



2013 CFP Pillar of Pharmacy Award Winner

Mr. Murray Bernard Koffler Biography

More than 250 leaders in pharmacy, former colleagues, friends and family members recently gathered to honour the founder of Shoppers Drug Mart—"a man who was years ahead of his time. We are finally catching up to the trail blazed by Murray Koffler," noted David Palmer, vice-president of advancement at the University of Toronto, during his address at the Canadian Foundation for Pharmacy's Pillar of Pharmacy Awards dinner.

Speakers at the gala dinner lauded not only Koffler's achievements for Shoppers Drug Mart—an "iconic Canadian institution," said Palmer—but also his many and far-reaching philanthropic commitments. With his wife, Marvelle, by his side, Koffler has contributed his time and funding to support pharmacy business education, scientific and medical research, the arts, the prevention of drug abuse and business programs for Aboriginal Canadians. The federal government named Koffler to the Order of Canada in 1977 and promoted him to Officer of Canada in 1996.

"Murray is always all about people," said his oldest son, Leon, chairman of Super-Pharm Pharmacy in Israel. "He starts with meeting people's needs and helping them meet their goals. He would always say, "Build upon the people and the business is sure to follow."

That philosophy is still behind much of the advice Koffler shares during monthly conversations with Shoppers Drug Mart's current president and CEO, Dominic Pilla. "I went to his home and discovered someone with an undiminished passion for Canada and Canada's healthcare system. He is a visionary," stated Pilla.



When he took to the stage, the 89-year-old pharmacist, who graduated with a Phm. B. degree from the University of Toronto in 1946 was as likely to share jokes as he was words of wisdom. After thanking his wife, children and grandchildren—many of whom were in the audience—Koffler quoted from his well-thumbed copy of *A Guide for the Advanced Soul* (by Susan Hayward): "It is good to have an end to journey towards. But it is the journey that matters in the end."

Dr. Wayne Hindmarsh, dean emeritus of the Leslie Dan Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Toronto, also shared personal reminiscences while serving as master of ceremonies for the evening. Attendees also heard from Marnie Mitchell, president of the Canadian Foundation for Pharmacy, and Barry Phillips, a Shoppers Drug Mart associate owner since the company's inception more than 50 years ago.



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Back row – LtoR – Dominic Pilla (SDM), Barry Phillips (SDM), Dayle Acorn (CFP – Executive Director), Wayne Hindmarsh (M.C.), Leon Koffler (Speaker)
Front Row – Murray Koffler, Marvelle Koffler

Special Presentations

Ms. Marnie Mitchell – President, Canadian Foundation for Pharmacy

Mr. David Palmer – vice President, Advancement, University of Toronto

Mr. Dominic Pilla – President & CEO Shoppers Drug Mart

Mr. Barry Phillips – Shoppers Drug Mart Associate

Mr. Dayle Acorn – CFP (Executive Director)

Mr. Leon Koffler – Chairman, Super-Pharm Pharmacy (Israel)

Dr. Wayne Hindmarsh - Master of Ceremonies