

The Biennial General Meeting of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association is taking place virtually from April 7-8, 2021. The theme for the BGM is *Navigating the New Normal*.

On the occasion of each BGM, the NLTA recognizes individuals who have made significant contributions to education, the NLTA and its Branches and Special Interest Councils. Below are those being honoured for BGM 2021.



Barnes Award

The Barnes Award, named in honour of Dr. Arthur Barnes, the first Minister of Education in the province who, in 1928, initiated a number of teacher conferences to promote excellence in education, was established in 1987 to recognize outstanding professional development services provided by teachers at the special interest council level.

Terri L. Decker from the Council for Special Services NLTA Special Interest Council (COSS) is recipient of the 2019-20 Barnes Award.

Terri is an active member of COSS and has been instrumental in many consultation processes undertaken by the Council. Terri has been an invaluable resource to classroom teachers, special education teachers, and school administrators over the course of her career. She is described as having a problem-solving approach and is always willing and available to help all children learn, particularly those with visual impairments.

Throughout her teaching career, Terri has worked with students who are blind or visually impaired. In addition to her work with students, she has provided opportunities for parents to meet and network and has worked closely with the CNIB and Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority. She has organized events for blind or visually impaired students for socialization, independent living and leisure skills, including movie nights, pottery classes, bowling events, rock climbing, diving and agricultural fairs. Her support to her students also extends to assisting them in completing applications to attend summer camps and scholarships. In her off time over the summer, her dedication continues. Terri has worked with foster families, preschoolers and daycares to enhance learning opportunities.

Terri continues to grow and develop her skillset and has participated in many in-service and professional development training opportunities over the course of her career.

Megan Roome from the Technology Education NLTA Special Interest Council (TESIC) is recipient of the 2020-21 Barnes Award.

As an NLTA member, Megan has made outstanding contributions to Special Interest Councils. Seeking to get involved with technology integration efforts, Megan became secretary of TESIC and quickly became very involved in the regular operations of the Council. When TESIC found itself unexpectedly without a president, Megan was up to the task and quickly took on the challenge of revitalizing TESIC. Under her leadership, membership has grown exponentially and many teachers from around our province have benefited from Megan's dedication to offering technology-related professional learning opportunities to all teachers, regardless of their teaching context.

As TESIC's membership has grown and evolved, Megan sought to ensure all those interested in technology integration could join by proposing a new constitution that would be more reflective of the current membership and inclusive of different teaching contexts. During her leadership with TESIC, Megan has sought meaningful connections with other Special Interest Councils as well. In 2018, Megan and TESIC joined forces with MSSIC (Math Science Special Interest Council) to plan and organize a conference showcasing STEM Education. Spearheaded by Megan, this extensive collaboration between the two Special Interest Councils led to STEMfestNL, which was a full day conference at Memorial University attended by over 150 participants and over 20 presenters.

Megan frequently represents TESIC at NLTA meetings and events and doesn't hesitate to provide meaningful feedback on the role of Special Interest Councils. Furthermore, Megan regularly collaborates with other Special Interest Council executives who seek her out for advice on SIC operations; for example, Megan deftly maintains TESIC's very active social media presence and other SICs have come to her to learn more about the positive work TESIC has done.

Megan is currently a Grade 6 Early French Immersion Teacher at Villanova Junior High School in Conception Bay South.

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Bancroft Award

The Bancroft Award, named in honour of James Frederick Bancroft, the first President of the NLTA, was established in 1980 to mark the 90th anniversary of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association. The Award recognizes outstanding service at branch level of the NLTA.

Natalie Jackson of the Taylor's Brook Branch is the recipient of the Bancroft Award for 2019–20.

For two decades, Natalie was involved with her Branch serving as Member at Large, Secretary, and Vice President from 2003-17 and Branch President from 2018 until her retirement in 2020. During those 20 years, Natalie was a mainstay on the Social Committee, instrumental in planning various events each year, including Christmas socials and year-end socials.

Throughout her time at the Branch, Natalie was involved in several NLTA activities. She was a BGM delegate for numerous Conventions and served as School Representative from 2003-19, attending various School Representative seminars and Joint Council meetings over that time period. Natalie was a leader for her Branch Executive and created a team atmosphere through which the entire Branch worked together on many initiatives, including the Premier's Task Force and contract priorities.

In 2020, Natalie retired after a 30-year teaching career.

Stephen Drover of the Port aux Basques Branch is recipient of the Bancroft Award for 2020–21.

Stephen has been an active member of the Port aux Basques Branch since 2000, including five terms as Branch President, one term as Secretary Treasurer and four terms as Vice President. He served as a member of NLTA Curriculum Committee, as well as serving on several Branch Committees, including the Social Committee, Retirement Committee and Finance Committee. Stephen actively participated in and helped plan all retirement functions with the Port aux Basques Branch for over two decades and was integral in planning a Financial Information Session for Branch Members and helping to organize and sponsor the annual NLTA Curling Funspiel, Family Day and Christmas social activities.

During his Branch involvement, Stephen has attended a number of Joint Council meetings as Branch President. He used his experience to reach out to new teachers and encourage their involvement in the Branch; in particular, he helped the Branch organize seven delegates to attend the School Representative/Branch Leadership seminar in 2019.

Outside of his work with the NLTA and Branch involvement, Stephen is also a member of the Channel-Port aux Basques Volunteer Fire Brigade, Cabot Masonic Lodge No. 13 and has been a volunteer hockey coach with the St. James' Regional High Saints and the Western AAA Kings.

