

October 20, 2022



In 2021, the Government of Manitoba awarded the first ever Empower Women Awards to recognize two Manitoba women who were working to advance gender equality, and who had contributed to their communities throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. This year, the Empower Women Awards will be given to one woman and one youth nominee, based on their dedication to gender equality, and efforts towards reconciliation.

All the nominees have made exceptional contributions to their communities at the local, provincial or national scale, and exemplify the immense leadership capabilities of dedicated and inspired women.

They have challenged systemic inequalities, spoken out against injustice, changed lives at a personal level and served as role models for many other women and girls across the province. They demonstrate what is possible when we work collectively, and show that we all have a role to play in the journey towards truth and reconciliation.

Please join us in recognizing all the exceptional women nominated for the **2022 Empower Women Awards!**



Message from the Minister responsible for the Status of Women

As Minister responsible for the Status of Women, I would like to congratulate all of the exceptional women nominated for the Empower Women 2022 Awards.

We recognize the essential role that women in communities across Manitoba have played in shaping our province's past and future. Manitoba has a proud history of strong, ambitious women, standing up and fighting for change. I encourage all Manitobans to take a moment this month to think about, learn about and celebrate the amazing women who have made valuable contributions in our province.

This year, our theme is "Women working towards reconciliation and healing." Many women and youth were nominated this year from a variety of sectors and areas of Manitoba, as you can see throughout this booklet. These nominees include artists and dancers, community organizers and activists, former and aspiring politicians, and aviation and STEM educators. I want to thank all of those nominated, and all of those who did the nominating, for recognizing the importance of the work that those in our community are accomplishing.

Rochelle Squires

2523





Hilda Anderson-Pyrz

Hilda Anderson-Pyrz is a member of the Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation, and Chair of the National Family and Survivors Circle in Canada. For 20 years, she has worked to prevent and end gender- and race-based violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+people.

She was instrumental in establishing the Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc.'s Missing and Murdered

Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) Liaison Unit, where she was the Director for five years. Hilda served as President of the Families First Foundation and as Co-Chair of the Manitoba MMIWG Coalition.

Hilda's determination to center the voices and expertise of families of MMIWG, survivors of gender-based violence and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people is guided by her own life experience as an impacted family member and the recognition that Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people are sacred.



Dr. Anju Bajaj

Dr. Anju Bajaj is a teaching vice-principal at Holy Cross School. She is recognized as: a leader, researcher, activist, organizer, author, STEM educator, consultant, public speaker, and visible minority role model. She provides encouragement and opportunities for students, especially female students through her school clubs such as the New Horizon Club. The club in conjunction with St. Boniface Hospital Research Centre provides opportunities to interact with female and male researchers.

Through her work with science fairs, especially the Bison Regional Science Fair, which she founded, females have been able to participate in the Canada Wide Science Fair and win awards.



Michelle Bergen

President of CUPE 998 proudly representing members at Manitoba Hydro & Efficiency Manitoba. With over 20 years experience as a labour activist, Michelle strives to empower others in the workplace & the community. Michelle has faced adversity, but her leadership has proven to inspire & empower others. Michelle volunteers her time with two MFL committees Health & Safety for the past 15+ years and the MFL Occupational Health Committee. She also chairs the Women's committee with CUPE MB. Michelle

recently has taken on a new role of the Weight Watchers Ambassador for Canada having lost over 100lbs, a true inspiration.



Jillian Borreson

A global citizen at heart, Jillian's love of travel and independence made her a champion of the power of diversity. As student coordinator at Brandon Flight Centre, Jillian has worked to forge new pathways for women entering aviation careers, where they make up less than 10% of licensed pilots. Jillian has been key in the creation of the Aviation Management program with ACC, PLAR recognition for flight training and expanding training into the Parkland. But it's her work helping students to overcome

barriers that has had the biggest impact. From reimagining career options to finding scholarships, housing contacts and mentoring, Jillian works to ensure that women once again claim their place in the aviation world.





Anita Campbell

Anita Campbell is a Metis woman with vision, passion and driven by her relentless need to advocate on behalf of Metis women. Anita is the Minister of Finance & Human Resources with the Manitoba Metis Government.

Anita has been the Spokeswoman of Infinity Women Secretariat since 2013. Recognizing a lack of programs and services, IWS was created to uplift all Métis women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ individuals and would not be the

organization it is today, without her leadership and devotion, to over 1300+ members.

Anita is a wife, mother, and grandmother to a beautiful, blended family.



Audrey Frances Chartrand

Frances Chartrand is a Métis woman, wife, mother, and grandmother from Duck Bay, Manitoba. She is Vice-President of the Northwest Métis Council Inc, and Minister of Health and Minister of Early Learning Child Care for our Métis government in Manitoba. Frances practices the knowledge of her Métis culture and is recognized within the Métis community, nationally and internationally.

