine. "We are glad to have the opportunity to highlight the dedication of the staff, the quality of the programming and to underscore the convening role this library has played for local and francophone residents."

Brigitte Gibson, Regional Director General, Prairies and Northern Region, Department of Canadian Heritage, is pleased to offer her congratulations to the St. Boniface Library. "I commend the team at the St. Boniface Library for being active, determined and creative in its approach to providing French language services to the community. It is exactly this kind of action that is necessary to grow and strengthen our official language minority communities."

Teresa Collins, Executive Director of the Francophone Affairs Secretariat, extends warm congratulations to the deserving recipients. "The entire francophone community benefits from the professionalism and initiatives of individuals who are willing to go over and above what is asked



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of them. Without question, they are deeply committed to the Manitoba Francophonie and make every effort to support our vibrant community.”

"Libraries are intellectual and cultural centres, real hubs of information and learning for our bilingual municipalities and Francophone community" says Justin Johnson, Executive Director of the Association of Manitoba Bilingual Municipalities (AMBM). "The Saint-Boniface Library excels in the active offer of quality services and programs *en français* with the aim of raising awareness of the importance of preserving and sharing the Francophone community's heritage and culture through reading and the dissemination of information. We warmly congratulate them for their contributions and wish them continued success in the future."

“The City of Winnipeg is so proud of the St. Boniface Library staff,” said Chief Administrative Officer Doug McNeil. “Victor Hugo said that a library is an act of faith – and the St. Boniface Library staff’s tireless and innovative work is an eloquent testament to our city’s vibrant francophone heritage, and exciting future contributing to French language and culture.”

Members of the general public and public sector employees at the federal, provincial and municipal level were invited to submit nominations for the *Prix Ronald-Duhamel – Ronald Duhamel Award* by January 31, 2019.

The award ceremony was held at the St. Boniface Library and shared in the spirit of the *Rendez-vous de la Francophonie* which runs throughout the month of March. This is the eighth time the Award has been presented since its creation.

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