



## NEWS RELEASE

### AME BC Announces 2011 Award Recipients

#### *Leaders in Mineral Exploration and Mine Development to Be Recognized at January 25 Gala*

**Vancouver, B.C. — December 14, 2011** — The Association for Mineral Exploration British Columbia (AME BC) is pleased to announce the 2011 recipients of its annual awards presented to individuals or teams for significant contributions to the mineral exploration industry in British Columbia and Western Canada.

“We are pleased to honour the diverse achievements of this year’s recipients,” said Mona Forster, AME BC’s Chairperson. “It is satisfying to see the traditions of discovery, development and dedication carried forward as we prepare to celebrate 100 years as an industry association.”

AME BC’s awards are named in honour of industry leaders who made transformative contributions to mineral exploration and development and to the progress of AME BC through advocacy and service. These awards are presented annually at Mineral Exploration Roundup, the world’s premier mineral exploration conference.

The Awards Dinner will be held at 7:30 p.m., Wednesday, January 25, during Mineral Exploration Roundup 2012. Roundup 2012 will be held January 23-26 at the Westin Bayshore, Vancouver. The theme of Roundup is “Celebrating our First Century of Global Discovery” to coincide with AME BC’s 100-year Anniversary.

This year’s recipients are as follows:

**Dirk Tempelman-Kluit** and **Peter Bernier**, founders of Richfield Ventures Corp., are the recipients of the H.H. “Spud” Huestis Award for excellence in prospecting and mineral exploration. They are recognized for their skills and tenacity in identifying and assembling claims prospective for bulk-tonnage gold mineralization at the Blackwater property in B.C.’s Nechako region. Their subsequent drilling program confirmed a multi-million-ounce gold deposit and triggered a rush to find similar deposits in the region. Richfield was acquired by New Gold Inc. in 2011.

**Clynton Nauman**, President and CEO, and **Bradley Thrall**, Environmental Vice-President and COO, of Alexco Resource Corp. are the recipients of the E. A. Scholz Award for excellence in mine development. They are acknowledged for successfully re-opening the Bellekeno Mine and reviving Yukon’s Keno Hill Silver District through an innovative strategy that includes managing environmental liabilities generated from more than 75 years of historic mining. Bellekeno achieved commercial production in early 2011, and is presently Canada’s only primary silver mine.

**Mark O’Dea** is the recipient of the Murray Pezim Award for perseverance and success in financing mineral exploration. Mark led his first junior explorer, Fronteer Gold, from inception to its final sale to Newmont Mining Corp. for a \$2.3 billion cash pay-out. He created Aurora Energy in 2006, and engineered the sale of its Labrador uranium assets to Paladin Energy for \$260 million in 2010. Mark has raised more than \$370 million of equity over ten years.

**Jon Carlson** is the recipient of the Hugo Dummett Award for excellence in diamond exploration and development. As project geologist for CF Mineral Research in 1992, he coordinated exploration drilling programs to define a cluster of kimberlites which were developed as the Ekati Mine in the Northwest Territories. In 1994, he transferred to DiaMet Minerals as Chief Geologist before joining the BHP team in 1996. Along with applying advanced geophysical and geochemical techniques, he developed criteria for the interpretation of microdiamond characteristics with respect to macrodiamond grades — all keys to exploration success at Ekati.

**Jeff Pontius** and the **International Tower Hill Mines Ltd. exploration team** are the recipients of the 2011 Colin Spence Award for excellence in global mineral exploration. They are recognized for the acquisition, discovery and advancement of the world-class Livengood gold property near Fairbanks, Alaska. Since 2005, they successfully advanced Livengood from a geochemical anomaly into a major, multi-million-ounce bulk-minable gold deposit in the prolific Tintina Gold Belt.

**Michael Gunning**, president and CEO of Hathor Exploration Ltd., is the recipient of the David Barr Award for Leadership and Innovation in Mineral Exploration Health and Safety. A commitment to health and safety has permeated his 25-year career in mineral exploration and geological research. He has captivated audiences through AME BC’s Introduction to Exploration Safety workshop for the past six years, and in 2009, also developed a safety workshop for Saskatchewan’s mining industry.

**The Britannia Mine Museum** is the 2011 recipient of the Robert R. Hedley Award for excellence in Social and Environmental Responsibility. The museum exemplifies these values as the site of a former mine with a challenging operating legacy that has been transformed by a \$14.7-million renovation and environmental mitigation program. In addition to being a popular tourist attraction, the museum is a venue for educating the public about the contributions of mining and minerals to society.

The Frank Woodside Past Presidents Distinguished Service Award is awarded to four individuals: **Jim Allan, Glen Dickson, Grant Luck, and Christine Ogryzlo.**

AME BC also recognizes **Ed Kimura** with the Gold Pan Award for his service to the mineral exploration community through his work with the association.

AME BC will also honour two renowned geoscientists with Special Tributes: **David Lefebure**, former chief geologist with the British Columbia Geological Survey, and **Michael Burke**, former head of the Mineral Services Division of the Yukon Geological Survey.

For more details about the awards, visit [www.amebc.ca/about-us/awards.aspx](http://www.amebc.ca/about-us/awards.aspx).

#### **About AME BC:**

The Association for Mineral Exploration British Columbia (AME BC) is the predominant voice of mineral exploration and development in British Columbia. Established in 1912, AME BC now represents 4,000 individual and 350 corporate members, including junior and major companies, geoscientists,

prospectors, engineers, entrepreneurs, suppliers, mineral producers and associations who are engaged in mineral exploration and mine development in BC and throughout the world.

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For further information and to register as accredited media for Roundup 2012, please contact Jonathan Buchanan, Director, Communications & Public Affairs, AME BC, at 604.630.3923 or [jbuchanan@amebc.ca](mailto:jbuchanan@amebc.ca). B-roll footage of prospecting, geological work, drilling, helicopter transportation, and other mineral exploration activities on properties in BC is now available on request.