She has dedicated her career to providing advocacy, supports, and resources for Métis families across Manitoba. Through

the Lost Moccasins Project, Frances was at the forefront of facilitating the repatriation of Métis children who were placed for adoption during the Sixties Scoop. Frances works to advance gender equality by focusing on gendered health and wellness equality.



Yijie (Jennifer) Chen

Graduating from the University of Manitoba with a Master's degree in Kinesiology, Yijie (Jennifer) Chen is an award-winning activist. She was recognized as one of the four "Immigrant Women of Inspiration" in 2021 in Canada. During the pandemic, Ms. Chen united community members in organizing a number of initiatives to give back to the community and help fight COVID, as well as anti-Asian racism campaigns to raise awareness and fight against sexism. Her passion is connecting with communities and

fighting for justice. She is a proud Canadian and loving mother of two young children.



Liz Choi

Liz Choi's superpower is her ability to tackle - and conquer - any challenge. When faced with an opportunity, she deploys her "future think" skillset by zeroing in on a strategic vision and winning solution. Known as a transformation agent, she breaks new ground and influences innovative change in companies and people alike.

As a leader, Liz expertly balances her ferocious boardroom persona with a nurturing spirit and genuine desire to elevate

those around her. As a change and community champion, she firmly believes that success is grounded in teamwork, truth and trust.





Isabel Daniels

I have been working in community for 14 years, supporting our women, planting seeds of change for our life givers, our women. I always try to be a listening ear, encouraging them to come back to our traditional ways of being. I travel throughout the province of Manitoba passing along women's teachings, doing full moon ceremonies, and healthy selfrespect workshops. Most of my work is with the MMIWG2S survivors, I am always trying to change the perspective that society has about our women, our life-givers. Indigenous

women are more likely to be victims of violence over their non-Indigenous counterparts.



Susan Emerson

Recently appointed as Director, Quality Assurance and Program Support for Early Learning and Child Care with the Manitoba Government, Susan has experience in early childhood education, child protection and community development. As Former Vice President of Operations for the YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg, Susan advocated for an educated and well compensated workforce and championed quality programs and services in all areas of her responsibility. In addition to supporting new childcare staff in completing

their required certifications through a variety of post-secondary streams, Susan has served as an engaged Board Member of community groups addressing domestic violence, international development and Newcomer settlement.



Durdana Islam

Dr. Durdana Islam is a mother, a community leader, an educator and an activist. She holds a PhD in Natural Resources and Environmental Management. Dr. Islam teaches at the University of Winnipeg. Durdana is the Founder and the Chairperson of the Waverley Climate Action Team.

Dr. Islam is a Director of the Islamic Social Services Association and she is currently leading the project of

building the first Muslim women's shelter in Manitoba. Her heart is in creating a healthier and sustainable community. She is actively involved in many voluntary works to empower others and give a voice to those who lost theirs.

Durdana believes in the equity for all in a diverse and progressive society. It is through our determination and shared vision; we can accomplish real changes to build a better world where social and gender equities are addressed. Whether in the scope of university teaching, professional and volunteer work, Durdana strives to connect with people and create a sense of community. She believes in the philosophy of learning, growing and empowering others.



Golchin Jalalat

Let me introduce myself. I am Wonder Woman!

This is me, Golchin Jalalat! A 38-year-old IT professional. All people have milestones that mark significant events in their lifetime. For me, the most important of them was coming to Canada with my husband and son from Iran on May 2019 to reach out my dreams.

I always advocate for equality and equity. I came from a country where women's rights are trampled so I try harder

to get women supported and see a better future for women all over the world.





Shreya Jhunjhunwala

Shreya Jhunjhunwala (She/Her) is a Strategist at Emdash with more than 10 years of experience as an entrepreneur, contract consultant, and professional communications specialist.

In 2018, she graduated from the Creative Communications program at Red River College, with a specialization in Public Relations. Shreya is passionate about developing strategic communications that help nonprofits, unions, and community

organizations reach their target audiences. She approaches her work with insight, intention, and supportive inquiry.

Before entering the world of communications, Shreya worked as a fashion designer and boutique owner in India for six years, where she learned how to successfully operate a business, communicate with customers, and lead a team through a person-centered approach. Shreya also co-owns Collective Consulting — a management consultancy - where she helps make organizations better for people of diverse identities.

Shreya is an immigrant, with her roots in Kolkata, India. She now resides on Treaty 1 Territory of Turtle Island; in what is now called Winnipeg, with her family. An avid traveller, Shreya has visited over 20 countries and is counting down to her next trip.



Carriera Lamoureux

I am a Métis woman who grew up in Winnipeg's North-End. I am a friend, an athlete, an ally, a referee, an advocate, and an author. I am blessed with a small group of people who believe in my value and worth, and I am privileged to express that love outward, so the young women in my life can stand boldly and proudly in their purpose. I try my best to be authentic and to give space to others to be the same. Despite my own shortcomings, I am committed to using my story to trail blaze, uplift, and empower those around me.



