



[cfpdp] Canadian Foundation for
Physically Disabled Persons

CFPDP to Honour the NHL, Council of Canadian Innovators, International Paralympic Committee President and Beijing Paralympic Medallists at 2023 Great Valentine Gala

TORONTO, ON – Jan. 3, 2023 – The [Canadian Foundation for Physically Disabled Persons](#) (CFPDP) is pleased to announce the 2023 honourees for the CFPDP Corporate Award, David C. Onley Award and King Clancy Award. The **National Hockey League** (NHL) led by **Gary Bettman** and the **Council of Canadian Innovators** (CCI) co-founded by **Jim Balsillie** and **John Ruffolo** will receive CFPDP’s 2023 Corporate Award. **Andrew Parsons**, President of the **International Paralympic Committee** (IPC), will be honoured with the 2023 David C. Onley Award and the **37 medal-winning athletes** from the **Beijing Paralympics** will receive the 2023 King Clancy Award. The official ceremony will take place on Feb. 11, 2023 during CFPDP’s [39th Annual Great Valentine Gala](#) presented by **Scotiabank** at the Fairmont Royal York Hotel in Toronto.

The NHL is being honoured with the 2023 Corporate Award for its commitment to diversity and inclusion, including its focus on people with disabilities. The League’s dedication to creating positive change using its global platform is extraordinarily evident through the [NHL’s inaugural Diversity and Inclusion Report](#) and the 2022 NHL Awards Gala, where all awards were presented by people with disabilities and those whose stories of resilience have inspired the hockey community.

“The NHL is continuing its leadership role on and off the ice,” says **The Honourable Vim Kochhar**, Founding Chair of CFPDP. “Through its powerful voice and universally loved sport, the NHL is helping other organizations recognize the benefits of promoting and helping people with disabilities, who represent more than 22% of Canada’s population.”

CCI is another powerful ally in advancing equity and inclusion for people with disabilities. As a national business council, it represents Canada’s fastest-growing technology companies and helps them gain greater access to the talent needed to scale up globally. CCI is training current and future board members through its [Innovation Governance Program](#), then adding participants to a roster of prospective directors within a specialized referral program that helps scale-up companies fill board vacancies.

“CCI’s program seeks to support individuals from populations that are traditionally underrepresented inside Canadian boardrooms, including people with disabilities,” says Hon. Kochhar. “While there has been some progress in recent years, changing the status quo will take time. We applaud the efforts that CCI is making to help diversify the talent and voices at the boardroom table.”

Andrew Parsons, President of the International Paralympic Committee, will receive the 2023 David C. Onley Award for his passion, commitment and leadership in raising awareness of international Paralympic sport.

Additionally, **Canada’s 37 medal-winning athletes from the Beijing Paralympic Games** are being honoured with the 2023 King Clancy Award. CFPDP is also providing these outstanding athletes with **podium cheques** and recognizes the generous, ongoing support of **Scotiabank**, a partner in the Podium Fund since 2004. **Rob Snoek**, a three-time Paralympian, world champion medallist, Canadian record holder, renowned broadcaster and CFPDP board director, will join us at the 39th Annual Great Valentine Gala to present this award.

The 39th Annual Great Valentine Gala is presented by **Scotiabank** along with Platinum sponsor **Deloitte**. The honorary gala co-chairs are **Paula Allen**, Global Leader and Senior Vice President of LifeWorks, and **Raj Viswanathan**, Group Head and Chief Financial Officer at Scotiabank. Our Gala chair for 2023 is **Tony Wight**. Award-winning journalist and retired CBC News Network anchor **Suhana Meharchand** is back once again as the Gala’s emcee, a role she has volunteered in for more than 25 years.

The Lay Awakes, a fantastic singer-songwriter duo travelling in from Brooklyn, New York, will provide the evening’s entertainment. **Anna Paddock** (piano and vocals) mesmerizes audiences alongside her multi-talented musical partner and husband **Patrick Anderson** (guitar and vocals). Anderson has also spent many years representing Canada in wheelchair basketball and is a three-time Paralympic gold medallist.

“For almost four decades, we have been proudly honouring the organizations and people who are helping to make Canada the best country in the world for people with disabilities,” says Hon. Kochhar. “We also offer our most heartfelt appreciation to CFPDP’s loyal patrons, donors, sponsors and attendees for their ongoing support. Together, we are increasing awareness, shining a spotlight on abilities, driving positive change and creating opportunities so that everyone can reach for their dreams.”

About the Canadian Foundation for Physically Disabled Persons:

Founded in 1984, the goal of the Canadian Foundation for Physically Disabled Persons (CFPDP) is to consistently seek to put the emphasis on a person's abilities — rather than disabilities — and to recognize and celebrate their achievements and contributions to society. Since then, CFPDP has initiated dozens of important projects and events, raising over \$35 million. Learn more at <https://www.cfpdp.com/>.

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