
Press Release

PRIX RONALD-DUHAMEL – RONALD DUHAMEL AWARD WINNER FOR 2009

WINNIPEG, MANITOBA, March 9, 2009 – The *Prix Ronald-Duhamel – Ronald Duhamel Award* was presented today to Mr. François Lentz, a former curriculum consultant with the Bureau de l'éducation française (BEF), a division of Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth. Mr. Lentz retired in September 2008 after a productive 20-year career devoted to French-language education in the province.

The leadership shown by Mr. Lentz within the BEF enabled his colleagues to work collaboratively, provide exceptional services, and ensure the provision of a high-quality and innovative education in French. Mr. Lentz's influence extended far beyond the province's borders with his many significant contributions to French-language education at the national level.

A joint initiative of the Société franco-manitobaine (SFM), the Manitoba Federal Council, the Manitoba Francophone Affairs Secretariat, and the Manitoba Association of Bilingual Municipalities (AMBM), the *Prix Ronald-Duhamel – Ronald Duhamel Award* 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.

"Mr. Lentz has contributed greatly to the Francophone community both locally and nationally", reports Daniel Boucher, Chief Executive Officer of the Société franco-manitobaine. "He has always promoted the Francophone community and we congratulate and sincerely thank him!"

For his part, Louis Chagnon, Regional Executive Director, Canadian Heritage, Regional Office (Winnipeg), indicates that choosing a winner was not easy. "The selection committee was presented with excellent nominees, and I am extremely pleased with the outcome. Through his innovative approach and exemplary work, Mr. Lentz has had a decisive influence both in Manitoba and elsewhere."

According to Guy Jourdain, Senior Advisor, Francophone Affairs Secretariat, "Mr. Lentz launched major initiatives during his distinguished career and is recognized by his peers for his exceptional vision and expertise in education."



Jean Beaumont, Executive Director of the AMBM, is delighted with Mr. Lentz’s nomination. “He serves as a leader and a model for the promotion of the French language in Manitoba.”

Members of the general public and employees of a governmental or quasi-governmental body at the federal, provincial or municipal level were invited to submit nominations for the *Prix Ronald-Duhamel – Ronald Duhamel Award* by January 31, 2009.

The award ceremony was held at the Centre culturel franco-manitobain, as part of the *Rendez-vous de la Francophonie*. This is the third time the Award has been presented since its creation.

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FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

<p>Michelle Freynet Official Languages Co-champion Manitoba Federal Council Government of Canada Telephone: 204-983-6767</p>	<p>Guy Jourdain Senior Advisor Francophone Affairs Secretariat Government of Manitoba Telephone: 204-945-4915</p>
<p>Joelle Boisvert Project Coordinator Société franco-manitobaine 212 – 383 Provencher Boulevard St. Boniface MB R2H 0G9 Telephone: 204-233-4915</p>	<p>Jean A. Beaumont Executive Director Manitoba Association of Bilingual Municipalities 212 – 383 Provencher Boulevard Saint-Boniface MB R2H 0G9 Telephone: 204-233-4915 or 1-800-665-4443</p>
<p>www.prixronaldduhamelaward.mb.ca</p>	