Ana Lopez

My name is Ana Lopez and I run Salsa Explosion Dance Company studio. Born in Mexico but later moving to Canada, I have grown up loving dance. I originally started in ballet. Winning the Canadian Championships several years and placing top twelve at the renowned Youth American Grand Prix. At the age of 19, I decided to make a full time shift to salsa and won multiple professional competitions. Currently, my main focus is on the studio and running my

Currently, my main focus is on the studio and running my Kids Program. I am part of the leadership of Salsa Sunday's

which has become a huge success this past year with over 1000 Winnipegers in attendance each Sunday. I love being able to share my passion for dance.



Lindsay MacKenzie

Lindsay is a self-described community connector and is dedicated to fostering meaningful connections between brands and the important people they exist to serve. Lindsay spent 10 years with Canada's public broadcaster delivering one-of-a-kind experiences to communities and out-side-the-box storytelling that put the person at the heart of their own story. Her professional highlights include starting the first-ever community advisory board for local news, engineering the remote newsroom model

as co-created with community members and being the first community engagement producer who championed engagement practices with data-informed audience analytics practices.





Theresa Oswald

Theresa Oswald began her career as a teacher at Glenlawn Collegiate where she taught English before moving to guidance, resource and administration in the Louis Riel School Division. She was elected to the Manitoba Legislature in 2003.

Oswald has accomplished several firsts throughout her various careers. She was the first NDP candidate to win the Seine River riding. She was the first female Minister for Healthy Living in Manitoba, and the first cabinet minister

in Manitoba to give birth while holding office. She was the first female Minister of Health in Manitoba and remains the longest consecutive serving Minister of Health in Canada since the introduction of Medicare. She is currently the first female CEO of Doctors.



Carol Paul

Carol Paul, B.Ed., M.Ed. is the Executive Director at the Manitoba Construction Sector Council where she is responsible for managing projects and coordination of the sector council's activities. She taught courses at the University of Manitoba/University of Winnipeg and was Managing Director at the Centre for Education and Work where she managed national research projects. Carol is a founding member of Urban Circle Training Centre, a holistic Indigenous Training Centre in Winnipeg, where she

managed the adult learning centre for 14 years. Carol is passionate about forming strong partnerships with underrepresented groups to address skill/training gaps in Manitoba's construction sector.



Brooklyn Rudolph-Nicholas – Youth

Brooklyn is an Ininew (Cree) woman and member of the Pimicikamak Cree Nation. She is 24 years old and grew up off-reserve in Treaty 1 Territory, in the North End of Winnipeg, MB. She is an advocate for Indigenous rights and cares deeply for Indigenous Communities. She is a professional Indigenous Artist and centres her art projects on ways to create positive change within the community. She loves to give, and most of her Indigenous artworks are gifted around the community to non-profit organizations

(shelters, mental health organizations, women's centres, etc.).

Kimberley Sharp

Kimberley Sharp is an addictions and community support worker in Portage la Prairie. She has worked to distribute food and feminine hygiene products to those experiencing homelessness, and is an active supporter of the 2SLGBTQ+ community. As a proud Indigenous women, she supports and advocates for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, as well as the Every Child Matters movement. She continually works to support, educate, and advocate for her community.





Sisters of Fire

Sisters of Fire are a group of Indigenous Women and 2Spirit People living positive with HIV and working together to learn, stay healthy, empower and care for themselves and their communities. They know that traditional practices and ceremonies are essential for healing; that they are strong and unique people; that they are essential leaders in the community; that they are important and valuable; that they can help others with HIV to stay healthy; and gain

connections to community, culture and knowledge. They have the strength to thrive with HIV and carry the knowledge that they can help others.



Manon Timshel

Manon Timshel helped bring together a community of people passionate about harm reduction and reconciliation during a time when we all felt very socially isolated. She worked with the newly founded chapter of Bear Clan in Portage la Prairie to bridge wide gaps in social programming and culture. Manon used her paramedic skills to get down on the same level as the people in a genuine way that we all found inspiring. Since her teenage years she has been volunteering and continues to demonstrate her commitment to community,

women's health, reconciliation and youth.



Jessica Zapata – Youth

Jessica is a Colombian Social Communicator and Journalist that migrated to Canada in 2018 to work at a Canadian Tech Company. From a very young age, her passion and interest in making a social impact on the world have put her in various leadership positions, such as communications Vice president of AIESEC and Board Member of KIDS Initiative Inc.

This year, Jessica founded The Winged Foundation whose mission is to support organizations and reduce poverty

cycles by inspiring and supporting Colombian children and youth with education and well-being, so that they can find their life purpose and spread their wings to new opportunities. Jessica's role model is Nelson Mandela and her favourite quote is: "A winner is a dreamer who never gives up," because as people say when they refer to her: She will not give up on leaving a print in the world, to make this world a better place for future generations.

