



PAUL HARRIS FELLOW AWARD

CONFERRED UPON GINA ST. AMOUR, JUNE 27TH, 2017

The following text was read at the awards presentation ceremony.

Our first honoree is a lady who grew up in a small Northern Ontario town where service above self was a way of life! Her friendly demeanor, ability to facilitate, and her outstanding communication skills were recognized early-on as being so essential in the facilitation of the aid and support of needy families. She went on to enhance this innate fledgling volunteer expertise through experience with several agencies including the Children's Aid Society.

Building on these experiences and natural abilities she attained a Bachelor of Applied Science from the University of Guelph with a major in Family and Social Relations and in 2004 was appointed Executive Director of the Ottawa Rotary Home. Many of you will be aware now, that the individual we are honouring is Ms. Gina St. Amour, whose entire life has centered on outstanding community service in support of handicapped youth and adults.

Aside from her superb management of the Ottawa Rotary Home, Gina has had to overcome many external obstacles in the development of a centre of excellence for respite care for families caring for the handicapped in the Ottawa region. She works tirelessly with parent groups to facilitate their use of respite care for their severely handicapped children and adults - in spite of recent funding cuts to the adult respite program by the Provincial government. How has she accomplished this: Primarily by working closely with families who need and rely on the Rotary Home. She continues to reach into the community using her communication and volunteering skills. To ensure a continuing level of high quality, family-centred care, Gina has fostered the development of the Ottawa Joint Advisory Group, made up of parents and family members of clients of the Rotary Home, the Ottawa Treatment Centre and Roger's House.

She has initiated, facilitated and supported many fundraisers for the Rotary Home in association with the Ottawa Rotary Home Foundation, including the annual Golfathon where she has arranged for respite family members to speak at the Golfathon Dinner, which has become a highlight of the evening. She also has a major role in the Angel Campaign, a community outreach fundraiser for supporters of the Rotary Home. Since the Rotary Home for Respite Care is on the cutting edge of the provision of respite care, which is envied throughout North America, visits to the home are facilitated by Gina whenever possible not only locally, but provincially, nationally and internationally. Her latest innovation is the establishment of an on-line training program for Rotary Home staff members.

Gina St Amour is a remarkable professional and caring individual who works and volunteers in a difficult but so important segment of our community life, that often goes under the radar for many of us. She goes above and beyond the call of duty in the facilitation of quality respite care for families in the Ottawa region.

In spite of her heavy work load, her volunteerism commitments and the inevitable caring emergencies, Gina has performed exemplary community service in support of handicapped youths and adults. She has made an outstanding personal contribution that has significantly enhanced the welfare of our community at the local level.

Please join me in welcoming Gina St. Amour to the podium to receive her Paul Harris Fellow Award from President Jean.