

## NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Alberta Blue Cross® recognizes inspiring Albertans championing wellness**

For the fourth year, Alberta Blue Cross's Faces of Wellness program recognized Albertans who are everyday champions for physical, mental and social wellness in their own lives, workplaces and communities.

This year's grand prize recipient of an all-expense-paid weekend wellness experience in Banff is Zachary Weeks, a committed advocate for disability rights and social justice, who is using his platform to fight ableism and raise awareness about accessibility. Born with cerebral palsy, Zachary has worked as a consultant on significant projects such as the construction of Rogers Place and the Glenrose Rehabilitation Hospital, ensuring the voices of the differently abled are heard and considered. His work on the City of Edmonton's Accessibility Advisory Committee further illustrates his commitment to building inclusive spaces in his community.

Zachary has earned many awards for his impactful work, including the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal and membership on the Governor General's Canadian Leadership Conference. Zachary's inspiring efforts have contributed significantly to shaping policies that make our communities safer and more inclusive.

"I am grateful for the opportunity to enjoy such a thoughtful and generous experience in the Rocky Mountains," says Zachary. "It's not often that we take the time to pause and reflect, so this feels particularly special."

Each year, the Faces of Wellness program recognizes Albertans making positive lifestyle changes toward becoming healthier, promoting a health-related cause, making the most of life while living with a chronic condition, advocating for wellness in their workplaces, standing up for mental health or acting as a role model for others.

"In 2024 we received more than 250 nominations for Faces of Wellness from every corner of our province, sharing incredibly diverse and inspiring stories of Albertans' commitments to wellness," says Brian Geislinger, senior vice-president of Corporate Relations and Community Engagement at Alberta Blue Cross.

Of those nominations, 9 finalists were selected and received a \$500 gift card. nOne of those finalists, Jim Scott, is a Coaldale resident.

Jim is a running coach and advocate for wellness. His work began with a personal love for running. Jim has participated in numerous races throughout his lifetime, with several personal standouts, such as being the oldest participant in the Churchill Polar Bear Marathon and being part of a team in Ragnar Race that ran from Miami to Key West. His personal running has taken him all over North America and his passion translates to a natural coaching ability. His longtime



volunteer work at the Nord-Bridge Seniors Centre in Lethbridge has resulted in 1,100 seniors receiving walking and strength training and overall fitness guidance. Jim has coached people from all walks of life in fitness. His support has encouraged many to go on to embrace healthy lifestyles, whether overcoming challenges with sobriety or training for physical exams. Jim is an example of practicing what he teaches and is a champion for personal wellness, inspiring others to prioritize their health.

60 other nominees from across Alberta also received wellness-themed prizes for their heartfelt nominations and stories.

Learn more about Alberta Blue Cross's [2024 Faces of Wellness honourees](#).

As Alberta's leading benefit provider, Alberta Blue Cross provides coverage to more than 1.8 million Albertans and administers a wide range of plans for employers and individuals as well as government program sponsors. And as a champion for wellbeing, Alberta Blue Cross leads and supports a wide range of initiatives across the province to promote wellness and active living.

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