



For immediate release  
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## **Descriptive Video Champion Diane Johnson Named Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year Finalist**

*BC broadcast industry veteran recognized for her passion and advocacy for the visually-impaired community*

(Vancouver, BC) Diane Johnson, CEO of Vancouver-based Descriptive Video Works and a broadcast industry veteran of more than 20 years, has been named a finalist in the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year Pacific region award. She is the only finalist in the special citation-social entrepreneur category, a unique recognition acknowledging an entrepreneur's achievements in driving social change and improving people's quality of life. The Entrepreneur of the Year Awards recognize the spirit and contribution of entrepreneurs here and around the world.

With over 20 years devoted to the broadcasting industry, with key positions in radio, network television and as head of marketing for Walt Disney Western Canada, Diane Johnson is uniformly respected for her integrity, her positive win/win approach and her creative acumen in problem-solving.

As CEO of Descriptive Video Works, Canada's leading descriptive video (DV) service for the close to 1.5 million Canadians who are visually impaired, Diane is able to provide those living with significant vision loss the ability to enjoy television programs. Descriptive Video Works uses the latest advancements in technology in state-of-the-art facilities paired with outstanding script writing and narrative performance from the country's best talent. Diane prides herself on working with blind and visually impaired groups to produce superior quality described video for broadcasters, independent producers and the visually impaired and blind.

Diane's passion for enriching television experiences for the blind and visually impaired began at the age of seven, when she met Darlene Chilton, a young blind girl who captivated everyone with her beautiful piano playing. Diane could not get over how unfair it was that her friend Darlene would never be able to enjoy watching television. In 2003, she saw the opportunity to provide a service for the visually impaired and launched Descriptive Video Works.

Diane's biggest accomplishment and contribution to the community has been in her capacity as an educational advocate for the visually-impaired. She meets with government regulators to explain the DV processes to them; educates network broadcasters on the necessity of the descriptive process; has helped found the Canadian Described Video Broadcast Committee; and in the process, helped the blind and vision impaired community find a voice in the broadcast industry.

Diane is also a member and former chair of the BC Chapter of Canadian Women in Communications (CWC). In 2006, Diane was awarded the "Chapter Leader of the Year" Award by CWC. Diane works with the Association for the Sight Impaired Consumer, the Canadian Council of the Blind, and the Canadian National Institute for the Blind to stay well informed on all issues of importance to the blind and visually impaired.



Diane is now expanding her business into the USA and is already establishing strategic alliances with broadcasters and members of the blind and vision-impaired community there.

The Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year Pacific winners will be announced at a banquet on October 5, and the overall winner will represent the region at the national banquet held in Toronto on November 23. For a full list of finalists, visit <http://www.ey.com/CA/en/About-us/Entrepreneur-Of-The-Year>.

**About Descriptive Video Works:**

Descriptive Video Works is an industry leader with advanced technology and seamless delivery of high quality described video (DV) and audio vision (AV) for the visually impaired and blind. It is this commitment that sets them apart from others. Founded in 2003, the company holds the distinction of having developed standardized best practices for DV production and having the Chair of the CRTC, Konrad von Finckenstein visit their Vancouver studio. Using the latest advancements in technology in state-of-the-art facilities, Descriptive Video Works has completed described video on thousands of shows in English and French, including over 150 Feature Films, 179 I Love Lucy shows, Sanctuary, W5, Hiccups, Corner Gas, Shattered, and hundreds of other shows. [www.descriptivevideoworks.com](http://www.descriptivevideoworks.com)

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**How descriptive video works:**

Still a relatively new service in Canada and the United States described video is to the blind and visually impaired, what closed captioning is to the deaf. DV provides a descriptive narrative of the key visual elements in television programs and other visual media to make them more accessible to people with visual disabilities.

On a secondary audio track, a highly trained narrator provides the vocal description of the action within the natural pauses in the dialogue. A full DV mix consisting of the main program audio combined with these narrated descriptions is accessible through most TVs and VCRs via the secondary audio program (SAP). Currently less than four per cent of Canadian shows have DV compared to more than 17 per cent in the United Kingdom. [www.descriptivevideoworks.com](http://www.descriptivevideoworks.com)