



COG president named 2020 Leader of the Year

Electricity Human Resources Canada honours COG CEO Stephanie Smith with award to celebrate “a human-centred leader in a highly technical field”

JAN. 8, 2021 — CANDU Owners Group (COG) President and CEO Stephanie Smith has added a new honour to an already impressive career resume as the recipient of the Electricity Human Resources Canada (EHRC) 2020 Leader of the Year, for her on-going outstanding contribution to the electricity sector.

“We’re pleased to recognize Stephanie as the Leader of the Year,” said Michelle Branigan, Electricity Human Resources Canada (EHRC) CEO, during the Dec. 21 announcement. “Her professional resume speaks for itself, but the committee was also impressed with the way she has continued to lift others up and contribute to their success through each stage of her career.”

The award is presented annually to an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to their organization within the Canadian electricity industry “through visionary people management strategies and leadership.” Smith was recognized for her leadership at Ontario Power Generation (OPG), where she most recently served as deputy SVP of Darlington Nuclear Station before joining COG as president and CEO, Sept. 1.

Before she became the first female CEO in COG’s 36-year history, Smith spent approximately 30 years with OPG, a tenure that was marked by firsts. As OPG’s first female maintenance manager, she was responsible for 800 maintenance staff and 200 contractors.

In 2016, Smith continued to make history, becoming OPG’s first female director of Operations and Maintenance at Pickering Nuclear, overseeing all maintenance activity at the plant, from fuel handling to safety systems. Under her leadership, for the first time ever, the plant was recognized for operational excellence by the World Association of Nuclear Operators (WANO). Smith also completed a secondment at WANO before being named deputy SVP at Darlington in 2019.

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“Stephanie’s leadership, courage and ability to inspire others truly makes her a role model that many women can look up to. She is a trailblazer having accomplished many firsts in the nuclear industry,” said one of Smith’s colleagues in the nomination letter.

Smith actively supports women in the nuclear sector through her work with Women in Nuclear Canada (WiN Canada) and Women in Renewable Energy (WiRE). She often speaks at industry leadership events as well as events on women’s participation in STEM fields.

Smith is an active professional mentor and her EHRC award nominators described her as “an advocate for the importance of diversity of thought in driving business results and moving organizational culture forward.”

Smith will be presented with her award at a virtual ceremony, Feb. 17.

[Click here](#) to view the full EHRC Leader of the Year announcement.

[Click here](#) to view Nuclear Engineering International Magazine’s profile on Smith from October 2020.