

Order of the NWT 2018 Recipient Summaries

Mr. Les Carpenter

Mr. Carpenter was a resident of Yellowknife and is nominated for his work in **communications**. Mr. Carpenter fulfilled many roles as a northern leader, most notably with the advancement and support of Northern/Aboriginal broadcasting. After high school, Les began his career at CBC Inuvik and became a northern “celebrity” hosting the Saturday night request show. He often travelled to communities to host the show live and was hugely popular when he decided to host from various correctional centers across the north to help connect inmates with their families and friends. In 2009, he served as CEO for Native Communications Society (NCS) of the NWT and fought for stable funding for CKLB radio and its aboriginal language content. Most recently, in addition to his work with NCS, Les was appointed to the Oversight Committee of the Independent Assessment Process for Indian Residential School Claims. Les spent his entire career developing and demonstrating the understanding of power, potential, and responsibility of communications. Les was nominated on April 30th and has since passed away. As such he remains eligible for induction into the Honour.

Ms. Sharon Firth

Ms. Firth is a resident of Yellowknife and is nominated for her work in **sports and recreation**. Ms. Firth is a cross-country skier, a member of the Gwich'in First Nation, and was among the first indigenous athletes to represent Canada at the Olympics. She, along with her sister Shirley, were members of the first Canadian women's cross-country ski team and went on to compete in four Winter Olympic Games between 1972 and 1984. Sharon is a strong supporter and advocate of sports and recreation for youth and is an active volunteer for the Arctic Winter Games, Ski North, Fast and Female, and Territorial Experimental Ski Training. Ms. Firth has been recognized many times for her many achievements. She is a recipient of the Order of Canada and of the Queens Golden Jubilee medal and most recently received a honorary Doctor of Laws degree from the University of Alberta for her outstanding contributions to sport and the NWT community. Sharon is an honoured member of the Canadian Sports Hall of Fame and has opened doors for other indigenous and northern athletes. Sharon continues to promote healthy living through her work as Youth Program Advisor with the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs.

Mrs. Lillian Elias

Mrs. Elias is a resident of Inuvik and is nominated for her work in **arts and culture**. Mrs. Elias is an Educator, a specialist in Inuvialuit traditions, and a fluent Inuvialuktun interpreter and translator. She is an advocate for languages and is a member of the Atausiq Inuktut Titaursiq task group of representatives negotiating the unified written form of Inuktut. Lillian is an Elder and Language Specialist and travels with the Inuvialuit Communications Society team which produces films on Inuvialuit traditions and cultures. She is also part of the original group of Mackenzie Delta Drummers and Dancers who began the revitalization of the western style of Inuit drumdance. Mrs. Elias was part of the survivors group interviewed in the documentary, "We were so far away", and was an important contributor to the reconciliation of residential schools. She has also contributed to the NWT Seniors' Society and the Pauktuutit Inuit Womens' Association.