

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Three exceptional individuals receive the Lieutenant Governor's Medal for Seniors

Vaudreuil-Dorion, May 19, 2023 – On May 14th, three individuals who have distinguished themselves over the years through their volunteer work in Vaudreuil-Dorion were awarded the Lieutenant Governor's Medal for Seniors during a ceremony attended by the Honourable J. Michel Doyon at the Collège militaire de Saint-Jean-sur-le-Richelieu. This provincial recognition is a way to underline the commitment of Denis Lapointe, Agathe Bouchard and Marie-Éliane Wart to the community.

"The pathway taken by these three people has been impressive. They have accomplished great things in the region, in all humility, without ever asking for anything in return. Their volunteer work and selflessness over the years deserved to be recognized. This is why the municipal council of the City of Vaudreuil-Dorion thought it important to submit their candidacy for the Lieutenant-Governor's Medal for Seniors. On behalf of City Council, I want to take this opportunity to thank them wholeheartedly for their contribution to our community," said Mayor Guy Pilon.

Denis Lapointe and Agathe Bouchard

The volunteer journey travelled by Denis Lapointe and Agathe Bouchard has been one of togetherness for this couple. Both have embraced the same causes and have generously donated their time so that their fellow citizens could benefit from community-based hospital care. Having lived in Vaudreuil-Dorion since the 70s, their first accomplishment, with the help of two other couples, was the creation of a theatre company to give children in the region the chance to have access to this art form. This was followed by several years of involvement in municipal politics and with Mouvement Desjardins. However, the culmination of their volunteer work was undoubtedly the creation of an advocacy group in 2006 to build a hospital in Vaudreuil-Soulanges, the only region in Canada with more than 150,000 people that did not have a hospital. In addition to the mobilization strategy, Denis Lapointe and several members of the citizens' committee simultaneously created the Fondation Hôpital Vaudreuil-Soulanges, where they sit on the Board of directors. This Committee is responsible for launching the *Salon des vins Vaudreuil-Soulanges*, a significant and sought-after fundraising activity where the money raised is used to improve health services in the Vaudreuil-Soulanges region.

Marie-Éliane Wart

Originally from Belgium, Marie-Éliane Wart arrived in Quebec in 1962. She became a social worker five years later. This kind-hearted lady has worked for the people of Vaudreuil-Soulanges, Valleyfield and Huntingdon for 34 years. In 1982, she brought together 11 people who were known for their volunteer work in their community and founded the Centre d'action bénévole L'Actuel. She would later take upon

the role as Head of medical transportation for 20 years. This Centre, which now has about 20 staff members, works to ensure the well-being of the community by offering some 20,000 services to the community per year.

In 2000, Ms. Wart flew to Haiti, where she was greatly affected by the misery and poverty of the Haitian people. Upon her return to Quebec, she founded Fraternité Haïti des Trois Lacs, whose goal it is to sponsor underprivileged Haitian children and offer them access to school. Today, the organization supports more than four orphanages/schools located in four different villages and sponsors more than 200 children. Fraternité Haïti is also involved in raising special funds during emergency situations, including hurricanes or earthquakes, to help rebuild infrastructure in Haiti. Ms. Wart served as President of the organization until 2015. She still sits on the Board of Directors where she is responsible for sponsorships in Papaye.

The Lieutenant Governor's Medal recognizes seniors for their sustained volunteer commitment at the social or community level which began at or continued beyond the age of 64 and which contributed to the well-being of their community or the achievement of an organization's goal.