

ALBERTA JUSTICE

# 2023 Alberta Community Justice Awards

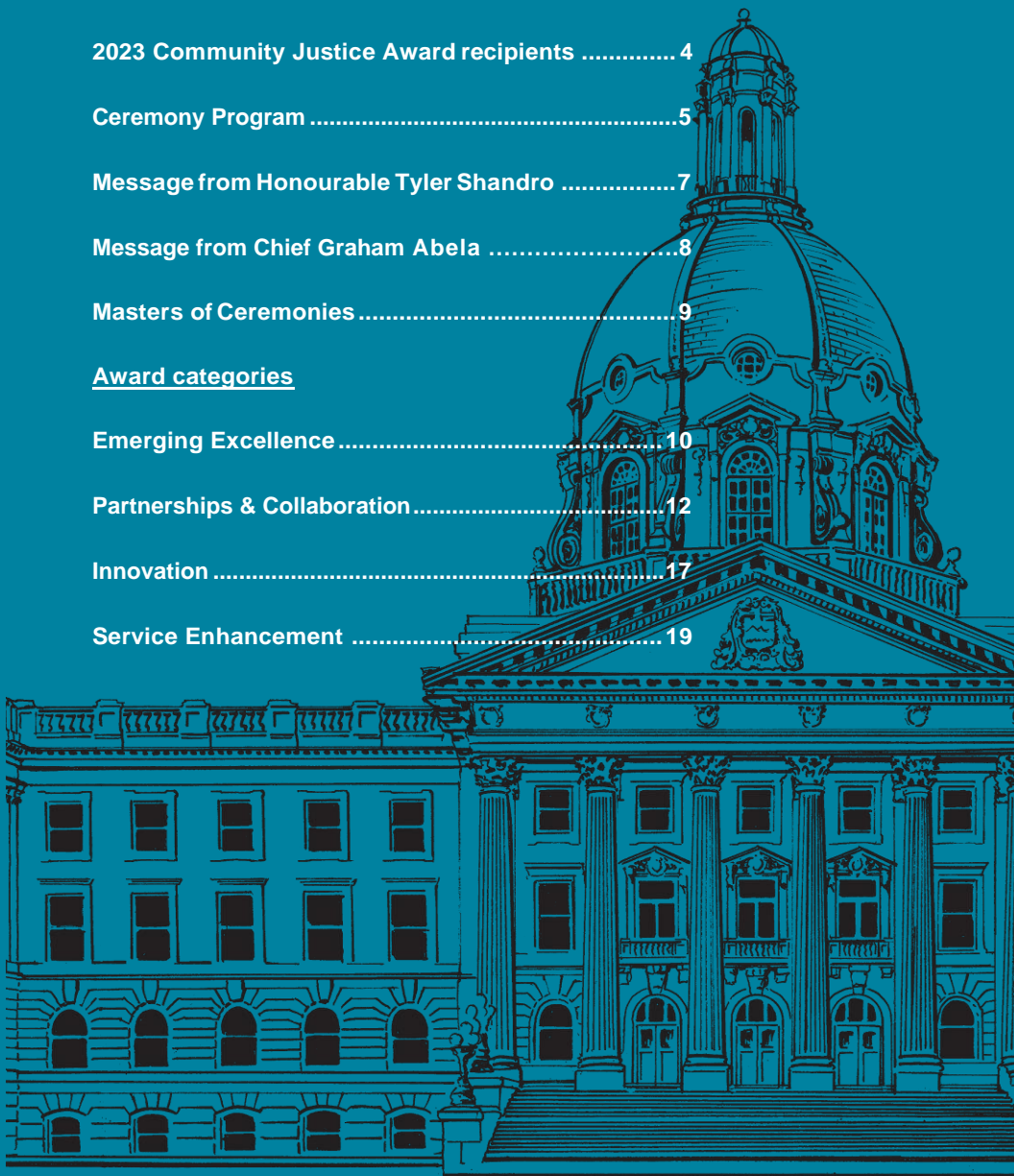
March 31, 2023

Parallel Church, Taber, AB



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## Awards

The Alberta Community Justice Awards recognize the outstanding contributions of individuals and organizations promoting community justice in the province. The award categories include Emerging Excellence, Partnerships and Collaboration, Innovation & Service Enhancement. Alberta Justice is co-hosting the ceremony with the Taber Police Service & Taber Community Action & Prevention Society.

