



SASW Distinguished Service Award

Don Ebert MSW, RSW (SK) Saskatoon, Sask.

It is unlikely that one can find an accomplishment that stands out more than to be recognized by your peers and colleagues with whom you struggled through the day to day grind of departmental policies and organizational restructuring. This is, however, exactly the achievement reached by Don Ebert. One of Don's major roles in his career was his time employed as the Professional Leader of the Social Work department for Saskatoon District Health. It was during his time there that Don earned the respect and admiration of his colleagues as someone with professional integrity and a secure, foundational adherence to the values and principles of Social Work. Don's impeccable presence on a daily basis communicated this sense of unwavering professionalism. There were many changes occurring then within the health district that could have potentially seen the dissolution of the Social Work department as a separate entity. It was during that time that Don mobilized various meetings and discussions to communicate the uniqueness of the Social Work approach within health care and also accessed support from the SASW through executive director Klaus Gruber. Social Workers united together under Don's leadership to advocate for the profession itself as a unique and necessary presence within health care.

Don also excels in experience and talents with family therapy, having spent a year at the Tavistock Clinic in the UK under the one and only John Bowlby who was a foundational developer of "attachment theory". This experience certainly inspired Don as he has been and still is a respected consultant for medical students, doctors, and also psychiatry residents learning to be more sensitive to their patient's therapeutic and emotional needs.

Don's impact within health care is profound; however it was not his only contributions that have stood out. Don has always been an active contributor to the SASW volunteering his time with the Public Relations committee tirelessly. He also served as chair of the former Advocacy Task Team having been identified as a Social Worker who was well respected by his peers and someone with professionalism and poise who might speak on our behalf. Don also served as president of the International Social Services Canada

initiative, which was part of a world-wide network linking separated individuals and families. He represented Canada travelling to Geneva, Athens, and Hong Kong.

For just over a decade now Don has been in private practice. Years after his alleged retirement Don has not ceased his contributions. Don continues to be a positive influence on the well being of individuals and families, both directly and indirectly. His contributions to the profession of Social Work make him an unsung champion most deserving of our recognition. Don Ebert, the honoured 2013 SASW Distinguished Service Award recipient.