

MEDIA RELEASE

CUFA BC Announces Winners of the 2021 Distinguished Academics Awards



Vancouver, April 28, 2021 – The Confederation of University Faculty Associations of British Columbia (CUFA BC) is pleased to announce the winners of the 2021 CUFA BC Distinguished Academics Awards:

- Early in Career Award: **Dr. Athena Madan** (Royal Roads University)
- *Ehor Boyanowsky* Academic of the Year Award: **Prof. Enda Brophy** (Simon Fraser University)
- *Paz Buttedahl* Career Achievement Award: **Dr. Ewa Czaykowska-Higgins** (University of Victoria)

Each year since 1995, CUFA BC honours the outstanding scholarship and public policy contributions of the distinguished academics at five research universities across the province. They are Simon Fraser University, University of British Columbia, University of Northern British Columbia, University of Victoria, and Royal Roads University. The awards bring with it the admiration of one's colleagues across the institution, disciplines, geographic borders and beyond, and is recognized with a commemorative plaque and cash award.

The fifty-year legacy of CUFA BC is that we believe the ideas that flow out of our universities are the lifeblood of our citizenry and democratic landscape, our intellectual life, and our economy. Now in their twenty-seventh year, the CUFA BC Distinguished Academics Awards continue to celebrate the ideas that contribute to the non-academic community and demonstrate the necessity and vitality of public university-based research and scholarly activity.

From one year to another, the nominees hail from different institutions and disciplines, and conduct research in very different domains. However different their work may be, they are united by their passion for rigorous and meaningful scholarship – and for research that contributes to the public good.

The Selection Committee had the extremely difficult task of selecting award recipients from the many outstanding nominees, whose excellence is indicative of the high quality of British Columbia's faculty and of their many contributions to the life of the province.

Dr. Athena Madan, Assistant Professor in the School of Humanitarian Studies at Royal Roads University, will receive the Early in Career Award for her work on humanitarian medicine and intervention and her commitment to the peace, justice, and development of strong global institutions. Dr. Madan demonstrates an exceptional record of social justice, meaningful engagement with marginalized communities, and humanitarian action. The Early in Career Award recognizes the contributions to the non-academic community made by faculty members who are at an early point in their academic careers.

Professor Enda Brophy, Associate Professor in the School of Communication and cross-appointed in Labour Studies at Simon Fraser University, will receive the *Ehor Boyanowsky* Academic of the Year Award. The award is named after the CUFA BC president who created the Distinguished Academics Awards series during his term and recognizes a specific and recent outstanding contribution to the community beyond the academy through research or other scholarly activity by an individual at any stage of their career.

Professor Brophy’s research illuminates the complex dynamics of remote and precarious work, a topic that has gained increasing urgency during the pandemic. Professor Brophy co-produced a report with his students on the labour conditions and collective organizing among food delivery workers in Metro Vancouver during the COVID-19 pandemic. The report is the first of its kind and provides a richly nuanced analysis of Canadian legal cases, hiring policies, pay structures, media stories, and statistical data about the sector. The report sheds light on the vulnerability and precarity of gig workers in Canada who are often women, people of colour, and immigrants. It is a call to action to close the loopholes on the regulations of so-called independent contractors who are often excluded from labour protections and health and safety regulations.

Dr. Ewa Czaykowska-Higgins, Professor of Linguistics at the University of Victoria, will receive the *Paz Buttedahl* Career Achievement Award for her lifelong commitment to community-based language research, a practice she introduced originally in a ground-breaking work that forever after changed the field of linguistics. Community-based language research advances the democratization of knowledge, social action and social change, and shifts the power differentials in research by advocating that language research should be conducted for, with and by the speakers of that language in collaboration with an outsider linguist. Throughout her career, Dr. Czaykowska-Higgins’s research, service, outreach, and community engagement has supported the maintenance, revitalization, and reclamation of Indigenous languages. The *Paz Buttedahl* Career Achievement Award is named in memory of Dr. Paz Buttedahl – academic, community builder, and faculty association leader – and is awarded to a faculty member who has shown sustained outstanding contributions to the community beyond the academy through research or other scholarly activities by an individual over the major portion of their career.

We congratulate the winners and all of the nominees who have clearly earned the deep respect of their colleagues, both inside and outside of the academy. For more information on the award winners and nominees, please visit www.cufa.bc.ca/awards. We usually present the awards at a celebratory gala with a large gathering of friends and colleagues, but as the pandemic continues to disrupt every aspect of our personal and social lives, we will consider how best to recognize our award recipients later in the fall.

For further information or comment please contact CUFA BC Executive Director Annabree Fairweather at 604-367-5856 or executive.director@cufa.bc.ca.

CUFA BC represents over 5,500 faculty members, professional librarians, lecturers, instructors, and other academics at the five research-intensive universities in British Columbia, which include University of British Columbia, Simon Fraser University, University of Victoria, Royal Roads University and University of Northern British Columbia.

CUFA BC [celebrates fifty years](#) of working closely with the member Faculty Associations at each institution. Our purposes are to support high-quality post-secondary education and research in British Columbia and to advocate for the interests of our members.

