

Intell May 1/03 p.2

By Jack Evans

SPECIAL TO THE INTELLIGENCER

"I never thought I would get this award."

Belleville businesswoman Georgina Thompson repeats the statement several times.

She was referring to her receiving the Harry Jerome Award this week from the Black Business and Professional Association for achievement and excellence in business in the Black community.

The presentation took place at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre with guests including Premier Ernie Eves and other political leaders and hundreds of nominees and their supporters.

"I have known about the Harry Jerome awards for some years," said Thompson. Her own nomination came a few weeks ago from Loyalist College, for which she had served several years as a director on the board.

"When they asked me if I would accept a nomination, I told them to go ahead, but I didn't expect to win." She was among 120 nominees for the award.

"I've been walking on cloud nine ever since I learned I would get the award," she said.

She traced the award to black athlete and activist Harry Jerome, who was the first black person to win the 100-yard Olympics dash. The Vancouver native died at the

age of 42.

The awards program in Jerome's name started in 1983 with awards in several categories, including academics, athletics, community service, and excellence in the arts.

Thompson started All-Care Health Services in 1981. The business has expanded dramatically.

She now has about 550 full and part time employees, offices in Belleville, Kingston and Bancroft and several key contracts. They include nursing services in five or six federal prisons in Eastern Ontario, acting nurse practitioner for the Plainfield Children's Home, and a contract for Haliburton.

To help her celebrate her award, Thompson was accompanied by about 30 friends, family and associates taking up three complete tables in the Metro Convention Centre... "the largest single contingent there," she laughed.

The award puts Thompson in company with such notables as former lieutenant governor Lincoln Alexander and musician Oscar Peterson.

Her next career move is to obtain a master's degree as a nurse practitioner with an online course from Athabasca University, in Alberta. "This was a hard program to enter and I was happy to be accepted. This degree will allow me to expand my qualifications and activities," she said

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— HARRY JEROME AWARD WINNER GEORGINA THOMPSON



INTELLIGENCER PHOTO BY TYLER ANDERSON

Georgina Thompson holds the 21st Harry Jerome Award for Black Business and Professional Association for her work at All-Care Health Services.

Thompson's tops in

black business

Thompson, Georgina

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