### 2022 Past Alberta Community Justice Awards Recipients



**Community Mobilization** – African Canadian Civic Engagement Council



**Innovation** – Edmonton SHIFT Lab



**Innovation** – Islamic Family & Social Services Association



**Partnerships & Collaboration** – The Watch Project



**Partnerships & Collaboration** – Kathleen Quinn, Centre to End all Sexual Exploitation (CEASE)



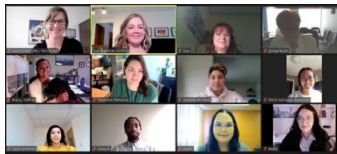
**Innovation** – Sarah Doolittle & Fletcher



**Innovation** – Edmonton Police HELP Unit



**Partnerships & Collaboration** – East Calgary Ambassador Program



**Service Enhancement** – Alberta Specialized Police & Court Support Network



**Leadership** – Debbie Leitch, Rural Red Deer Restorative Justice



**Leadership** – Jessica Buffalo, Legal Aid Alberta



**Partnerships & Collaboration** – China Sieger, Peace Regional Restorative Justice



**Service Enhancement** – Emergency Protection Order Program (EPOP)



## 2023 Community Justice Award recipients

### ■ Emerging Excellence

- ✦ Family Violence Prevention Centre
- ✦ Residents in Recovery Society

### ■ Partnerships and Collaboration

- ✦ Dean & Verna Hart – Red Deer/Lacombe Rural Crime Watch
- ✦ Zaki Hirabe – Edmonton Police Service Chief's Community Council
- ✦ Debra Tomlinson – Association of Alberta Sexual Assault Services (AASAS)
- ✦ Constable Julie-Ann Strilaiff – Peace River RCMP
- ✦ Alberta Hate Crimes Committee

### ■ Innovation

- ✦ Gar Gar – Youth Empowerment and Skills (YES) Centre
- ✦ The Canadian Mental Health Association, Alberta Southeast Region

### ■ Service Enhancement

- ✦ Rupert Arcand – Yellowhead Tribal Community Corrections Society (YTCSS)
- ✦ Kathy Parsons – Central Alberta Legal Clinic Foundation



# Ceremony Program

- **Welcome Music**

Violinist Hannah Van Hal

- **Entrance of Dignitaries & Recipients**

Dignitaries and Recipients escorted into ceremony by members of the Taber Police Service Honour Guard and Piper

- **Piper**

Regimental Pipe Major Chris Ward

- **Honour Guard**

Regimental Sergeant Major Constable Christopher Nguyen

- **Prayer**

Elder Patrick Black Plume

- **National Anthem**

Taber Christian School Choir

- **Welcome**

Grant Hunter – MLA Taber-Warner

- **Masters of Ceremonies**

Chief Graham Abela – Taber Police Service

Ken Holst – Taber Community Action & Prevention Society

- **Awards Presentations & Citations**

Grant Hunter – MLA Taber-Warner

Trevor Bergen – Executive Director of Business Transformation



## Program continued...

- **Honouring of Award Recipients**  
Filipino Dancers – FST Dance Group
- **Closing Address**  
Chief Graham Abela
- **Exit of Dignitaries & Award Recipients**  
Dignitaries and Recipients escorted out by Honour Guard and Piper
- **Reception to Follow**

**Special thank you to Parallel Church for the venue and catering, to Simple Elegance for the decorations and to Samuel Bennett for the photography.**



## Message from Honourable Tyler Shandro, QC



On behalf of Alberta's government, thank you for attending the 32<sup>nd</sup> annual Alberta Community Justice Awards. It is my honour to co-host these awards, which recognize individuals and organizations that have made outstanding contributions to prevent crime in our communities.

The determination of this year's recipients and nominees to keep Alberta communities safe must be celebrated and encouraged. Victims of sexual assault, individuals with mental health issues, victims of rural crime, and residents of Indigenous communities are just some of the groups who have benefited from their incredible work.



I am grateful to everyone in Alberta who strives to achieve the common goal of strong and secure communities. This can only be achieved by collectively working together and sharing our diverse experiences and knowledge.

I've always known that the biggest strength of this province is its people. These awards are a testament to this fact. Congratulations to all recipients and nominees.

**Tyler Shandro, KC**  
Minister of Justice

# Message from Chief Graham Abela

Taber Police Service

The Taber Police Service is proud to be the co-host for this year's Alberta Community Justice Awards.

