



Kristina Patterson was handed the Ruth Burrows Award at a volunteer breakfast on Saturday. The award is presented annually to an individual who has made an outstanding and exceptional contribution to the community.

Ruth Burrows Award winner

Intell May 1/06 p.1

Kristina Patterson

has boundless energy

By W. Brice McVicar
THE INTELLIGENCER

As a member of the Belleville Police Service, Kristina Patterson is paid to make the community a better place.

After she leaves work, however, she gets no financial reward for continuing to do this.

Patterson's involvement with the Community Development Council, Lattes for

Literacy, numerous sporting associations and many others garnered her the Ruth Burrows Award on Saturday morning.

The award — presented to an individual who has made an outstanding and exceptional contribution to the community — was handed to Patterson during the Volunteer and Information Quinte volunteer breakfast at the Ramada Inn.

• See 'Patterson' on page 4.

Patterson

• Story continued from page 1.

"It's an honour to win this award. It was completely unexpected," Patterson said.

Thirty-eight-year-old Patterson has been giving back to her community both professionally and unprofessionally since she was 19. Beginning her law enforcement career as a military police officer at CFB Petawawa, she saw the benefits of volunteering at a young age.

"Through high school and public school I always had coaches who volunteered their time and it amazed me that they could hold down full-time jobs, have families, a social life and still commit so much time to their teams," she said. "I really liked that concept ... that it was a devotion of volunteering to the people and not just the activity."

These coaches influenced Patterson to not only become a volunteer herself, but to follow in their footsteps in her approach to volunteering. Though she does volunteer with a number of recognized organizations she is always cognizant of the people in the community who she is assisting.

She said organizations play a "huge part" in her decisions as a volunteer but it always boils down to the impact it will have on the community.

"I live and work in Belleville and this community gave me a lot when I was growing up. I went to school here and I had amazing, amazing mentors as far as coaches are concerned, counselors in the schools ... I have the privilege of coming back and working in this community which gives me the ability to give something back," she said.

Patterson, who is now a staff sergeant with Belleville police, said she believes by donating her time and committing herself to special projects, she is continuing that circle of providing help.

Being involved with many groups can often help simply by name recognition, she said. Because she is known as a volunteer she hopes when people hear she is associated with an event or a group it will entice others to either support a cause financially or by volunteering themselves.

Though Patterson is now instructing at the Ontario Police College in Aylmer, she will continue to support groups and causes here in the Quinte region. She specifically mentioned the baby food drive which she has already co-ordinated for six years.

"It may be long distance but I'm hoping to possibly employ some of the younger officers of our service. Isn't e-mail an amazing thing?" she said laughing.