



Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

# COMMUNITY SAFETY & CRIME PREVENTION AWARDS

*For Outstanding Contributions Toward Crime Prevention  
and Community Safety in British Columbia*

November 5, 2021



# Message from the Minister



British Columbians have taken tremendous strides in adapting to the ever-changing reality of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many frontline workers, organizations and agencies throughout British Columbia have continued to show resilience and flexibility, finding new ways to help those most vulnerable in our community.

Amidst these challenging times, I am pleased to honour the exceptional individuals, groups, organizations, and programs that have made a significant difference in the lives of those who are impacted by crime, violence, and victimization. We continue to work with our community partners to ensure ongoing support for victims of crime, including those impacted by gender-based violence, through the advancement of crime prevention, restorative justice and other approaches that help keep our communities safer.

The Community Safety and Crime Prevention Awards honour the incredible leaders and visionaries who develop and deliver services and initiatives that foster healing, justice and safer communities in British Columbia. These individuals and organizations have made lasting contributions to this province through their dedication and innovation.

Thank you for your exemplary service and for demonstrating exceptional commitment to community safety, victim services, restorative justice, and crime prevention.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mike Farnworth". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized initial "M".

Hon. Mike Farnworth  
Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General

# The 2021 Community Safety and Crime Prevention Awards

Each year, the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General hosts the Community Safety and Crime Prevention Awards to celebrate and recognize individuals and groups that have made outstanding contributions to crime prevention, restorative justice, victim services and community safety in British Columbia.

The awards ceremony is held as part of Crime Prevention Week, which takes place annually from November 1 to November 7. Crime Prevention Week provides an opportunity for people across British Columbia to organize and participate in events that promote the importance of community awareness and action towards addressing and preventing crime and violence in their communities.

Nominations are accepted from across the province for the Community Safety and Crime Prevention Awards and are reviewed by representatives from the Provincial Safe Communities Working Group (SCWG), which brings provincial partners together with the common goal of keeping British Columbia's communities safer. SCWG members include:

- BC Crime Stoppers
- PLEA Community Services
- RCMP "E" Division
- Block Watch Society of BC
- Ending Violence Association of BC
- BC Society of Transition Houses
- Police Victim Services of BC
- Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation
- Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

This year's award recipients have demonstrated a high level of commitment to crime prevention, victim services or restorative justice in their communities. These awards honour the time and tireless efforts of individuals and groups across British Columbia in making our communities safer.

## The Award Categories

Award of Distinction

Services to Victims Award

Restorative Justice Award

Emerging Leaders Award

Safe Communities Award

Youth Leadership Award

## Award of Distinction

This premier award honours the extraordinary lifetime contribution and commitment to crime prevention, restorative justice, victim services, and/or community safety. The award was established in honour of Anthony J. Hulme for his role as a pioneer in crime prevention and community safety in British Columbia.

### Wanda Watts – Smithers, B.C.



Wanda Watts has shown exemplary commitment and innovation to supporting victims of crime for over 25 years. In 1996, Wanda joined the Board of Directors for Northern Society for Domestic Peace in Smithers, playing a key role in purchasing the building that houses many of the agency's programs today. She left her 18-year career in the public service and completed her degree in Social Work in 2005. She accepted a community-based victim assistance position and two years later, completed the Certificate in Victim Services through the Justice Institute of British Columbia.

Wanda has developed several protocols and key interagency relationships and provided individualized services for victims of crime in Northern BC. She is involved in numerous projects, including file management and website maintenance, building a resource library, fundraising for various programs and 3rd Party Reports. Wanda has also been involved in the Priority Response program and the development of public awareness materials including brochures and information material on domestic violence, sexual assault, safety planning, varying protective conditions and court preparation that are used by many. She also coordinated a community sexual assault protocol that is used as a template around the province.

