

Senator Harder awards exceptional citizens in Niagara Region
Medals celebrate the 150th anniversary of the first sitting of the Senate.

Senate GRO, November 13, 2017



As part of the Canada 150 celebrations, the Government Representative in the Senate is recognizing five leaders in the Niagara Region with medals for making their communities a better place to live.

Senator Peter Harder, who has deep roots in the region, awarded the Senate 150th Anniversary Medals on Monday afternoon at the Vineland Estates Winery. Senator Harder worked closely with Lincoln, Ont., Mayor Sandra Easton to recognize those who helped make the Niagara Region a centre of agricultural and vinicultural innovation and excellence.

“It’s my great honour to recognize these exceptional citizens who have contributed significantly to their communities and to our nation,” Senator Harder said. “This region has always been a centre for innovation and it continues to be.”



The Senate 150th Anniversary Medals feature the Senate's badge on the front and the Senate Chamber on the reverse. (Photo Credit: Greg Kolz)

The five recipients are:

Robert Bierhuizen

Robert Bierhuizen led the transformation of Sunrise Greenhouses into a hub of innovation—helping take the already-thriving Niagara Region up a notch in excellence. People across Canada enjoy the bounty of Niagara on their plates and in their glasses. Thanks to Bierhuizen, the beauty of Niagara's flowers are enjoyed across North America.

Jim Brandle

Thanks to Jim Brandle's work within the Vineland Research and Innovation Centre, farming communities across the region are applying principles of environmental sustainability to ensure that the flourishing local economy will continue to prosper far into the future.

Michael Ecker

Michael Ecker's leadership within the Vineland Growers Co-operative has strengthened the vital role of family farms in the Niagara Region. He has also helped ensure the co-operative continues to excel through partnerships with the Vineland Research and Innovation Centre.

Matt Giffen

Thanks to Matt Giffen's entrepreneurship, the Niagara Region—already known for wine—will be known for beer, as well. In addition to introducing the notion of

“terroir” to brewing craft beer, he helped diversify the agri-tourism offerings of the area and engaged local farmers in the process.

Leonard Pennachetti

Leonard Pennachetti’s leadership as a winegrower and champion of the Niagara Region has defined the area as an agri-tourism destination. His efforts have included contributing to the creation of the Twenty Valley Tourism Association, playing an instrumental role founding Ontario’s appellation control system, and the adoption of leading edge technology for wastewater treatment and greater protection of the environment.

Senator Harder will recognize seven more community leaders at an event in Ottawa on November 27. Each Senator received 12 medals to award to exceptional Canadians and permanent residents.

The medals, struck by the Royal Canadian Mint, feature the Senate’s badge on the front and the Senate Chamber on the reverse.

They were designed by Lt.-Col. Carl Gauthier. Lt.-Col. Gauthier, who is involved in honouring the men and women of the Canadian Armed Forces as the Director of Honours and Recognition at the Department of National Defence.

Find out more about the medals here.

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