



Metroland file photo

Mississauga's Ron Cunningham has been named this year's winner of the Community Service Award as part of the 35th annual Black Business and Professional Association's Harry Jerome Awards. The awards are being presented during a gala reception at the International Centre on April 22.

Dedication to community earns man Harry Jerome Award

CHRIS CLAY

cclay@mississauga.net

MN Apr. 11, 2017

Like any good volunteer, Mississauga's Ron Cunningham is deflecting any individual praise aimed his way and hopes his recently announced Harry Jerome Award will be a boon to his organization.

Cunningham will receive the Community Service Award at the 35th annual Black Business and Professional Association's (BBPA) Harry Jerome Awards, which are being presented April 22 at the International Centre. He's just one of more than a dozen individuals who will receive an award at the gala that honours excellence in African-Canadian achievement.

While understandably pleased to be presented with such a distinguished award, Cunningham told the News his hope is the recognition he's receiving will have an ancillary benefit of raising the profile of his Mississauga-based Citizens for the Advancement of Community Development (CACD), which works to help at-risk youth reach their full potential through a number of programs.

Several hundred youth enrol each year in the CACD's various programs such as after school, leadership and empowerment, youth justice and crime prevention, among others.

"It's very rewarding when you see that you're making a difference in young people's lives," said Cunningham. "When

you're recognized by something such as the BBPA's Harry Jerome Awards, it's encouraging because it's such a prestigious award for the African-Canadian community."

The many long hours he spends with the CACD isn't to benefit himself. It's to try and make a difference in his community and that's why he does what he does.

Still, to be honoured by his peers is a wonderful feeling.

"Great satisfaction comes with receiving any award, but when you're recognized by your peers in the black community it's very meaningful," he said.

Meanwhile, other Harry Jerome Award winners include Rev. Dr. Audley N. James (Lifetime Achievement Award), Harriet Thornhill (Youth Advancement Award), Dr. Everton Gooden (Trailblazer Award), Keith Spence (Professional Excellence Award), George Frempong (Business Award), Isobel Granger (Public Advocacy Award), Leanne Prendergast (Leadership Award), Sharon Riley (Entertainment Award), Gabrielle Fletcher (Academics Award), Dr. Barbara Trieloff-Deane (Diversity Award), Wesley J. Hall (President's Award), Chris Campbell (Volunteer Award), Andre De Grasse (Athletics Award), Dr. Juliet M. Daniel (Technology and Innovation Award), Cheryl Nembhard (Social Advocacy Award), Fabienne Colas (Arts Award) and Dr. Boluwaji Ogunyemi (Health Sciences Award).