Wanda is a member of the Integrated Case Assessment Team (ICAT), partnering with other local agencies to assist in high-risk domestic violence cases. For 5 years, Wanda coordinated the Bulkley Valley Domestic Violence Steering Committee, organized risk assessment training for the RCMP and developed community protocols around domestic violence (DV) such as the DV court response, DV incident

investigation, DV victim response, charge approval, and vary protective conditions. Wanda currently serves as the chair of the Smithers Community Coordination for Women's Safety, actively working with a group of frontline workers to discuss and collaborate on best practices, and has led the development of many projects, including a multilayered 3 year-long sexual assault project.

Wanda has been a strong advocate for helping clients navigate the justice system and court process. In addition to supporting and accompanying her clients, she has been involved in the implementation of several resources, such as a 4-step court preparation process to ready clients to testify, a Court Watch Program and a 'Self-Representing in Family Court' lending kit. She also advocated for amplification microphones in local courtrooms to assist victims and witnesses in providing their testimony. . Wanda has also been integral in the fundraising and development of a safe room for victims in the Smithers Courthouse, which other communities are looking to replicate. In 2019, she brought a court support dog into the community to help a client with selective mutism testify. Her clients are always her highest priority and inspiration.

Wanda is a proud mother of 4 and grandmother of 6. She is the president of her strata council and enjoys her hobby, Frosted Leaves.

## Services to Victims Award

This award recognizes exemplary leadership in providing services and supports to victims. The award was established to honour the network of individuals and organizations across British Columbia that work directly with victims and support survivors whose lives have been affected by violence.

### Karyn French - Victoria, B.C.



Karyn French has dedicated her career to helping vulnerable people access the supports they need to move forward with their lives. From leading programs supporting seniors followed by executive positions in providing accommodations for the hard-to-house population and her senior volunteer positions with organizations such as the Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness and BC Hospice Palliative Care Association, Karyn has always supported and championed for those in need.

Karyn spent many years in the housing sector where she was known as a dedicated executive leader with a passion for all aspects of the affordable housing sector, including service providers, staff and most importantly as a strong advocate for the interests of those needing housing. She was a significant contributor to the overall direction and health of the affordable housing sector through advocacy and leadership of the BC Non-Profit Housing Association.

Currently, as Executive Director, Karyn has dedicated herself to leading Greater Victoria Police Victim Services (GVPVS) where her vital leadership, passion, and determination have been integral in transforming GVPVS from a volunteer-based organization to a fully professional service. She has also played a pivotal role in leading Police Victim Services of BC (PVSBC) to what it is today. Karyn is passionate about assisting victims to access appropriate services to assist in their recovery and works tirelessly to build and maintain strong relationships with the police and other community partners.

In her role as Executive Director at GVPVS, Karyn has led a variety of initiatives to tackle operational challenges and has been instrumental in strengthening the organization at all levels – including the implementation of a policy-based governance model for the Board of

Directors and adding a level of financial sophistication to the organization. She is a strengths-based leader who routinely provides staff with opportunities to grow and develop their skills and fosters a positive workplace culture. Her ability to gain the confidence of the Board while simultaneously building good relationships with the staff are a product of her commitment to the services of GVPVS and PVSBC and to helping those who need it most.

Karyn is a graduate of the University of Alberta and a lifelong learner. Most recently, Karyn completed a certificate program for End of Life Doula at Douglas College. She lives in Shawnigan Lake on Vancouver Island and is married with two sons and two adored grandchildren.



## Emerging Leaders Award

This award was established in 2021 and recognizes an exceptional youth/young adult, age 18-30, who has made a significant impact in community safety, restorative justice, supporting victims of crime or violence, and/or crime prevention.

### Aaron Pete - Chilliwack, B.C.



Aaron started from humble beginnings in Downtown Chilliwack. He was raised by an Indigenous single-mother who was born with a disability, where they lived on social assistance in a food unstable household. His mother utilized community resources while Aaron was growing up, which gave him a deep understanding of the value of community and the impact it has.

