

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Alberta Blue Cross® recognizes courageous Albertans championing wellness

Alberta Blue Cross is starting off the New Year by recognizing Albertans who are everyday champions for wellness in their own lives, workplaces and communities through its annual Faces of Wellness program.

Grand prize recipient Ufuoma Muwhen lived with the emotional and physical challenges of sickle cell disease for 18 years. Cured after a bone marrow transplant, she wanted to be an advocate and positive light for others with sickle cell disease. She now focuses on creating hope in her community and advancing knowledge in the field.

Ufuoma created [NotJustYou](#), a nonprofit sickle cell support organization that provides a platform for individuals to connect, share experiences and access support. Her work as a community builder and her positive outlook showcases her dedication to wellness through meaningful change.

“It's important to recognize and celebrate the joy and fulfillment I find in life's simple pleasures, promoting a balanced and positive outlook,” says Ufuoma.

Each year, the Faces of Wellness program recognizes Albertans making positive lifestyle changes toward becoming healthier, promoting a health-related cause, making the most of life while living with a chronic condition, advocating for wellness in their workplaces, standing up for mental health or acting as a role model for others.

“Again this year we were overwhelmed by the incredibly courageous and diverse journeys of wellness shared by Albertans,” says Brian Geislinger, senior vice-president of Corporate Relations with Alberta Blue Cross. By the time nominations closed on October 2, Alberta Blue Cross had received more than 220 nominations and applications for the program from across the province.

As the grand prize recipient, Ufuoma was awarded an all-expense-paid weekend wellness experience in Banff for her inspiring story of positive change in her community.

10 finalists were also selected, including

- Evan James Mudryk who suffered a massive brain hemorrhage that led to a stroke in 2011. After 11 months of therapy, he regained his ability to walk, and now he educates

others on signs of a stroke and stroke recovery through his YouTube channel, [Stroke How To](#), and his work as a guest lecturer.

- Wayne Scouten, a sheriff with the Alberta Government, suffered a traumatic work incident involving graphic violence against women. He realized his experiences with trauma were impacting his daily life, and now he shares his journey with colleagues and sits on the wellness board he helped create to improve mental health resources for those in law enforcement.
- Enessa Habib who started [YEG Honeycomb](#), a project designed to bring bees to historic locations throughout Edmonton. YEG Honeycomb works with residents at Alberta Hospital Edmonton's Facility for Mental Health and Addiction and the Grierson Centre to help patients successfully transition out of the facilities and into the community.

60 other nominees from across Alberta also received wellness-themed prizes for their heartfelt nominations and stories.

"The experiences and journeys of these individuals truly reflect the diverse nature of wellness—whether that be striving to live a healthier life, overcoming a health challenge, or inspiring others to take on healthier behaviours through their own actions," says Geislinger.

Learn more about [Alberta Blue Cross's 2023 Faces of Wellness honourees](#).

As Alberta's leading benefit provider, Alberta Blue Cross provides coverage to more than 1.8 million Albertans and administers a wide range of plans for employers and individuals as well as government program sponsors. And as a champion for wellbeing, Alberta Blue Cross leads and supports a wide range of initiatives across the province to promote wellness and active living.

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