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## Editorial & Opinions

COMMENTS AND VIEWS FROM YELLOWKNIFER AND LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

# An Arctic inspiration

Success of organizations that receive annual Arctic Inspiration Prize will be the mark of its impact

**THE ISSUE:**  
ANNUAL AWARD

**WE SAY:**  
USING IT WISELY  
WILL HELP IT CONTINUE

— Northern News Services

Arnold Witzig has deep pockets and a love of the North – a combination which has benefited several organizations since 2012.

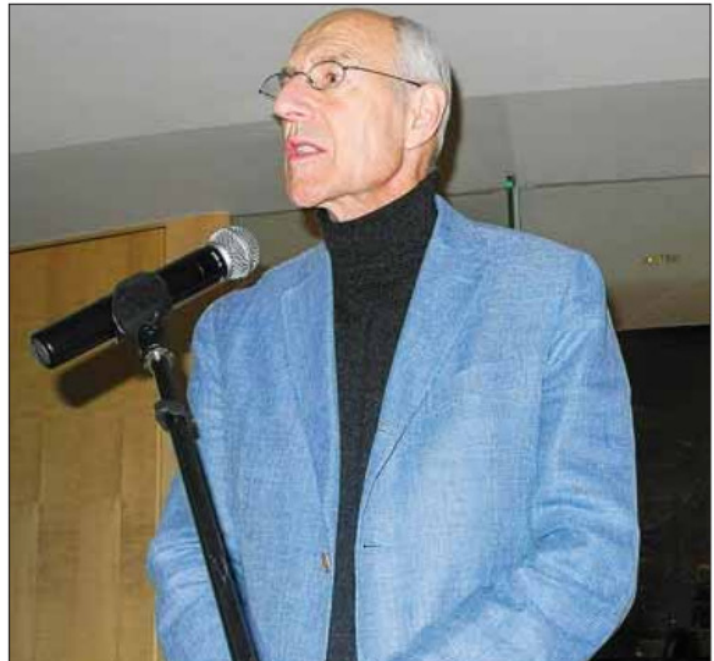
The Switzerland native, and his wife Simi Sharifi, who came to Canada as a political refugee from Iran, founded the Arctic Inspiration Foundation, and in 2012 started doling out \$1 million annually under the prize of the same name to Northern organizations.

Yellowknife-based FOXY, a sexual health organization for youth, garnered the entire 2014 prize.

Those who have benefited from this generous benefactor since the prize's inception celebrated at a special ceremony last month, where they were regaled with the inspiration behind the inspiration from the founder himself.

Turns out, he just loves the cold and the North and Canada and decided that giving back from the proceeds of his successful international architecture firm to "the very first Canadians" of the North felt like the right thing to do.

With funding comes responsibility and the best way to ensure this prize continues benefiting Northerners through the organizations that receive money is for those organizations to make the most of the award.



NNSI file photo

**Arnold Witzig founded the Arctic Inspiration Foundation, which gives out \$1 million annually to Northern organizations. The success of the prize can be found in how well the receiving organizations spend the money. FOXY is a positive example of money well spent, for the benefit of all Northerners.**

FOXY has done just that.

Its co-founder Candice Lys told *Yellowknife* last week the prize is invaluable to the non-profit organization.

Since receiving the \$1 million, FOXY, which was aimed at young girls, expanded to include boys. The organization, which travels around the North for workshops and programming, would have had to scale back had it not received the prize,

according to Lys.

The success of FOXY, as well as the other 11 organizations which have benefited from the prize over the years, should be a signal to Witzig that his generosity has had a measured effect on the place he loves so much.

This sets a positive standard for potential future recipients of the prize and improves life for Northerners without coming out of the government mandate.