



**[cfpdp] Canadian Foundation for
Physically Disabled Persons**

CFPDP to Honour Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities, KingSett Capital, Rick Mercer, Jay-Ann Gilfoy, Goldy Hyder, Norton Kothari and Raj Viswanathan at Landmark 40th Annual Great Valentine Gala

TORONTO, ON – Feb. 8, 2024 – The [Canadian Foundation for Physically Disabled Persons](#) (CFPDP) is pleased to announce the 2024 winners of the CFPDP Corporate Award, Honourable David C. Onley Award and King Clancy Award. The Foundation will also proudly unveil a new award, the Honourable Vim Kochhar Award, created in 2024 as a tribute to the visionary leader who founded CFPDP and has volunteered his time for four decades. The official ceremony will take place on Feb. 10, 2024 during the landmark [40th Annual Great Valentine Gala](#) presented by **Scotiabank** at the Fairmont Royal York Hotel in Toronto.

“Looking back to our first Gala in February 1985, we proudly came together to help support a North American first. Funds raised went towards constructing the first fully accessible, barrier-free apartment complex where adults and seniors who are deafblind live independently. Fast forward 40 years and we are now helping to support the construction of **Canadian Helen Keller Centre’s** (CHKC’s) new 56-unit affordable apartment building for the deafblind community and other disabled individuals,” says the **Honourable Vim Kochhar**, Founding Chair of CFPDP. “We have also supported dozens of other important projects over the years, including advancing Canada’s Paralympic movement, the WhyNot Marathon, community sports and recreation programs, the Canadian Disability Hall of Fame, increasing representation of disabled professionals on corporate boards and endowment funds for students with physical disabilities.”

Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities (Jumpstart) and **KingSett Capital** will be honoured with CFPDP’s 2024 Corporate Award. Iconic comedian **Rick Mercer** will receive the 2024 Honourable David C. Onley Award. **Jay-Ann Gilfoy**, President and CEO of Meridian, **Goldy Hyder**, President and CEO of the Business Council of Canada, and **Norton Kothari**, President and CEO of Kothari Group, are the 2024 King Clancy Award recipients. **Raj Viswanathan**, Group Head and CFO for Scotiabank, is the inaugural recipient of the Honourable Vim Kochhar Award.

2024 CFPDP Award Winners

Jumpstart is being honoured with the 2024 Corporate Award for helping to provide inclusive sport and recreation opportunities for kids of all abilities. Every year, Jumpstart supports over 400,000 children and youth nationwide. Canadian Tire has backed up its commitment to Jumpstart with more than \$200 million in grants and resources since 2005, including 100% of all customer donations.

The second 2024 Corporate Award will be presented to **KingSett Capital** for being a real estate industry innovator committed to creating accessible buildings and communities for all. By certifying over seven million square feet of its assets and some 500 rental apartments under the Rick Hansen Foundation accessibility program, the private equity real estate investment firm is showing that it aspires to have a meaningful impact.

Throughout his award-winning career attracting some of the largest TV audiences in Canadian history, **Rick Mercer** has prominently included people with disabilities in his work. He is being celebrated with the 2024 Honourable David C. Onley Award for his ongoing commitment to raising awareness of the disability community and his profound involvement in helping to advance the Paralympic movement.

Jay-Ann Gilfoy is being honoured with the 2024 King Clancy Award for her impressive dedication to advancing inclusivity, diversity and accessibility. She is leading transformative change at Meridian, Ontario's largest credit union. Among Meridian's initiatives, employees are offered training in American Sign Language, alternative communication techniques and general accessibility awareness to make services more inclusive. Outside of Meridian, Gilfoy is also involved with several different causes that are close to her heart.

The second 2024 King Clancy Award recipient is **Goldy Hyder**, a role model who is significantly advancing diversity and inclusion with a focus on disability. He is able to see, influence and advocate for how Canada's leading employers approach disability in their corporate cultures. Outside of work, Hyder is a passionate volunteer. Among the organizations where he shares his time, Hyder is a proud member of the Selection Board for CFPDP's "[A Seat at the Table](#)" initiative. This CFPDP program encourages greater representation of qualified professionals with disabilities on Canadian corporate boards.

Norton Kothari is being honoured as the third 2024 King Clancy Award recipient for his exceptional dedication to helping non-profit organizations and for being a role model. Kothari Group is a thriving real estate investment and development firm where helping non-profit and

cultural organizations is a core value. Kothari's endeavours in the non-profit space include donating millions of dollars to various charities and cultural institutions and giving significant time in service to help make Canada a better place.

Introducing the Honourable Vim Kochhar Award

Established in 2024 as a tribute to the incredible legacy of CFPDP's founder, the Honourable Vim Kochhar Award celebrates individuals who have significantly impacted the disability community and our country.

Raj Viswanathan, Group Head and CFO for Scotiabank, is the inaugural recipient of the Honourable Vim Kochhar Award. Viswanathan is being recognized for his outstanding commitment to advancing diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility and as a dedicated champion in advancing the Paralympic movement.

"Raj is a leader who personifies the values of inclusion and humility," says **Tony Wight**, Chair of the CFPDP Awards Committee. "His journey inspires us to rethink leadership, to celebrate the achievements of those who lead not with grand gestures, but with genuine commitment and a deep sense of responsibility. It is our great honour to celebrate Raj as the first recipient of the Honourable Vim Kochhar Award."

Rick Mercer will provide the evening's entertainment. Best known for his work on CBC Television's *This Hour Has 22 Minutes*, *Made in Canada* and *The Rick Mercer Report*, he will bring his bestselling memoir "Talking to Canadians" to life on stage.

The 40th Annual Great Valentine Gala is presented by **Scotiabank** along with Platinum sponsors **Deloitte** and **Element Fleet Management**. The Honourary Gala Co-Chairs are **Phillip Crawley**, Former Publisher and CEO of the Globe and Mail, and **Laura Dottori-Attanasio**, President and CEO of Element Fleet Management. Our Gala Co-Chairs for 2024 are **Mark Lecker** and **Tony Wight**, both CFPDP board members. Award-winning journalist and retired CBC News Network anchor **Suhana Meharchand** is back again as the Gala's emcee, a role she has volunteered in for over 25 years. **Rob Snoek**, a three-time Paralympian, world champion medallist, Canadian record holder, renowned broadcaster and CFPDP board director, will also join us at the 40th Annual Great Valentine Gala as the Foundation celebrates the athletes who will represent Canada at the 2024 Paris Paralympics.

"At Scotiabank, we believe in opportunities for all, and are committed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities by identifying, preventing and removing barriers," said Raj

Viswanathan, Group Head and CFO at Scotiabank. “We are proud to support CFPDP and the work they do to build awareness, further inclusion and accessibility efforts, and celebrate the achievements and contributions of people with disabilities in our communities.”

“We have been honouring the organizations and people helping to make Canada the best country in the world for people with disabilities for four decades. CFPDP remains extremely grateful for the ongoing support of our loyal patrons, sponsors, donors, supporters and attendees,” says Hon. Kochhar. “I never could have predicted that the Gala would remain in the hearts of so many people for so many decades. It is hard to find the words to properly express how much the community’s enduring support means. With it, we can continue to carry the torch on behalf of the 27% of Canadians who live with disability,”

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 founded dozens of important projects and events, raising over \$40 million to support them and other initiatives. Learn more at <https://www.cfpdp.com/>.

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Further Information / Media Requests:

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