Stephen retired in June 2020 after 30 years of teaching.

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Special Recognition Award

The Special Recognition Award was instituted in 1990 by Johnson Inc. to recognize the 100th anniversary of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association. The award is presented annually to an active or life member of the NLTA who has made a major contribution to the cultural, social and/or community life of Newfoundland and Labrador.

James Feltham of Deer Lake Branch is recipient of the 2020-21 Special Recognition Award.

James has coached high school basketball for a total of 49 years, even after his retirement, up to and including the 2020-21 school year. He has had a profound impact on the youth of Deer Lake, basketball players throughout the province, and continues to be a role model as a regular fixture at the Elwood High gym in Deer Lake. His work with students continues to make a huge difference to them personally, their enjoyment of school and their character development. James' commitment to extra-curricular activities has provided students with positive and healthy connections with their peers and with adults.

James' coaching career includes positions at Lewisporte High School, Deer Lake Integrated Regional High (later renamed Elwood Regional High School), as well as coaching Team NL under 15 boys to a bronze medal in 1991 and the Deer Lake under 15 boys to Silver Medal at the NL Winter Games in 1986. James has also served as President of the Deer Lake Men's Basketball League, President of the Deer Lake Senior Badminton Club, Head Coach of the Western Region Badminton team and Coordinator of Male Basketball at the NL Winter Games in 2018.

James' contribution to basketball and community sports has continued since his retirement from teaching in 1998 after 29 years of service.

The Patricia Cowan Award for Support and Promotion of Education

The Patricia Cowan Award for Support and Promotion of Education, established in 2007, is named in honour of the first woman NLTA President and may be presented once during a President's term of office. The award recognizes outstanding contribution to teachers and the teaching profession by individuals or groups outside the K-12 school system, either through advocacy or a relationship with the NLTA resulting in a positive impact on teaching and learning.

Susan Rose is the recipient of the Patricia Cowan Award for 2021. She was born in Corner Brook and graduated from Herdman Collegiate High School. Susan has been an advocate for human rights most of her life.

During the late seventies, she lobbied for the right to be employed as a summer student at the local mill and was one of the first four females hired as a laborer at Bowater's Paper Mill.

Susan graduated from Memorial University and acquired her Bachelor of Arts degree in 1982, followed by degrees in Education and Special Education. Susan worked as a Special Education teacher in St. John's from 1985 until 2006 and taught students from Grades 4 to 12.

In 1992, Susan began to lobby for LGBTQ rights in the education system – work that she continues to do today. She began NAN (Newfoundland Amazon Network) in 1994. Meetings were held in her home where lesbians would plan ways to help other lesbians in the province, as well as lobbying efforts to advance gay and lesbian human rights. Susan ran a phone line in her home for three years, where women could call from around the province when they needed support.

Since 2006, Susan has been working with students and parents in Newfoundland and Labrador, offering resources to assist them in dealing with issues within their school and community. In 2008, she developed a workshop through Planned Parenthood for high school students called "Making Queerness Visible" and co-presented it in 15 high schools on the west coast of the province.

Susan has been a returning volunteer at Camp Eclipse – a Leadership Camp which provides a safe environment each summer for LGBTQ youth in the province. In July 2009, she was awarded "Pride Citizen of the Year" for Newfoundland and Labrador for her contribution in the field of LGBTQ education.

Susan is also a leader with Egale, including serving as Vice President of the Egale Human Rights Trust and as Chairperson of Egale's Education Committee. In addition to her ongoing work for LGBTQ human rights, specifically with youth, Susan also runs a small tourism business called Coastal Cottages.

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Honorary Membership – BGM 2021

Provincial Executive may award NLTA Honorary Membership to any person who, in their assessment, has made a significant contribution to the cause of education.

Don Ash joined the NLTA staff in 1999 as an Administrative Officer in the then Benefits and Economic Services Division, following 17 years as a classroom teacher and school administrator, and two years in human resources with Amoco Canada Petroleum Company in Calgary. As a teacher and school administrator, Don was actively involved in the Association, including serving as a Branch President and member of the Provincial Executive Council.

As an Administrative Officer, Don was a strong advocate and representative for NLTA members in collective agreement administration and all areas related to teacher welfare and benefits. His responsibilities included pensions and pre-retirement seminars and serving as staff consultant for Group Insurance Managers. He was appointed as NLTA Assistant Executive Director in 2008, serving as Chief Negotiator for Provincial Collective Agreement bargaining. Don assumed the role of NLTA Executive Director in 2013 and led the NLTA team in negotiations for the Teachers' Pension Plan Reform Agreement and the Joint Sponsorship Agreement establishing the Teachers' Pension Plan Corporation. He initiated a review and restructuring of NLTA operations, leading to the establishment of a cohesive Programs

and Services team structure. In 2018, Don received the Canadian Teachers' Federation Special Recognition Award in recognition of his contributions to the teaching profession and the cause of publicly funded education in Canada.

Since retiring in 2016, Don has continued to contribute to the NLTA and the cause of education. He has been a member of the Teachers' Pension Plan Corporation Board of Directors since 2016, has served as independent chairperson for the Association BGM for two years and will reprise this role again in 2021, and has been the NLTA nominee to the board for several arbitration hearings.

Don holds a Bachelor of Science (Mathematics) and a Bachelor of Education from Memorial University, along with an MBA from the Schulich School of Business at York University. Don also completed a Certificate in Industrial Relations from Queens University and the Advanced Trustee Management Standards with the International Foundation of Employee Benefit Plans.