The Alberta Community Justice Awards recognizes individuals and organizations throughout Alberta who have made significant contributions and commitments to the prevention of crime and the overall improvement of the lives of their friends, family, neighbours and entire community.



In partnership with Alberta Justice and on behalf of the Taber Police Service, I would like to express my gratitude to all this year's Alberta Community Justice Award recipients. The selected recipients we are acknowledging today have had a significant impact on communities across the province, both rural and urban. Today's celebration is a thank-you for making a difference and shaping a positive future for all of Alberta.

I would also like to acknowledge the contributions of our many partners in public safety: non-profit organizations, service providers, and volunteers. Taber Police Service values the collaboration with our partners to help us find ways to improve the way we serve Alberta.

On behalf of all police organizations in Alberta, and in partnership with the Alberta Justice, I want to congratulate and express our sincerest gratitude to the 2023 recipients and nominees.

**Chief Graham Abela**  
Taber Police Service



## 2023 Community Justice Awards

# Masters of Ceremonies



A Taberite for 47 years, **Dr. Graham Abela** has been a police officer for 29 years, and a Chief of Police since 2016. He is an executive member of the Alberta Association of Chiefs of Police (AACP), serves on the Board of Directors for the Alberta Law Enforcement Response Teams (ALERT) and the Criminal Intelligence Services of Alberta (CISA), is the Chair of Human Resources Committee of the AACP and the Co-Chair of the Leadership Committee of the Chinook Child and Youth Advisory Committee.

Dr. Abela is the recipient of the Alberta Crime Prevention Award in Leadership, the recipient of the Canadian Exemplary Police Service, Alberta Long Service, Alberta Emergency and Queens Jubilee, and Queens Platinum Jubilee medals. He was awarded the Spirit of Taber Award and was a University of Calgary Distinguished Alumnus at the 2013 Spring Convocation.

Graham has been married to his wife Angeline for almost 20 years and they have three children.

**Ken Holst** is currently the president of the Taber Community Action and Prevention Society (TCAPS) and has been for three years. Prior to that he was Chair of the Taber Municipal Police Commission for nine years. He is the owner and operator of several businesses in Taber and has always found a balance between business and community. Ken is a past member of the RCMP, serving his entire time in law enforcement in Saskatchewan.

Ken is married with four children and 13 grandchildren. He enjoys sports of all kinds and is an avid music listener and concertgoer.





## 2023 Community Justice Awards

# Family Violence Prevention Centre (FVPC)

Emerging Excellence Category

The Family Violence Prevention Centre (FVPC) is one of the units that operates under Edmonton John Howard Society. This unit is an integral part of Domestic Violence Justice Response in Alberta and its goal is to address gaps in the justice system by providing free and essential services to victims of family and intimate partner violence.

Their services include:

- Community Outreach Support: For those experiencing family violence seeking ongoing support and advocacy
- Furniture Program: Gently used furniture for individuals and families who have recently left a family violence situation
- Nalah Centre: Support and advocacy for victims of intimate partner violence in collaboration with community agencies and the Government of Alberta.
- Domestic Violence Complainant Assistance Program: Support and advocacy from trained court workers to assist in navigating the court processes related to domestic violence
- Partner Check Outreach Program: Support and services for the partners of individuals participating in treatment through Forensic Assessment and Community Services



Edmonton John Howard Society

## 2023 Community Justice Awards

# Residents in Recovery Society

Emerging Excellence Category

Residents in Recovery Society offers a continuum of care for substance-use disorder that includes pre-treatment and post-treatment, family reunification sober living, all of which go above and beyond a standard treatment regime. Residents in Recovery Society also operate an in-patient treatment program for mothers and children with Family Services involvement. They work with the individuals and families to personalize a care plan, which includes trauma-informed care, an intensive outpatient recovery program, transportation to/from appointments and court dates and equine-assisted learning. They offer many services that are key to successful rehabilitation which correlate with lower recidivism throughout the areas they serve.

Residents in Recovery provides a safe, abstinence-based and therapeutic home for those leaving incarceration and starting their recovery journey. Residents in Recovery accepts individuals directly from jail or remand, without any funding in place. Clients can be released on conditions from house arrest and ankle monitoring to curfew. Once in the program, a caseworker works with clients to get them on income support and meet with their community corrections officer. Residents in Recovery receives approximately 30-40 applications per month from the Edmonton Remand Centre.



