

For Immediate Release: January 25, 2024

VST PRESIDENT'S T.E.G. 2024 AWARD RECIPIENT NAMED
FOR THOUGHTFUL, ENGAGED, AND GENEROUS CHRISTIAN PRACTITIONERS

VANCOUVER, BC. January 25, 2024. The Vancouver School of Theology has named **Rev. Andria Irwin** as the **2024 recipient of the T.E.G. Award**. Established in 2019, the award recognizes leading practitioners in Christian ministry during their early years of career service.



A graduate of VST's Master of Divinity program, Andria earned a communication diploma from Capilano University, a bachelor's degree in journalism from Thompson River University, and an executive business certificate from the UBC Sauder School of Business. She has served as a church planter and a digital church consultant, and is an advocate for the faithful building and planting of online communities. In 2020, Andria co-authored the book *Following: Embodied Discipleship in a Digital Age* with former VST professor Rev. Dr. Jason Byassee, who says, "Andria is adept at synthesizing challenges from various vantages into her views while accommodating diverging viewpoints." Andria currently serves as the Associate Minister of Hillhurst United Church in Calgary, Alberta, where she lives with her partner, Max, and their French Bulldog, Eugene.

"Constantly learning, deeply passionate, and always committed to God's mission, I am convinced of Andria's embodiment of VST's formative values of thoughtfulness, engagement, and generosity."

—Frances Kitson, VST Alumna and 2020 Chancellor's Scholarship recipient

"Andria takes excellent care in discerning the right approach, engaging quickly with others through joyous and sad times, and is generous with her time and spirit."

—Ardis Nelson and Sandra Soderling, Chairs, Highlands United Leadership Board

"Andria has an enthusiasm and joy that is infectious! She has been adaptive in a time when adaptation is the mode of the day. As each month passes we are seeing and benefiting from her presence among us."

—John Pentland, Lead Minister, Hillhurst United Church

"Andria is a thoughtful, engaged, and generous leader. During the COVID pandemic, she demonstrated astute leadership in equipping the local and regional church for online ministry with her personable style. In the year of her graduation, Andria won the Buechner Prize for preaching. Her investment in learning for the sake of the church and the world continues to amaze me."

—Richard Topping, VST President and Vice-Chancellor

About the T.E.G. Award

The Vancouver School of Theology President's T.E.G. Award (Thoughtful, Engaged, and Generous) is a distinguished award for leading practitioners in the Christian faith to be nominated and recognized by VST for their contributions. It is not restricted to alums or affiliates of VST. Instead, it expresses VST's stature in the broader community, with a strong and growing reputation for leadership development, innovation, and change. This award will be presented at the 2024 Convocation ceremony in May.

The T.E.G. award is intended to have a continuous presence in the community. Thanks to the annual generosity of founding donors and other supporters, this award will continue each year to acknowledge the outstanding contributions of Christian leaders.

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Nominations for the 2025 VST T.E.G. Award are welcome. The award is open to all full-time ministry leaders within the first ten years of full-time employment in Canada. Candidates will be known for their exemplary leadership and contributions to Christian ministry for the 21st Century, reflecting the virtues of being *thoughtful, engaged, and generous* in keeping with the mission of VST. Nominations should be directed to Rachael Shi at rshi@vst.edu in the President's Office and received by December 31, 2024. Successful recipients may receive this award once.

About VST

VST's core mandate is to educate and form thoughtful, engaged, and generous Christian leaders for the church in the 21st century. VST is a leading theological school viewed as a change agent and innovator for the church.

VST is an affiliated college of the University of British Columbia, ranked in the top 100 schools globally and in the top 10 of the most improved theological schools. VST has been recognized by In Trust Magazine for realizing transformational change as it renews theological education. A recipient of a prestigious Pathways for Tomorrow grant from the Lilly Endowment, VST is redefining the critical role of theological field education in preparing clergy. VST is accredited by the Government of British Columbia and in North America by ATS (Association of Theological Schools).

The Vancouver School of Theology celebrates its foundational relationships with the Anglican Church of Canada, the Presbyterian Church in Canada (through St. Andrew's Hall), and the United Church of Canada. VST welcomes students from many Christian communions, other faith traditions, and Indigenous communities. The Indigenous Studies Program at VST is central to the school's identity and commitment.

The Vancouver School of Theology recently celebrated its 50th Anniversary in 2021. VST, through its predecessor schools, has taught theology in Vancouver since 1893.

The Vancouver School of Theology acknowledges that the land on which they are located is the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the *xwməθkwəyəm* (Musqueam) People.

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