

March of Dimes loses a longtime friend

The Honourable George S. P. Ferguson, Q.C. passed away on June 15, 2011 at the Toronto General Hospital from complications from an aortic aneurysm.

A polio survivor, the virus left Justice Ferguson with permanent physical disabilities, but did not harm his spirit. Ferguson went on to have a lengthy and distinguished career in law, a long and happy marriage and an involvement with the charity he helped create - March of Dimes, a relationship that spanned over 55 years.

Given the significant accomplishments of Judge Ferguson, March of Dimes established an award in his honour over a decade ago, known as the [*Judge George Ferguson Award for Full Participation and Equality*](#) which recognizes truly distinguished contributions to the lives of people with disabilities, such as the adoption of Human Rights legislation or the creation of barrier-free communities.

“The award is bestowed annually to someone whose contribution has moved society forward toward inclusion of people with disabilities. This Award captures the personal qualities and contributions of Justice Ferguson,” says March of Dimes Canada President and CEO, Andria Spindel.

In 2007, Justice Ferguson published his memoirs, which reflected on his Toronto upbringing, his years recovering from the devastating effects of polio, his legal career and appointment to the bench of the Superior Court of Justice. Proceeds from the sale of “Who am I to Judge”, benefited March of Dimes Canada’s Post-Polio Canada program, which delivers peer support to polio survivors and health education across Canada.

Post-polio syndrome (PPS) affects over 50,000 Canadians and is historically connected to the roots of March of Dimes which served people affected by polio in the '50s and helped fund research to find a vaccine to prevent it. Today, March of Dimes Canada continues to address the issues, both health and social, of people living with PPS and its debilitating effects.

“In 2011, March of Dimes celebrates its 60th Anniversary, and we wouldn’t be the organization we are today were it not for Justice George Ferguson,” says Andria. “He has been an integral part of March of Dimes since its inception and the legacy he leaves and the people he has helped in incalculable – he will be greatly missed.”

To purchase the book and support Post-Polio Canada, please e-mail fundraising@marchofdimes.ca