



Eira "Babs" Friesen



HONOURING  
BABS FRIESEN

Eira "Babs" Friesen (1917-2008) was a community activist and long-time YWCA and YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg volunteer. She was the originator of the Y-Neighbours program, which brought stay-at-home moms and pre-schoolers together for exercise, mutual support and companionship. The program was so successful, it soon spread city-wide and remains so today.

Recognizing another need, she was instrumental in establishing the Women's Resource Centre at the Winnipeg YWCA in 1973. This was the first such centre offering women information, support, and guidance in Western Canada and the model for dozens of social safety net programs and organizations ever since. She was active with her church, immigrant women, MATCH International, the Provincial Council of Women of Manitoba and the Council of Women of Winnipeg, the UN Platform for Action Committee and the University Women's Club.

She received numerous awards and honours for her contributions, including the Queen's Jubilee Award, the Premier's Volunteer Service Award, the Medal of Merit from the Girl Guides of Canada, the Paul LeJeune Volunteer Service Award from the Manitoba Council for International Cooperation, the 50th Anniversary United Nations Global Citizen Award and the YMCA-YWCA Woman of Distinction Award. In 2003, she was inducted into the Order of Canada, and the same year, was the recipient of the Governor General's Award in Commemoration of the Persons Case.

# DR. MARY PANKIWI (HRENCHUK)

2011 RECIPIENT OF THE EIRA 'BABS' FRIESEN LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

The Manitoba Women's Advisory Council and the YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg are pleased to present Dr. Mary Pankiw (Hrenchuk) with the 2011 Eira 'Babs' Friesen Lifetime Achievement Award.

"It is a great honour for me to be the second recipient of this award. What a privilege and pleasure it was to know and work with Babs. She was an inspirational role model and tireless mentor who left a unique legacy. This award inspires me to continue with my volunteer work for women's equality."

Dr. Pankiw has dedicated her rich and remarkable life to expanding opportunities and promoting human rights through education, community service and advocacy.

She tackled her first cause as a young student, when she campaigned for, and gained, enriched course offerings at her school – and she hasn't rested since. She has been a voice for women and seniors, working through local and national organizations to raise awareness and effect change.

Dr. Pankiw's community leadership includes serving as President of: the Ukrainian Canadian Women's Council, Manitoba Society of Seniors, and the Councils of Women of Manitoba (a term she completed in 2010). She has been active in more than a dozen other organizations and has received many honours for her contributions, including a YMCA-YWCA Women of Distinction Award in 1998 and a spot on Chatelaine's Who's Who of Canadian Women list two years in a row.

An educator in both public school and Ukrainian heritage classrooms from age 19 until her retirement at 70, Dr. Pankiw has inspired generations of young women. A lifelong learner, she has studied education, music and writing at universities around the globe, taking courses as recently as last year. She has five children and 11 grandchildren.

Dr. Pankiw was selected from several nominees by a selection committee, composed of Marlene Beaudet, Marlene Bertrand and Margaret Paterson.



Dr. Mary Pankiw (Hrenchuk)



MANITOBA WOMEN'S ADVISORY COUNCIL  
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