



MHCC Board Member Receives *Inspiring Lives* Award

The Mental Health Commission of Canada is extremely pleased to announce that one of its board members, Andy Cox, received an *Inspiring Lives* Award on Wednesday, May 6. The awards, which are now in their 5th year, were hosted by the Mental Health Foundation of Nova Scotia and the Canadian Mental Health Association Nova Scotia Division. The *Inspiring Lives* Award recognizes the achievements of Nova Scotians who have inspired others as they face their own challenges with mental illness or addiction.

Andy was one of five award recipients. All were recognized for showing perseverance in taking control of his or her life, creating greater understanding of mental illness or addictions and reducing the stigma associated with these, inspiring and supporting others, and contributing positively to their community.

The Commission was proud to learn that Joe Leger was also a recipient of the 2009 *Inspiring Lives* Award. Joe is a member of the Commission's Child and Youth Advisory Committee. He has played a key role in developing a Youth Reference Group for the Commission.

Andy's nominations talked about the challenges he faced when his academic life at university was cut short by mental illness at the age of 17. Andy was misdiagnosed with Clinical Depression and it was several years before he was accurately diagnosed with Bipolar Disorder. With the support of his family, Andy's journey of recovery has grown into a true passion for mental health. As the Mental Health Advocate at the Izaak Walton Killam (IWK) Health Centre, Andy now helps children, youth and their families navigate Nova Scotia's mental health system.

Andy is pictured below receiving his *Inspiring Lives* Award from Linda Smith, Executive Director, Mental Health, Children's Services and Addictions Treatment, Government of Nova Scotia.

