

OHS President's Award Winner: Pancheta Barnett

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The Awards Committee would like to first recognize the The Waterdown Museum of Hope with an honourable mention in the President's Award category. This grassroots initiative presents captivating, student-researched stories that offer a rich and educational experience. The Committee thanks the Waterdown Museum of Hope for demonstrating the impact of grassroots historical organizations in Ontario.

This year, the Ontario Historical Society is proud to present the OHS President's Award to Pancheta Barnett, President of the East York Historical Society, in recognition of her exceptional leadership, volunteerism, and profound contributions to preserving and celebrating the history of Ontario. The President's Award recognizes an outstanding contribution to the preservation or promotion of Ontario's history.

Pancheta Barnett has dedicated herself to community-centred heritage preservation while championing equity, historical accuracy, and broad public engagement. Under her leadership, the East York Historical Society has reached new heights through dynamic programming, collaboration with public institutions, and the active preservation and promotion of local Black history. Her work has included spearheading initiatives to honour historically overlooked figures, such as the naming of Henry Box Brown Lane and Luella Price Lane, and advocating for heritage recognition through plaques, educational talks, and accessible public history resources. As a writer and editor, her ongoing publication of *East York Inklings* continues to inspire civic pride, build historical awareness, and connect people within the community. Ms. Barnett's commitment extends deeply into community service. She has personally supported historical education for youth through school presentations, collaborated with libraries and partners to deliver inclusive learning programs, and fostered multigenerational outreach by delivering newsletters to seniors and maintaining direct contact with long-standing Society members. Her collaborative leadership has sparked renewed interest in East York's past while uplifting voices historically under-represented in Ontario's heritage landscape. The Awards Committee congratulates Pancheta Barnett on this well-deserved honour and thanks her for her enduring commitment to preserving, sharing, and enriching Ontario's history.



The OHS President's Award was presented at the 2025 OHS Awards Ceremony on December 6, 2025 at the Historic John McKenzie House in Willowdale, Toronto, Ontario. Left to right: Co-Chair of the OHS Awards Committee Hans Bathija and President's Award winner Pancheta Barnett.

Founded in 1888, the Ontario Historical Society is a non-profit corporation and registered charity dedicated to the preservation and celebration of Ontario's history for people of all ages and cultural backgrounds. To learn more about the OHS Awards Program, or to submit a nomination, please visit ontariohistoricalsociety.ca/awards/ or contact the Society's offices by telephone or e-mail.

-Ontario Historical Society-

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