



Press Release

For Immediate Distribution

Townshippers' Association Hosts its Annual General Meeting and Names 2021 Community Award & *Excel in the Estrie!* Contest Winners.

SHERBROOKE, June 4th, 2021 –Townshippers' Association hosted its 41st Annual General Meeting this Friday June 4th, 2021, with 35 members, guests, and stakeholders in attendance.

For a second year in a row, the Association provided a summary of the last year's activities via videoconference and the business meeting was followed by the unveiling of the winners of this year's *Young Townships Leader Award*, *Outstanding Townships Award*, and the *Excel in the Estrie!* Contest.

This year's well-deserved honours go to **Gayl Rhicard, Spencer Wilson, Corey Morin (Outstanding Townshippers)**, **Shanna Bernier (Young Townships Leader)**, **Lee Desormeaux and Madison Bradley (Excel in the Estrie!)**. Because public health measures continue to pose challenges for group activities, these exceptional individuals will be celebrated in different ways throughout the year, beginning with being highlighted through TA's Web series, *About Townshippers* (available on YouTube) over the summer.



Top left to right: 2021 Outstanding Townshippers Gayl Rhicard, Spencer Wilson, and Corey Morin. Bottom left to right: 2021 Young Townships Leader Shanna Bernier. Excel in the Estrie! winners Lee Desormeaux and Madison Bradley.

Gayl Rhicard has been an active volunteer in the community of Stanbridge-East for many years and is never shy to lend a hand where it may be needed. Before recently stepping down as Treasurer, Gayl

was a volunteer with the Loisirs de Stanbridge-East Sports Associations for eight years. She is a familiar face at the Annual Apple Pie Festival held by the Missisquoi Museum and has lent a hand to the Graham Neil Winter Classic outdoor hockey tournament, which raises money to help offset costs for children from Stanbridge-East playing organized hockey; this year Gayl donated beautiful handmaid masks to local elementary schools during the pandemic. Described as a unique and selfless individual by her nominators, Gayl's tireless dedication to her community is appreciated, an example for all, and worthy of celebration! Congratulations Gayl!

Spencer Wilson was an active member of the Board of Directors for Loisirs Stanbridge-East Sports Association from 2016 to 2021 and has been a dedicated community volunteer for several years. The founder of G.O.O.S.E (Great Outdoorsmen/Women of Stanbridge-East, similar to Boys & Girls Scouts), prior to the pandemic, Spencer organized bi-weekly activities for school-aged children to promote a healthy lifestyle and less screen time while learning about nature and useful skills like how to use a compass or track the stars. Congratulations Spencer!

Corey Morin of Sherbrooke has made countless contributions to his surrounding community over the years; whether donating his time, financial resources, or products through his Domino's Pizza franchises, a common theme among Corey's nominators was his enthusiasm for supporting a wide variety of endeavours and his generosity when doing so. Corey's passion for giving back has led him to orchestrate initiatives to help folks as close as in his own neighbourhood and as far as Fort McMurray and Haiti; to quote one of his nominators, "Corey isn't just someone who inspires others; his approach towards life is something to aspire to". Congratulations Corey!

Shanna Bernier is a native Townshipper who has dedicated much of her young life to community development work, building relationships with families new to the region, developing inclusive outreach initiatives, and giving her time to a wide variety of committees and boards. Shanna is described by her nominators as the kind of young leader who leads by empowering those around her to reach their potential and become leaders themselves; during COVID her work and community engagement made her a beacon for many children, youth, and young adults in a time of crisis, turning outward to serve her community and asking, "how can I help". Thank you, Shanna, and congratulations!

"Our community awards strive to celebrate individuals from across the Townships who are making exceptional contributions to their communities and to the lives of those around them," said Townshippers' Executive Director Rachel Hunting. "It is our sincere pleasure to present these honours to the 2021 recipients and we thank them very much for their dedication to the Eastern Townships."

Outstanding Townshipper Award

The OT is awarded to individuals and/or groups that have given generously of themselves, beyond the usual expectations of their job or profession (volunteering, mentoring, or philanthropy) to make their community or the Eastern Townships a better place to live, work and raise a family. Current or former community members can be considered provided their contributions benefit the region's English-speaking community.

Young Townships Leader Award

The YTLA highlights the achievements, dynamism, and involvement of young people by celebrating young Townshippers, age 15 to 35, who have shown leadership within the English-speaking community of the historical Eastern Townships, either in their school, town or in the wider community. Winners of this award receive \$1,000, thanks to the support of generous sponsors including Global Excel Management, CASS, and Stanstead College.

Excel in the Estrie! Contest

Since 2012, the Excel in the Estrie! contest has celebrated the success of high school seniors and helped them to think proactively about their future in the Eastern Townships. Organized by the Place aux jeunes Eastern Townships project, the challenge was originally launched alongside the regional Hooked on School Days initiative to celebrate school perseverance. Winners of this contest receive a cash prize up to \$500.00 thanks to the support of generous sponsors including Global Excel Management, CASS, and Stanstead College. This year's winning essays will appear in Townshippers' Fall 2021 magazine.

Questions about the association's awards program can be directed to Cathy Turner, Office Manager, at ct@townshippers.org. Questions about the *Excel in the Estrie!* Contest can be directed to Bethany Vanasse, PAJ Eastern Townships Migration Agent, at paj@townshippers.org.

About Townshippers' Association

Townshippers' Association is a non-profit, non-partisan community organization that has been serving the English-speaking community of the historical Eastern Townships since 1979. For more on the Association and its activities, connect online at Townshippers.org

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Source:

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