

Lyall honoured by IFEBP for his volunteer work

Grant Cameron January 3, 2020



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO — Richard Lyall, RESCON president (at right), recently received the 2019 Canadian Lifetime Volunteer Award from The International Foundation of Employee Benefit Plans (IFEBP) for his long-time volunteer work with the organization. Presenting the award to Lyall is Paul Meinema, Canadian board chair of the IFEBP.

Richard Lyall, president of the Residential Construction Council of Ontario (RESCON), has been honoured for his long service and contribution to the International Foundation of Employee Benefit Plans (IFEBP).

[See video on YouTube](#)

Lyall received the 2019 Canadian Lifetime Volunteer Award from the organization recently before many long-time colleagues and friends at the annual Canadian Employee Benefits Conference in San Francisco. The award is in recognition of his contributions to enriching the organization's educational efforts.

He told the audience that he was truly taken aback by the honour and it made him think of the incredibly talented staff and volunteers he's had the opportunity and privilege of working with over the years.

“I thank all of you for giving me the opportunity to be part of this community and the privilege of being able to perform some deeds, hopefully, that made a difference. I’m humbly honoured by this recognition.”

Lyall, who has been at the helm of RESCON since 1991, got involved with the IFEBP in 1999. For two decades, he has lent his time to the foundation, serving on various committees and championing ventures such as the Canadian Health and Wellness Innovations Conference and apprenticeship programs. He was president and chair of the IFEBP in 2012.

Paul Meinema, Canadian board chair of the IFEBP, said Lyall has consistently given his time and talents to a whole host of committees, from industry relations to legislative updates, and was the second Canadian to serve as president and chair of the organization.

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— **Paul Meinema**

International Foundation of Employee Benefit Plan

“Richard has always had a keen interest in health and wellness initiatives,” said Meinema. “His biggest passion, however, has been for the future of the Canadian workforce. Richard has been one of the strongest voices in the advocacy for the apprenticeship programs.”

He said Lyall has an ability to gain a consensus and collaboration among many diverse voices.

“His imprint can be seen in several of the foundation’s cross-border initiatives, including the Institute for Apprenticeship, Training and Education programs. This program has brought together the Canadian and U.S. apprenticeship leaders for many years and it continues to grow and explore innovative ideas for fostering these critical programs.”

Meinema said Lyall is an elegant man, spontaneous and quick to share a smile and a laugh.

“He’s very thoughtful and extremely adventurous and he’s one of the most insightful and interesting people that you’ll ever meet.”

In his acceptance remarks, Lyall told the audience that the award caused him to think of what the IFEBP has achieved on behalf of plan beneficiaries and their dependents.

“It reminded me what this is really about – improving benefits and therefore lives.”

The work, he said, has been huge in scope, covering training, retirement, physical and mental health and wellness, fiduciary duties, administrative responsibilities, and required out-of-the-box thinking during a period of unprecedented technological change and challenging times which continue to this day.”

But, “there were many successes, gratifying, moving the puck forward.”

These days, more than ever, said Lyall, there is a vital and ongoing need for trusted and objective education.

“It’s never been greater than today. After all, as many of you know, in the information revolution we’re now in a period of fake news, manufactured truth, disinformation on a scale not seen before, so having trusted education sources is vital.”

Lyall said that thanks to the IFEBP he’s been able to meet and exchange ideas with benefits people across North America, something that is vitally important.

“It’s caused me to think and remind myself about what this is all about and that people count on what we do, and it is important, and you are important, and our community is important, education is important.”

The IFEBP is a non-profit organization that delivers research findings, education and networking opportunities to more than 8,200 organizations and 32,000 individual members across Canada and the U.S.