



news release

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Gerald Vandezande named to Order of Canada

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TORONTO – It is with great delight that Citizens for Public Justice congratulates Gerald Vandezande on being awarded the Order of Canada today.

“Gerald is eminently deserving of this honour,” says CPJ Executive Director Harry Kits, calling Vandezande a tireless advocate for social justice in Canada.

“It is wonderful to see Gerald recognized, to see, through him, the work of Citizens for Public Justice recognized, and to see that work for justice is affirmed in Canada today.”

Vandezande was a founding member of Citizens for Public Justice and spent 35 years under our public justice banner – as Executive Director and later National Public Affairs Director. He retired in 1998 after an extensive speaking tour of Canada to celebrate CPJ’s 35th anniversary.

CPJ was founded predominantly by Dutch immigrants of the Reformed faith. Their primary focus was on the issues most significant to their community – education and labour. Over time, Gerald, his colleagues and the supporting community developed an understanding of public justice that included issues of concern to all Canadians. Aboriginal rights and an economy of care emerged as primary themes that continue to this day. More current issues include refugee concerns and child poverty. Even as issues broadened, so did national membership across a diverse Christian community. Ties were made across faiths and coalitions

Vandezande award

were formed around particular issues. Citizens for Public Justice is now a widely ecumenical, public policy organization highly respected by Members of Parliament, provincial politicians, senior civil servants and other decision-makers across Canada.

“Gerald’s faith is such a living part of him, he was able to grow and continue to open new doors in a deepening understanding of the Gospel call for justice,” says Harry Kits. “He has left us a rich legacy, even as he continues to publish and speak out on justice issues in his retirement. Citizens for Public Justice could not be happier he has been awarded in this way.”

The Public Justice Resource Centre, CPJ’s sister organization, published speeches Gerald gave to celebrate CPJ’s 35th anniversary. *Justice Not Just Us: Faith Perspectives and National Priorities*, received funding in part from the Atkinson Foundation, in recognition of the society-transforming message it contains.

- √ A biography and CV follows,
- √ A photo is available on the CPJ website at www.cpj.ca
- √ Or at higher resolution by emailing cpj.cpj.ca, or calling 416-979-2443 ext 28.

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