Today, Aaron Pete is the host of the Bigger Than Me Podcast, a UBC law student, and Social Media Coordinator for the Native Courtworkers & Counselling Association of BC. Aaron is a member of Chawathil First Nation, within the Sto:lo territory. He also provides presentations on Indigenous Cultural Awareness, where he aims to bridge the divides and make learning about Indigenous topics accessible.

Aaron worked hard to join the Native Courtworkers and Counselling Association (NCCABC) because of the important work they do regarding the overrepresentation of Indigenous peoples in the court system. Aaron saw the long track record and leadership the NCCABC has displayed and was eager to play a role in the organization. Aaron has served as a Native Courtworker in Surrey, Bella Bella, Vancouver, and the Fraser Valley. He has been proud to represent the NCCABC because he has seen the impact a Native Courtworker can have on Indigenous people who need help with mental health resources, housing, treatment, and cultural resources. Today, he serves as the social media coordinator because he has a passion to raise awareness of the important work that is being done, while also making sure that the organization connects with Indigenous peoples earlier in the court process.

## Restorative Justice Award

This award recognizes those who have demonstrated a commitment to developing partnerships that have advanced the work of restorative justice and brought caring and respectful service to victims, offenders and their communities. The award was established in honour and memory of the late Dr. Liz Elliott, founding Co-Director of the Centre for Restorative Justice at Simon Fraser University and a highly respected practitioner and advocate for Restorative Justice.

### Meghan Ramsay – Kelowna, B.C.



For the past two years, Meghan Ramsay has served as the program coordinator of the Boys and Girls Club (BGC) Okanagan Youth Restorative Justice Program, an agency that supports children, youth, and families across the Okanagan Valley. Meghan leads a committed team of 10 Peace Circle facilitators, a restorative justice caseworker, and a team of dedicated restorative justice volunteers.

Prior to the program coordinator role, Meghan served as the caseworker for the Youth Restorative Justice program for two years. In this role, Meghan was appointed the task of case managing and facilitating restorative justice conferences for youth 11-24 years who had been referred to the Restorative Justice program. It is through the caseworker role that Meghan soon realized that families were able to communicate their feelings, challenges, and strengths within an appropriate environment where participants felt safe – emotionally, physically, spiritually, and mentally.

In 2020, Meghan implemented the Peace Circle project after the program received the Civil Forfeiture grant funding. The project focused on training peace circle facilitators to support youth, ages 11-24, and their families through the circle's process and providing safe spaces for the youth, their guardian, the person(s) harmed and other supports to discuss the effects of the youth's actions and how to repair the harm done. The peace circles allowed participants to have a structured yet flexible process to notice what challenges are creating barriers, work through those barriers as a team and create support plans that provide accountability, strategies, and implementation of the family's strengths.

Meghan incorporates the values of BGC Okanagan of belonging, respect, working together, speaking out, encouragement and support by the way she leads the dedicated restorative justice staff and volunteers and in the supportive work she can provide youth and families within the Restorative Justice program. Meghan's passion for supporting youth and families, and the desire to support communication and healing within families, is shown through her continuous commitment throughout her career and life. Meghan is inspired by the belief that a small group of people can make a lasting and remarkable impact within the communities they serve.

## Safe Communities Award

This award recognizes exemplary leadership through developing innovative projects and key activities or initiatives to promote safe communities. The award was established in honour and memory of Constable Kenneth M. Lemckert who played a key role in the Vancouver Police Department's community policing program. Ken recognized the importance of partnerships and the contributions we can make towards solving local problems.

### Satbir Cheema – Surrey, B.C.



Satbir Singh Cheema is the President and CEO of Progressive Intercultural Community Services (PICS) Society, a registered non-profit community organization that has been serving the local community since 1987, providing a broad spectrum of programs and services that assist new immigrants, seniors, farmworkers, women and youth. He joined PICS in 1998 as a frontline staff member and was promoted to Director of Employment Programs and Planning in 2004. In 2017, Satbir was hired as the CEO when the society's founder and CEO retired.

