

Rights of First Nations, Youth Unemployment, Imperialism: Peace Activist Ed Lehman Granted the “Lifetime Achievement Award”

By [Ed Lehman](#) and [Daniel Reech](#)

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Ed Lehman began protesting for peace during the Vietnam War — and he never stopped. Now, after over 50 years of activism, the Regina resident is being honoured with a Lifetime Achievement Award by the Saskatchewan Council For International Cooperation (SCIC).

Lehman is the editor for the Saskatchewan Peace News, is the head of the Regina Peace Council, a member of Peace Quest Regina, and is also involved with the Making Peace Vigil.

“This award is a recognition of work that I’ve done in the area of global cooperation and social justice and solidarity with people around the world,” Lehman said.

When Lehman first got into activism, the primary issues that caught his attention were imperialism, colonialism, youth unemployment and the mistreatment of First Nations people in Canada.

“This period now that we’re in,” Lehman said. “It seems like all these issues that we were discussing 50 years ago have come to the floor again.”

Lehman has condemned Canada and the United States’s role in perpetuating colonialism domestically and imperialism abroad.

“Personally I feel,” Lehman said. “If we’re going to fight colonialism we have to fight it at home, but we also have to fight what our countries are doing internationally.”

Lehman notes that these issues don’t receive a great deal of coverage in the Canadian media which is why he is always organizing events.

Lehman was nominated for the award by fellow activist and close friend David Gehl.

"[Ed] has been very active," Gehl said. "He edits the Saskatchewan Peace News, our regular bulletin. He knows people across Canada in the peace movement in many different organizations. I think he's a leader."

"He had a lot of personal experiences that enriched his life," Gehl said. "He'd seen many different cultures, I think he has quite a rich life experience."

Gehl and Lehman have been friends since high school. Gehl's family was heavily involved in politics. Lehman credits his connection to Gehl for changing his views on the Vietnam War during his teenage years, one of the issues that sparked Lehman's lifelong commitment to peace activism.

"It's a lifelong achievement award, and Ed has been very active lifelong for the 50 years that I've known him," Gehl said. "I think he fits the bill. I think he's been really important for raising the profile of the Regina Peace Council, he's taken a lot of the initiatives to have the conferences and I know he joined the Canadian Foreign Policy Institute."

The event is scheduled to happen March 23 from 6:30 to 8:30 CST. Registration information can be viewed [here](#).

When Ed learned that he was being given the award, he insisted that the virtual event be centred around a discussion of Canadian foreign policy rather than himself.

"I think it's typical of Ed," Gehl said. "The SCIC was unable to have a public award ceremony but they did offer to have a public event and Ed wanted it not to focus on him so much as to focus on Canadian foreign policy. So he was able to suggest that they would have a webinar focused on Canadian foreign policy in the 21st century."

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