
NEWS RELEASE

City of Abbotsford announces John LeBlanc and Harry Schmidt as 2025 civic award recipients

ABBOTSFORD, BC – October 21, 2025 – The City of Abbotsford is pleased to recognize the outstanding achievements, excellence and dedication to the community of two Abbotsford residents, John LeBlanc and Harry Schmidt, and have named them as recipients of the 2025 civic awards.

“On behalf of Abbotsford City Council, I am proud to recognize John LeBlanc and Harry Schmidt with this year’s *Community Champion Achievement Award*,” said Ross Siemens, Mayor of Abbotsford. “John’s courage and compassion in the face of adversity and Harry’s lifetime of service and generosity exemplify what it means to be community champions. Their selflessness, leadership and humanity remind us of the profound impact one person can have on the world around them.”

The Community Champion Achievement Award is given to an Abbotsford individual, group, or organization who has achieved National or International recognition in a variety of areas, including, but not limited to: academia, sports, arts, and culture; or performed a noteworthy deed which is considered of benefit to the community. As recipients of the Community Champion Achievement Award, John and Harry’s names will be engraved on paving stones that will be placed along the city-wide Discovery Trail within Abbotsford’s Community Champions plaza.

John LeBlanc

John LeBlanc is being recognized for his extraordinary bravery, compassion and selflessness during the nine-month search for lost hiker, Jordan Naterer, in Manning Park in 2021. His actions exemplify the highest ideals of community service: courage in the face of danger, unwavering dedication to others, and profound empathy for those in need.

John’s quiet heroism reminds us that true community champions are often those who act not for recognition, but out of kindness and conviction.

Harry Schmidt

Harry Schmidt is receiving the Community Champion Achievement Award in recognition of his lifetime of service, philanthropy and compassionate leadership. Through his decades of community involvement, ethical, community-minded business practices and international humanitarian efforts, Harry exemplified the very spirit of community service.

Whether building affordable housing for local seniors, dedicating his time to raising funds for children in need or constructing orphanages and medical facilities in developing nations, Harry’s impact endures through the countless lives touched by his generosity. Though he passed away in September 2024, Harry’s life stands as a testament to the power of service and is a shining example of what it means to build community both at home and around the world.

Links for more information:

- [John LeBlanc and Harry Schmidt biographies and pictures](#)

For more information contact:

Melissa Godbout
Communications and Public Relations Specialist
City of Abbotsford
E: media@abbotsford.ca