RESIDENTS  
IN  
RECOVERY

## 2023 Community Justice Awards

### Dean and Verna Hart

Partnerships and Collaboration Category

Dean and Verna Hart take an active role in promoting and advocating for rural crime prevention in Alberta on a local and provincial level. Both Dean and Verna have been involved with rural crime watch since 1994 as volunteers of the Hanna Rangeland Rural Crime Watch Association and since 2016 with Red Deer /Lacombe Rural Crime Watch (RCW).



Dean joined the board of the Alberta Provincial Rural Crime Watch Association in 2014 and in 2015, Dean became chair of the website portfolio. In addition, Dean sits as a Director on the Red Deer/Lacombe Rural Crime Watch Association, the Police Advisory Committee partnership between Red Deer & Lacombe Counties and Blackfalds RCMP) and the Rural Red Deer Restorative Justice Committee.

Verna has been involved on the Alberta Provincial Rural Crime Watch Association board since 1998. Since 2002, Verna has held the treasurer position. From 2018 to 2021, Verna was a director of the Central Alberta Crime Prevention Centre.



## 2023 Community Justice Awards

# Zaki Hirabe – Edmonton Police Service Chief's Community Council

Partnerships and Collaboration Category

Zaki was the project manager at the Centre for Resilience Social Development (The RAJO Project), a marginalized youth empowerment project that integrates high-risk youth into schools, meaningful recreation, cultural activities, and employment programs while promoting a healthy environment both at home and school. Zaki is an advocate, mentor, and youth supporter who encourages social inclusion and reduce unhealthy behaviour.



He is the co-chair of the Chief's Community Council (CCC) with the Edmonton Police Services. Zaki has led the CCC in providing advice to EPS on how it updates policies that impact racialized communities. Through his leadership, the CCC has been able to identify gaps, missteps, and blind spots in policing that disproportionately impact racialized communities. Zaki leads a team of 16 public council members who are intersectionally connected to dozens of communities facing social inequities.

He is also a member of Edmonton Public School Board Equity Advisory Committee. As of February, Zaki has secured a new position as a success coach at M.E. Lazerte High School.

## 2023 Community Justice Awards

# Debra Tomlinson – Association of Alberta Sexual Assault Services (AASAS)

Partnerships and Collaboration Category

Debra Tomlinson's work as Chief Executive Officer of the Association of Alberta Sexual Assault Services (AASAS) involves creating and facilitating collaborative partnerships to reform the criminal justice response to sexual violence. Deb has fostered partnerships between community-based sexual assault centres, police, Crown prosecutors and health stakeholders in the criminal justice system.



These partnerships have led to increased reporting options for survivors of sexual assault and abuse, to advanced trauma-informed guidelines and training for criminal justice professionals, to the formation of multi-disciplinary teams that provide comprehensive and specialized support for victims, to enhanced access to specialized and community-based police and court support services in Alberta.



## 2023 Community Justice Awards

# Constable Julie-Ann Strilaiff – Peace River RCMP

Partnerships and Collaboration Category

Constable Julie-Ann Strilaiff was assigned to the Duncan's First Nation Community Tri-Partite Agreement (CTA) Indigenous Liaison position in March 2022. Since then, she has worked to establish strong relationships with community members, elected leaders and band administration to regularly communicate about matters of community importance or police-related concerns. Constable Strilaiff represents the detachment at community gatherings, started and maintains a youth night on the Nation, builds positive connections with the youth, and participates in powwows. She has worked on projects with an Elder to make a ribbon skirt for RCMP members to wear to ceremonies.



She started a multi-agency committee in Duncan's First Nation, which includes the RCMP, Victim Services, Stepping up Domestic Violence, Restorative Justice, and others. When domestic violence was identified as a priority this year, she developed connections with local domestic violence prevention programs and restorative justice to have deliver a presentation to address their needs. She encourages agencies to participate in Women's Group Nights to have the opportunity to connect with the Nation's women in an informal way. On top of all this, she also volunteers at the local soup kitchen.

## 2023 Community Justice Awards

# Alberta Hate Crimes Committee

Partnerships and Collaboration Category

The Alberta Hate Crimes Committee (AHCC) is a community-driven organization that was created in 2002 to respond to 9/11's impact on Muslim communities. The AHCC provides training, advice, and support to all Albertans in regards to hate crime and incidents. They have developed and been a contributor to many resources including developing the STOPHATEAB website. The site receives hate incident occurrences, responds those who are targeted and refers them to authorities and community organizations, and produces biannual reports, as well as *Supporting Victims of Hate Crimes and Incidents*, *Beyond Hate: A Resource Toolkit*, and *Coalitions Creating Equity (CCE) Response Model to Hate Incidents in Alberta*.



