

Winner of the 2015 Lieutenant Governor's Silver Medal for Excellence in Public Administration in British Columbia



Above, Ron Poole receives his award from Norma Glendinning, President of IPAC Victoria, and the Honourable Judith Guichon, Lieutenant Governor of BC, at the ceremony on June 9, 2015.

Recognizing Ron Poole

On June 9, 2015, Ron Poole was awarded the prestigious Lieutenant Governor's Silver Medal for Excellence in Public Administration in British Columbia, presented annually by the Victoria and Vancouver Regional Groups of the Institute of Public Administration of Canada (IPAC). The IPAC Victoria Lieutenant Governor's Silver Medal recognizes the outstanding career achievement of a public sector practitioner who has shown distinctive leadership in public administration and whose career exhibits the highest standards of excellence, dedication and accomplishment.

Long regarded as one of the most respected local government administrators in B.C., Ron is also recognized as a thoughtful and personable individual who is dedicated to building relationships and developing strong consensus on tough issues. Currently the Chief Administrative Officer for the District of Mission, his career as a local government official, educator, and mentor spans over 30 years. He is a champion of educational initiatives within local government, spearheading the first Public Administration Certificate program at North West Community College for both First Nations and local

government employees. He also served on the Local Government Management Association's Board from 2000 until 2006. In 2008, Ron received the LGMA President's Award for his long-standing commitment to professional development, programming and training.

Congratulations Ron, and thank you for your many contributions to local government.

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IPAC is a not-for-profit professional association dedicated to promoting excellence in public administration at all levels of government.

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Q&A with Ron Poole

Following receipt of the Silver Medal, Ron had a chance to reflect on a number of significant factors in his illustrious career.

How did you get started in municipal government?

In 1985 I graduated from the University of Victoria with my Bachelor's degree. My first job was as the Recreation Director for the Skeena-Queen Charlotte Regional District.

Can you describe the moment when you first found out that you won the Lieutenant Governor's Silver Medal for your career accomplishments?

During my speech at the award ceremony at Government House I alluded to the fact that the day I found out I was to be awarded the LG Silver Medal, it was also the same day I was putting in my resignation as CAO with the District of Kitimat. My Council was lost for words at my announcement and I found it hard to say, "Oh, and by the way, I just found out I am the 2015 recipient of the LG Silver Medal". However, I was speechless when I was contacted and it took me a couple of days for it to sink in and realize just how honoured I was to be recognized in this way.

What is your process for developing respectful and positive working relations with a wide-array of interest groups with competing interests?

Again, if I refer back to my "acceptance speech", trust has always been at the forefront of developing any respectful relationship. I think I learned this most from working with the many First Nations that I have been fortunate enough to meet. One wrong comment or "untruth" in your efforts to work with them, can undo any relationship built to date. It can also ruin any potential relationships in the future.

What advice would you provide to new professionals pursuing a career in the public service?

Be honest, be fair, pursue with vigour and love serving those around you. Never forget family and place them first above all else.

What traits and/or characteristics do you look for in a new professional prior to engaging in a mentor/mentee relationship?

I have never looked at traits or characteristics in someone who wishes to be mentored. On a couple of occasions I have been asked, but most often the mentoring just happens. I guess you could say that a desire to learn from someone has to be present but I also feel that there must be respect on both parts for the relationship to really take hold and for learning to occur.

Who are some of the leader(s) that you look up to and why?

In local government I would have to say the following:

- a. Andy Teslyk, retired CAO, Chetwynd (1993) – Andy really got me started in pursuing the career path of a CAO and made me believe that I could do well in this field.
- b. Judy Rogers, retired City Manager, City of Vancouver – Again, Judy supported me, encouraged me, wanted me to come and work for her; another person who made me feel worth more than I realized.
- c. Paul Gipps, CAO, Fraser Valley Regional District – always supporting me in my position. One of my most successful mentoring protégés. Reminds me every day how much I have done for him and his career.

What book are you currently reading?

"Leaders in the Shadows", by David Siegel. This is a wonderful book including a section on Judy Rogers. I will be using sections of it to present at the newest MATI Course this fall in Kelowna called The Successful CAO. Deb Sargent from Smithers and I will be teaching about relationship building.

The other book I am concurrently reading is "The First 90 Days in Government", by Peter Daly. Also another good read.



Attendees at Ron's award ceremony on June 9, 2015.