

DOROTHY PRICE RETIRES AFTER 25 YEARS

The long-serving Executive Director of the Canadian Foundation for Physically Disabled Persons (CFPDP) announced her retirement on June 30, 2019.

Dorothy Price, a Scarborough native who recently welcomed a new granddaughter, looks forward to retirement activities like spending more time with family and increasing her travel schedule.

During her tenure with the CFPDP, she played a critical role in helping it grow from a one-event organization into a well-respected leader in the disability community. Price's first encounter with the CFPDP occurred in 1991, when she helped coordinate the design and construction of Rotary Cheshire Homes as an administrator with project architect J. H. Rust Architect Inc.

Impressed with the work that the charitable organization was doing on behalf of people with disabilities, she agreed to join them in 1994 — just in time to take the administrative reins of a huge new undertaking, the WhyNot Marathon. A cross-Canada run organized by the CFPDP to raise awareness of the upcoming 1996 Paralympic Games in Atlanta, WhyNot Marathon covered more than 11,000 kilometres and passed through 700 communities. The participants included more than 8,000 torch carriers, 150,000 runners, 300 Rotary Clubs, 12,000

Rotarians, 7,500 Royal LePage agents and 200 Paralympic athletes.

Price served as the project organizer, handing all the details from Toronto and overseeing a crew of 60 people.

“It was a huge project with many different challenges — we were working, basically, seven days a week until it was done,” said Price. “But it was a great success in generating media coverage... It was something brand new, and it got people excited about our Paralympic athletes.”

Proud moments

Price said she experienced many proud moments working for the CFPDP. In particular, she said her heart still swells when she recalls witnessing some of Canada's top Paralympic athletes capture their medals.

“Seeing our Paralympians on the podium, seeing our flag raised high so many thousands of miles from home. One of my very fondest memories is of seeing Elisabeth Walker-Young being awarded the gold medal in para swimming at Sydney 2000 by former Australian Prime Minister John Howard,” she said.

Asked to identify, in her opinion, which of the CFPDP's many pro-

grams have had the biggest impact over the years, Price couldn't say for certain. But she said that she's always felt especially gratified by the outpouring of positive reaction to the CFPDP's recognition initiatives, including the annual Gala, CHKC luncheon, Rolling Rampage and, of course, the Canadian Disability Hall of Fame induction luncheon.

“These events are about honouring people with disabilities, and others, who have done extraordinary things, putting them to the forefront, showing appreciation for their courage and contributions. I mean, the stories are often so heartening. Afterwards, people have come up to me on so many occasions to say kind words and tell me they feel uplifted,” said Price.

Meeting people, watching them grow and evolve

Price said a big part of what made her job special was meeting people in the disability community, getting to know them and watching them grow and evolve over the years.

“When you consider the challenges that many people with disabilities have just getting out of bed in the morning, it really puts things in perspective,” she said. “You



realize that many of the problems that able-bodied people complain about, the regular aches and pains we have, are minuscule in comparison.”

Price said she’s grateful to The Honourable Vim Kochhar, chair of the CFPDP, for hiring her and giving her the opportunity to learn and grow in the role. “He always gave me the room to express my ideas, he taught me how to negotiate and I’m proud that we always made a profit on our events,” she said.

Price also thanks her colleague Rob Ham, the CFPDP’s office manager, for his dedication to the foun-

ation, his attention to detail “and for always making me look good.”

In addition, she said she thanks the CFPDP’s board members for their hard work and for consistently being a guiding light for her over the years.

Kochhar described Price as “the backbone of the organization for 25 years.”

“We would not have made the progress we did without Dorothy’s hard work and without the benefit of her organizational skills. She will be missed, but we wish her a happy retirement,” he said.

Located in downtown Toronto on the ground floor of Metro Hall, 55 John Street, the Hall of Fame recognizes outstanding achievement in sports, health and rehabilitation, science and medical research, advocacy, public policy, volunteerism and community service.

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