

2018 GLOBAL CITIZEN AWARD



Terri (front left) at the Making Peace Vigil 7th Anniversary

TERRI SLEEVA devotes her life to the struggle for peace and justice. Her level of commitment is outstanding, dedicating herself to concerns ranging from anti-poverty, anti-racism, disability, and human rights, to the environmental justice and anti-war movements. She is also a constant ally in Indigenous peoples' struggle for justice. Terri is active in a variety of roles, with experience in policy development, advocacy, community building, communications and services. The list of groups and organizations Terri serves is lengthy. She is chair of the Regina Citizens' Public Transit Coalition, and belongs to the Disability Income Support Coalition (DISC),

SaskTel Employee Network on Disability (SEND), Colonialism No More, Making Peace Vigil, Mother Earth Justice Advocates, End Poverty Regina, and many, many others. She is Membership Coordinator for Amnesty International, group 91, is the Tetra Society of North America Community Coordinator in Regina, and Ambassador for the Rick Hansen Foundation. She is the proud mother of 2 children and 4 grandchildren, 2 of whom are adopted. Terri puts herself on the line for peace and justice on a daily basis. She believes that the status quo steps on human rights and peace initiatives so we need to address these concerns.

A Conversation with Saskatchewan's Global Citizens...



Terri (front right) with other members of Colonialism No More

What does Global Citizenship mean to you?

Global citizenship should be the major focus of all inhabitants of Mother Earth. Resource extraction, climate change, starvation and wars are designed to make people into haves (1%) and have nots (99%). Governments are under the direction of the elites or dictatorships which are very self-serving. When the focus of global citizenship is enacted, all people will treat all others with dignity and respect and as equals. To me, global citizenship is the opposite of profit driven greed which exploits Mother Earth and its inhabitants.

What do you feel are some of the biggest challenges currently facing our global community? What do you identify as possible solutions to these challenges?

People's ignorance is paramount because they think that because it's on the other side of the world, they will never be affected. The world is being destroyed in the name of money and people are functioning in their little bubbles (I'm referring to most government officials). We need to educate, educate, educate and groups are banding together to resist initiatives that are untenable.

Where do you find your inspiration?

I go to St. George Orthodox Cathedral every Sunday to recharge my batteries. I believe through God, everything is possible and will benefit others. The bonus is seeing people react positively to initiatives I was involved in because it changed their situation for the better. I'm addicted to warm fuzzies!!

Tell us about a teacher, mentor, or other role-model who really made a difference in your life.

There have been many mentors in my life, including Catherine Verrall, Florence Stratton, Su Deranger, Peter Gilmer, Gloria DeSantos & Larry Kowalchuk. I studied their actions to improve bad situations and found the results they achieved through hard work to be inspirational. The discovery of critical thinking made my decisions so much easier. An example would be Catherine Verrall who organized a successful conference "Making Peace with Earth", rode her bicycle into her 80s with a sign that said "bring back Via Rail" and wrote a cookbook. How do you out-do that?



Terri (front left) at "Study War No More" rally

What do you see as one of the most encouraging or innovative trends that is creating positive change in our world right now?

People are finally starting to come out of their bubbles and seeing what is really going on around them. As a result, more people are being involved in rallies and other civil disobedience. Indigenous people are beginning to speak out about the injustices they have lived with for the last 150 years and earlier. The university puts on workshops to teach about different perspectives in the world and the injustices people have endured. Quite a few of these workshops left me in tears and was life changing.

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What is one way that you try to work for sustainable solutions to global challenges?

One of the ways is by working for dignity and human rights. I'm an ambassador for the Rick Hansen Foundation so we go to schools to teach children about what it is like to live with a disability, both the positive and negative aspects. We ask the children to be "Accessibility Champions" to provide an inclusive environment for people with disabilities. Starting with children at a young age will be the catalyst to changing the status quo. ♦