Satbir has served as a member of BC RCMP Commanding Officer's Cultural Diversity Advisory Committee and the City of Surrey's Task Force on Gang Violence Prevention set up by the Mayor of Surrey that led to the development of the Surrey Anti-Gang Family Empowerment (SAFE) Program. He has represented the PICS Society at various levels – both locally and nationally, serving as a Board Member with ASPECT (Association of Service Providers for Employability and Career Training) for seven years. His contributions included submissions to the Defense Diversity Council in Ottawa providing a community perspective on recruiting efforts of the Canadian Forces. In 2006, Satbir participated and assisted with "Operation Remembrance", an initiative by the RCMP and Canadian Forces to arrange markers for 36 unmarked graves of veterans in Surrey.

Over the years, the PICS Society has become a valued community advocate for safer communities. Current and ongoing initiatives by PICS Society's leadership team include bringing attention to the prevalence of drug and gang activity in communities with walks, car rallies and collaborating with other service providers to help youth and

their families. Additional programs have been started at PICS Society to help youth at risk in developing their skills to get them back into education and the labour market. 'Harmony House', the second stage transition home program for women and children fleeing domestic violence has been expanded. Moreover, funding has been secured from the Provincial Government to build a 125-bed, 3-story long-term care facility named 'Guru Nanak Diversity Village', that will provide culturally sensitive 24/7 care and a safe environment for South-Asian seniors.

In 2012, Satbir was awarded Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal, in recognition of his significant contributions to community service.

Satbir reinforces PICS Society's commitment to building a healthy and just society that values and respects all cultures. He is strongly motivated to make our communities better, safer and inclusive. He truly believes that a great team can accomplish great things and that the work at PICS Society is changing lives for the better.

## Youth Leadership Award

This award recognizes those who have demonstrated outstanding leadership and commitment to working with youth in their communities. The award was established in memory of Constable Wael T. Audi, a young and enthusiastic member of the Squamish RCMP, who recognized the potential in youth and encouraged their participation in community safety and crime prevention.

### Mssko Wakil – Burnaby, B.C.



Mssko Wakil works with MOSAIC as a youth case manager and is actively engaged in youth empowerment and leadership. Mssko has helped newcomer youth from diverse cultural backgrounds in their settlement and integration process. During their first years of settlement in Canada, many newcomer youths face barriers and challenges which include limited knowledge about Canadian society, social expectations, support systems, language and cultural barriers, employment and housing issues, academic stressors, social isolation, immigration stress, and anxiety, etc.

Through MOSAIC's Leadership Training for youth, Mssko has helped youth to feel less isolated, build a strong sense of belonging, build confidence, and even become peer supporters and advocates for other newcomer youth. Many of the youth were helped to get back to school, gain access to colleges and universities, and find employment.

Mssko is an active advocate for refugee youth. She has participated in local and national level consultations and spoke about the challenges and opportunities for refugee youth in Canada.

Mssko has established a girls club as a safe space for young women, and a youth leaders' team, which consists of 20 youth who participate at local, provincial, and national level discussions and conferences such as the City of Richmond Diversity Symposium, showcasing the success stories of refugee youth and their contributions to the community. As a result, the youth leaders and the participants gained increased confidence and learned valuable skills such as advocacy, legal and human

rights concepts, negotiation skills, group facilitation, multiculturalism, diversity and inclusion, and a better understanding of systemic challenges and learned their rights and responsibilities within Canadian law.

Currently, Mssko is coordinating the MOSAIC-led, Canadian Council for Refugees (CCR) Youth Branch in BC where youth leaders share their experiences and provide peer support to other newcomer youth in BC and across Canada.

Mssko is a former refugee from Afghanistan, has a Bachelor of Laws (LLB) from Kyrgyz State Academy of Law. She currently attends UBC's Peter Allard School of Law and is working towards becoming a practicing lawyer in Canada. Mssko speaks seven languages and plans to learn French.