

Students, Families, Colleagues and Friends,

I am so excited, humbled, and incredibly honoured to share that I have been recognized with the **Governor General's History Award for Excellence in Teaching**. Those in the *biz* call it "the GG"; it's a national recognition of my teaching and learning.

Check it out! Canada's History Society has created this [Press Release](#), [Interview Video](#), [Project Summary](#), and [Podcast](#) to celebrate this announcement.

This is an incredible recognition, by Canada's History Society, of work that I think defines my best practice, my most inspired historical thinking, my furthest reaching pedagogy, and my most unabashed pride as an educator, husband, father, and gay man.

The **HISTORYTELLERS Project**, was created in partnership with the ArQuives (Canada's 2SLGBTQ+ Archive, and the largest independent queer archive in the world). During the 2024-25 school year, students in my Grade 10 Canadian History classes created short narratives about historic photographs from Canada's rich and often unknown 2SLGBTQ+ history. Each story was edited by inspiring 2SLGBTQ+ leaders in all reaches of our community. We curated both a physical and [digital exhibit](#), worthy of any professional historian, to share these stories and photographs beyond the walls of our classroom and school.

It's not just my work that is winning an award, it's our student's work too. I am so grateful to the incredible students who took this journey with me. Their integrity, care, and respect for this history, and for me, is inspirational. I am truly honoured by their work; they've helped me feel safer in my classroom, which is an incredible gift.

I share this recognition with a [list of incredible 2SLGBTQ+ project editors](#) who, like me, were never taught our history in school. We have so much to learn and unpack in order to understand our place in this world. In our community, it has always felt like we support each other. So, I say a very queer "thank you" to them too.

Thank you to my incredible colleagues in the HDSB and specifically at GWSS. Their support, curiosity, and guidance has helped me find my bravery in this work. I am surrounded by educators and leaders who encouraged me, found project funding, and gave me the energy to reach forward.

And, I couldn't do this work or be the teacher I want to be without my loving husband and son. Our family inspires me everyday, but these two define the purpose and reason for this milestone success. Their gifts allow me to use my own; I am my best self because of them.

I hope this recognition will inspire us all to learn more about Canada's 2SLGBTQ+ history; and if you do, learn it from our students.

- Explore the ArQuives [digital exhibit](#) of The HISTORYTELLERS Project. Donate to [The ArQuives](#), and support their efforts to preserve and celebrate queer and trans history in our country.
- Support the efforts of the [Halton Learning Foundation](#), whose generous equity grant helped bring our physical exhibit into being.
- Learn about [The HISTORYTELLERS Project](#) and all of the incredible work we did.

The HISTORYTELLERS Project is groundbreaking, leading work, and its recognition (and mine) is just the next step in building the shared history of a very proud nation.

Humble, Honoured, Happy,
And Always Here to Help,

Ian Duncan (he/him)