The AHCC enhances government and community responses by sustaining commitment to dialogue regarding response models that address diverse communities targeted by hate-motivated crimes. This enables Albertans to contribute to solutions through dialogue, problem-solving and community action, reducing gaps and avoiding duplication of efforts by encouraging collaboration and coordination within the broader community.

## 2023 Community Justice Awards

# Gar Gar – Youth Empowerment and Skills (YES) Centre

Innovation Category

Gar Gar is committed to the issue of youth gang involvement and vulnerability. He founded the Youth Empowerment and Skills (YES) Centre in response to increased involvement of South Sudanese young people and youths from other ethno-cultural communities in gang violence. The YES Centre aims to provide a safe, positive environment with meaningful programming for young people as a preventative measure. The strategy involves creating a safe hub where youth can meet for sports and recreational activities, building skills, accessing technology and connecting to other services.



Since poverty is another issue for many of the children and youth he serves, Gar provides support to struggling families by attending to urgent basic needs, such as food security. He works closely with the Calgary Police Diversity Unit on issues of concern including discrimination, connects with local schools to enhance inclusivity, and engages Calgary city councillors and provincial and federal constituencies to bring awareness of the issues faced by the communities he serves.

## 2023 Community Justice Awards

# The Canadian Mental Health Association, Alberta Southeast Region

Innovation Category

Lyndon Grunewald became Executive Director of the Canadian Mental Health Association during the initial stages and creation of the Community Assistance Response (CARE) Team.



With the growing recognition that police are not the appropriate service to manage low-risk calls that do not involve criminal activity or disruption to public, the CARE team was formed as a non-police response to low-risk mental health calls for service. The goal of the team is to provide support to individuals experiencing mental illness, addiction, and homelessness and assist them with system-navigation so they may efficiently access available programs in the Medicine Hat community.

## 2023 Community Justice Awards

# Rupert Arcand – Yellowhead Tribal Community Corrections Society (YTCCS)

Service Enhancement Category

Rupert Arcand has been a part of Yellowhead Tribal Community Corrections Society (YTCCS) since its inception in 1990. Rupert started with YTCCS as a Probation Officer, and in 1994 was appointed to the Executive Director role. Rupert initiated and leads the provision of culturally responsive strength-based services and supports to address the overrepresentation of Indigenous people in the justice system. Rupert has helped guide YTCCS's vision to achieve safe First Nations and healthy, respectful First Nation people.

For more than three decades, Rupert has ensured continuity in YTCCS' community corrections services by helping clients understand and meet sentencing and bail conditions, supporting true healing, and reducing recidivism. He has also expanded and enhanced community justice efforts by coordinating new partnerships, strengthening and building on existing relationships, and securing funding for existing and pilot programming.



## 2023 Community Justice Awards

# Kathy Parsons – Central Alberta Legal Clinic Foundation

Service Enhancement Category

Kathy has been involved with the Central Alberta Legal Clinic Foundation (CACLC) for 15 years. Over this time, she has contributed significantly to the growth of the agency. She is part of a provincial initiative to serve victims of human trafficking, sits on the board of the local John Howard Society and participates in local community initiatives in an interagency capacity and as an advocate to community development partnerships.

In 2010, she created the Tenant Advocacy Program to support people in navigating or mitigating legal matters such as evictions, disputes with the Residential Tenancy Dispute Resolution Service, filing complaints with Service Alberta, and supporting individuals who are facing barriers to safe, affordable housing. In 2020, Kathy worked to bring an Immigration advocate onto the staff who provides services for residency and citizenship applications, refugee applications,



sponsorship, visas and other information helpful to immigrants. This program also works with the legal team to provide information for clients who may have difficulty understanding the law in their new home. In 2021, Kathy worked to partner with post-secondary institutions to support social work practicum students and provide more holistic services to the clients served by the CACLC. This program offers a space for clients who are addressing legal matters, but whose needs also include court support, advocacy, non-legal paperwork, psychosocial supports, and crisis intervention. Kathy also launched the Affidavit Photo ID program, including a Trans ID clinic. These two programs provide autonomy and agency to clients, and can even serve as a crime prevention measure. These ID clinics have been a bridge for disenfranchised individuals seeking to access other programs for food, shelter, medical supports, safety and care.





**Congratulations to all the 2023  
Alberta Community Justice  
Award Recipients!**