

'Amazing' ACC, Habitat project celebrated

REPORT ERROR



The Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation acknowledges recipients of the Brandon Housing and Community Awards during its annual general meeting at city hall on Wednesday.

A partnership between Assiniboine Community College and Habitat for Humanity Manitoba was given special recognition yesterday for its affordable housing project.

ACC trades students and Habitat for Humanity volunteers were presented with a 2014 Housing Award from the Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation.

"I can't express how much it means to us to have the opportunity to build a house for Habitat for Humanity," said Zac DeSchutter, ACC student in the pre-employment carpentry program.

DeSchutter spoke to the crowd at BNRC's award ceremony following the organization's annual general meeting in the city hall foyer on Wednesday.

"There are several different reasons why this is such a great opportunity for us. One of them being, we get to learn on a first-hand basis what it's like to build a house from the ground up."

DeSchutter said it has also been a "tremendous community building opportunity" for the students.

"We get to know that this house will be there standing for years after we built it, and we can drive by and know that's our first project that we worked on."

Habitat for Humanity and ACC trades students partnered to build a ready-to-move home. Students are building the home as part of their 2014-15 curriculum. Carpentry, woodworking, plumbing and construction

electrician programs are all involved in the initiative. The build began in September and is expected to be complete this coming summer.

Rick Wells, local Habitat chairman, said the project is a “win-win” for the community and the college.

“It was just amazing for us to be able to partner with ACC and to actually have the students be a part of the project that someone would actually be living in,” he said.

BNRC also presented a housing award to Youth for Christ’s “small but powerful” pocket housing. The infill-style building at 139 Fifth St. has eight units, which equips residents with all the necessities to live independently. The building houses homeless and at-risk youth and adults enrolled in Youth for Christ’s transitional programs.

The Affordable Housing Builder Award was presented to McCarty Construction for its contributions to high-profile projects, including Massey Manor, Rotary Villa and the Kelsey Generating Station in Thompson. Four community awards were also given out, including the Youth Project award for the Women’s Resource Centre’s domestic violence workbook. The project developed an art therapy workbook for children who have been exposed to domestic violence.

Brandon Community Garden Network was presented with the Community Project award for the Seedy Saturday event. King George School was the recipient of the Cultural Project award for its Culture Days project, while Brandon University received the Beautification Project award for its Healthy Campus Community Garden.

Marty Snelling, general manager of the BNRC, said one of the highlights from the past year is the number of community projects they were able to support through community grants.

“This year there were 18 of them,” he said. BNRC distributed \$50,000 to local organizations through the community grants program.

The BNRC supported the Global Market, Brandon National Aboriginal Days, Wall of Remembrance and Brandon Film Festival, to name a few.

The not-for-profit organization provided nearly \$273,000 to community projects in 2013-14 through the Neighbourhoods Alive! renewal fund.

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