

For Immediate Release: February 11, 2026

VST PRESIDENT'S 2026 TEG AWARD RECIPIENT NAMED
FOR THOUGHTFUL, ENGAGED, AND GENEROUS CHRISTIAN LEADERS

VANCOUVER, BC. February 11, 2026. The Vancouver School of Theology is delighted to announce **Rev. Roberto DeSandoli** as the **2026 recipient of the TEG Award**. Established by President Richard Topping in 2019, this award recognizes leading practitioners in Christian ministry during their early years of career service.

Rev. DeSandoli is a graduate of the Vancouver School of Theology's Master of Divinity program and also completed a Certificate in Leadership Excellence through the UBC Sauder School of Business. His formation reflects a commitment to thoughtful leadership and engaged ministry in both church and community contexts.

A Minister of Word and Sacrament in The Presbyterian Church in Canada, Rev. DeSandoli has served St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Saskatoon since 2018. During his ministry the congregation has grown in active membership and strengthened its calling to serve its downtown neighbourhood through worship, pastoral care, and outreach.



His ministry emphasizes a missional and community-oriented identity. He has developed partnerships with local churches, service organizations, and faith communities and led initiatives bringing civic leaders, agencies, and the public together to support the well-being of the city. He has also contributed leadership at the Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly levels and participated in national change-leadership initiatives within the denomination.

Beyond his own congregation, Rev. DeSandoli has offered pastoral guidance to congregations without ministers, supported ecumenical collaboration, and participated in organizations working toward community cooperation and Indigenous ministry partnerships.

His reflections on urban ministry and congregational life were recently featured in *perspectives* magazine Issue 84, where he describes parish ministry as learning to serve one's neighbours and community faithfully in place.

"Roberto's central gift is his embodied love of Jesus and how he models the values and teachings of Jesus in his person and in his pastoral ministry."

— *The Rev. Victor Kim, Principal Clerk, The Presbyterian Church in Canada*

"God has given Roberto a deeply missional heart, commitment to ecumenism, and passion for leadership. These gifts bless the church and bless Saskatoon."

— *Rev. Mitchell Anderson, Lead Minister, St. Paul's United Church Saskatoon*

"Roberto is relentless in his commitment to the ministry of the church in the world. He is a mission-minded Christian leader who encourages and expects the people of St. Andrew's to be active Christians in the world."

— *Rev. Dr. Jean Morris, Vice President, VST Board of Governors*

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About the TEG Award

The Vancouver School of Theology President's TEG 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 2026 Convocation ceremony in May.

The TEG 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.

Nominations for the 2027 VST TEG 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, 2026. Successful recipients may receive this award once.

About VST

The Vancouver School of Theology is called to educate and form thoughtful, engaged, and generous Christian leaders for the church and the world. This work is made possible through the dedication of caring, competent, and committed faculty and staff who bring VST's mission to life. A change agent and innovator for the church, VST is recognized internationally as a leading theological school and is an affiliated college of the University of British Columbia.

VST celebrates its foundational partnerships with the Anglican Church of Canada, the United Church of Canada, and the Presbyterian Church in Canada, and welcomes students from many Christian communions, the global church, and other faith traditions through the Inter-Religious Studies Program, as well as Indigenous communities. For 40 years, the Indigenous Studies Program has been integral to VST's mission, grounding its commitments in relationship and mutual respect.

Vancouver School of Theology is a recent recipient of two prestigious Pathways for Tomorrow grants from the Lilly Endowment, a multi-phase initiative supporting pastoral education and training for the church by theological schools. The first grant funds VST's work in redefining the critical role of Theological Field Education in preparing clergy. The second grant, *Re-imagining Theological Education*, brings together the eight theological schools affiliated with The United Church of Canada in a five-year effort to build a responsive, collaborative framework.

Accredited by the Government of British Columbia and the Association of Theological Schools, VST advances its mandate by preparing ministers, priests, and pastors to lead flourishing congregations.

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VST traces its roots to predecessor schools, beginning with Columbian College, founded in 1893 in New Westminster. Formally established in 1971 through the amalgamation of Union and Anglican theological colleges, VST celebrated its 50th Anniversary in 2021 and continues this longstanding legacy of theological education in the region.

The Vancouver School of Theology acknowledges that it is located on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the xwməθkwəyəm (Musqueam) People.

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If you are interested in staying connected to VST's monthly news, please feel free to subscribe to the school's monthly newsletter, At a Glance. Visit www.vst.edu/news to add yourself to the list.