

Media Release

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Victoria, BC's IMPACT SUMMIT

Recognizes long-time community and sustainable tourism advocate Greg Oates and global game-changing nonprofit Tourism Cares, with 2024 IMPACT Awards

Traditional territories of the Lekwungen peoples (Victoria, BC) - The founders of the [IMPACT SUMMIT Sustainable Travel & Tourism Conference](#) are pleased to recognize community and sustainable tourism advocate [Greg Oates](#), and [Tourism Cares](#), a non-profit organization dedicated to ensuring tourism is a force for good.

Presented during the annual IMPACT conference in Victoria, BC, the awards recognize individuals and organizations who lead and inspire others to foster positive impacts for communities, our economy, and the environment. They also seek ways to support the revitalization of our wildlife, cultures and natural spaces whether through education, leading by example and empowering others to commit to climate action.

Greg Oates is Senior VP of Innovation at MMGY NextFactor. An early supporter and speaker at IMPACT, Oates has helped countless destinations and cities worldwide align their tourism and economic development strategies to drive sustainable visitor growth and build stronger communities. Through Oates' research work, he also provides the global tourism industry with the most comprehensive road map looking at the future of the visitor economy, worldwide. The tourism industry overall has gained invaluable traction towards a more sustainable future thanks to his work.

Celebrating 20 years of inspiring the travel industry to put people and places first, **Tourism Cares** has empowered travel and tourism companies in their sustainability journeys through resources, education, training and programming. One of their most successful tools has been the launch of the *Tourism Cares* [Meaningful Travel Maps](#). Through these maps of destinations, travel professionals and responsible travellers can build itineraries incorporating vetted, sustainable tours, experiences, accommodations, and transportation options. Already successfully driving positive community impact in Jordan and Colombia, Tourism Cares launched a global Meaningful Travel Map this year, with over 200 vetted partners across 14 countries. Through their strong belief that they can change the world through travel, Tourism Cares is uniting the travel industry and literally showing the way sustainable travel can be experienced around the world.

The award recipients each received a limited edition serigraph (silkscreen) print by Coast Salish artist Margaret August, purchased from the Mark Loria Gallery in downtown Victoria. As a Two-Spirit artist, August was born and raised locally, in the traditional, unceded Lkwungen and W̱SÁNEĆ territories and their work is inspired by their traditional teachings and encounters with nature.

About the IMPACT Sustainability Travel & Tourism Conference

[IMPACT SUMMIT: Sustainability Travel & Tourism Conference](#) was created with the goal of aligning the global tourism industry, as well as stakeholders and communities touched by tourism, behind a vision to achieve economic, social and environmental sustainability. Co-founded by [Synergy Enterprises](#), [tartanbond Communications](#), Starrboard Enterprises, and [Destination Greater Victoria](#), it is held annually at the Victoria Conference Centre, a certified carbon neutral facility in Victoria, BC. Destination Greater Victoria is also the first destination management organization in Canada to become fully accredited as carbon neutral, a significant feat accomplished during the last 18 months.

IMPACT's focus is on creating a collaborative space to learn, innovate, and discover valid and practical solutions toward the positive legacy we want from the tourism and travel industry in a modern and progressive Canada and beyond. In 2023, the co-founders launched the IMPACT event series, supporting national and global destinations in hosting their own IMPACT events. These conferences are a safe place where theory meets practice, and where all voices and levels of expertise are welcome. Having strong Indigenous new Canadian and global voices is also a critical component of the discussion.

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