



PAUL HARRIS FELLOW AWARD

CONFERRED UPON GURBACHAN SINGH BEDI, JUNE 27TH, 2017

The following text was read at the awards presentation ceremony.

Gurbachan Singh Bedi is a devoted volunteer. He works to advance mutual respect between people of different races, cultures and beliefs. In particular, he helps seniors and underprivileged people. He has won awards and certificates of appreciation for his work.

Mr. Bedi is also a founding member and a past president of the Punjabi-Canadian Seniors Association. Indeed, he has led the group for three years, formalizing the association's charter and its finances. He has introduced its members to those of other community associations including Ottawa Community Immigration Services and Jewish Family Services. In so doing he has helped cultivate inter-relationships. He learned to use computers. Then, inspired by his leadership, seniors in the Association followed his example. At Mr. Bedi's initiation, computer experts now volunteer with the seniors. He is a natural leader. Telling stories and reading poetry—his own poetry— with good humour are other ways he stimulates socialisation within the group.

Another group, the Sikh Community Services of Ottawa, is a volunteer organization with a range of programs. It works to improve the health and social well-being of community members. As its trustee for seven years Mr. Bedi has served as advisor to its Board of directors and line management. With the organization's seniors group again he is active, entertaining and leading with story-telling and by always being ready to lead the group in exercise.

With an Ottawa Inter-faith group yet again he plays a leading role in facilitating communication among the participants. This ability has helped promote understanding between Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Christians as well as people of other faiths.

An avid photographer, Mr. Bedi also volunteers upon request to photograph Ottawa community events. For each event he provides an album of print copies as well as online access or electronic copies.

Finally, but by no means least, Mr. Bedi has also made an outstanding literary contribution to both Sikhism and the world. He has transliterated a text of mainly pre-seventeenth century Punjabi into digitized Urdu script. But it is no ordinary text. It is Sikhism's most sacred text. It is the Sri Guru Granth Sahib, the ever-present guide to the practice of Sikhism. It is 1430 pages of scriptures and almost 6000 hymns of the Sikh Gurus, as well as selected writings of non-Sikh saints. Now, millions of people around the globe have better website-access to it. This improved access is thanks in large measure to Mr. Bedi.

In short, Gurbachan Singh Bedi is a devoted volunteer. He continues to advance mutual respect between people of different races, cultures and beliefs. In other words, Mr. Bedi exemplifies the qualities of a good citizen and provides a role model of the ideal community builder. Gurbachan Singh Bedi, please step forward to receive the Paul Harris Fellow Award.