

HUMAN RIGHTS AWARDS

Celebrating JHC's 25th anniversary



EVENT PROGRAM

SEPTEMBER 21, 2023

JOHN HUMPHREY CENTRE
for PEACE and HUMAN RIGHTS

2023 Human Rights Awards Program

Entrance of Her Honour, the Honourable Salma Lakhani, AOE, B.Sc., LLD (hon)
O Canada, Vice Regal Salute and piano music, played by *Donalee Inglis-Gorfer*



Greetings from Her Honour & Land Acknowledgement

Welcome from Noelle Jaipaul, Ceremony Host

Opening remarks from Megan Lukasewich, President of the Board

Greetings from Michael Janz, City of Edmonton Councillor



Presentation of Human Rights Champion Awards

Presentation of the Honourable Salma Lakhani Award



Presentation of Gerald L. Gall Award
Keynote Speaker



Thank you and Closing Remarks

Exit of Her Honour

Group Photo of Award Recipients



Reception - 1st and 2nd floor
Featuring music from *Sebastian Barrera* (2nd floor)



Award Recipients

HUMAN RIGHTS CHAMPIONS



Mark Brave Rock

Mark Brave Rock grew up in Moses Lake and went to school in Cardston. From humble beginnings he built a committed group that has been instrumental in upholding people's human rights, called SAGE Clan - SAGE stands for Serve, Assist, Guard and Engage, and is a Blackfoot led organization that started in October 2018. Along with a team of volunteers, the Clan patrols multiple times a week in the areas of Lethbridge, Alberta, that are frequented by people experiencing homelessness and addiction. Mark and SAGE Clan ensures they receive basic needs and supplies from donations they receive, while providing companionship and building relationships with folks. Through the work Mark and many volunteers are doing, SAGE Clan is trying to redefine what front line workers look like, destigmatizing homelessness and addiction, and utilizing a more natural approach that is rooted in dignity, connection, genuine care, and the shared experience of humanity.

Mark is driven by his own lived experience and the powerful call from his ancestors and the land to return to and utilize traditional ways, to remind those who are battling homelessness and addictions who they are and provide them hope and connection. As quoted by his nominator: "Mark's commitment to assisting people experiencing homelessness and addiction in Lethbridge has always come from a place - drawn from his own lived experience - that seeks primarily to give voice to people experiencing these issues, and not to speak for them". He treats people with dignity and respect and values their perspectives, making sure those he assists are included, valued, empowered to participate and feel they belong. Mark's quiet wisdom, steady presence, willingness to listen and learn, his generosity and humility is what has earned him a high degree of respect and admiration from the community and the volunteers he supports and mentors.



Vee Duncan (Aug. 29, 1987 – Sept. 11, 2023)

Vee Cee Duncan was a 36 year old, half-Secwépemc, half-Squamish Nation. He was born in Williams Lake, BC. His Mom is a survivor of St. Joseph's Residential School, and his Dad was murdered when Vee was 9 years old. He was raised in East Hastings and all over the Lower Mainland. He lived on Sugar Cane Reserve with his Grandma, who passed on traditional knowledge that would deeply affect Vee's ability to overcome the challenges that followed. Facing the impacts of intergenerational trauma, Vee left home at 17, and experienced addiction, incarceration, and homelessness for many years. In 2018 he was released from jail for the last time, and found a path to recovery at an Indigenous treatment centre. He spent the his last four years doing extensive therapy to heal from trauma and abuse.

In 2019, Vee started handing out water to people in need, practicing altruism through teachings of recovery and teachings of his people at Alkali Lake. In the summer of 2020, he volunteered at Peace Camp YEG, providing much-needed support to Edmonton's vulnerable populations. In March 2021, he walked from Calgary to Edmonton dragging a shopping cart to raise awareness about homelessness and Indigenous mental health, and founded the non-profit company Nékem: To Change Something to continue his community outreach and awareness-raising work.

Vee chose the name Nékem to honour the Secwépemc values about taking care of the community that he learned from his grandparents growing up. As a Managing Director, Vee led Nékem's efforts to dismantle harmful colonial biases in existing support services, build resilience and support within the houseless community, and mentor Indigenous Warriors to heal from intergenerational trauma and give back to the community. He built working partnerships with a wide range of non-profit organizations, business, and government agencies to strengthen the community ties necessary for this work. Since March 2021, Nékem has delivered thousands of meals, along with supplies related to harm reduction, menstruation, and winter needs. Vee drew strength and inspiration from connecting with Indigenous ceremony and traditional learning. He participated in Sundance and was a Pipe Carrier. He shared the knowledge that he knew to those that wanted to learn.

Know someone that should be nominated for a Human Rights Award? 2024 applications are open. See QR Code on the back of program.



Award Recipients

HUMAN RIGHTS CHAMPIONS



Sunpreet (Sunny) Singh Johal

Sunpreet (Sunny) Singh Johal is lauded by numerous supporters as a passionate advocate for social justice, combating hate crimes, and promoting anti-racism. He has spearheaded groundbreaking initiatives at the local level, dedicating himself tirelessly to empower and advocate for marginalized groups. His efforts revolve around raising awareness about human rights violations and implementing pragmatic solutions to address these concerns.

In their role as Interim-President and Co-Chair of the Communications Committee of the Alberta Hate Crimes Committee (AHCC), Sunny has taken the lead in combatting hate crimes and fostering a secure and inclusive society. As a Student Researcher at MacEwan University, Sunny's research has been centered on hate crimes and their far-reaching impact on communities. He has been actively involved in various projects, such as "A Profile of Islamophobia in Alberta" and "Rebels Yell: Analyzing Hateful Discourse on Rebel Media's Twitter and YouTube Platforms". Additionally, Sunny contributed to a resource guide for hate crime victims, titled "Supporting Victims of Hate Crime and Incidents," and conducted in-depth research on the lifecycle of a Hate Crime within the Canadian Judicial system.

Sunny's dedication to diversity and equity earned them recognition and the esteemed Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility Leaders Award for their exceptional contributions in fostering an environment of inclusivity and acceptance at MacEwan University. With an unwavering commitment to social equality, Sunny Johal continues to make significant strides in the fight against hate and discrimination.



Rehma Khan

Rehma is an incoming MSc in Public Health student at the University of Alberta. She is passionate about social justice, gender and health equity, and human rights. Her work is focused on promoting initiatives surrounding sexual and reproductive health advocacy, and improving health outcomes for immigrant women and girls. In Edmonton and on the campus community, she has led and supported many initiatives to promote gender inclusivity, such as serving as Operations and Events Chair for Women in Leadership, a student group at University of Alberta. In this role, Rehma was responsible for creation and execution of events, including a panel highlighting women leaders, a brunch to raise funds for a scholarship on campus for women leaders in financial need, a conference to engage Edmonton youth and connect them with community leaders, and a gala encouraging youth to become leaders of tomorrow. Rehma was also the President of the Students Invested in Health Association where she worked alongside a team to create local and international health promotion projects. Her passion for gender equality and health equity is also visible in her work with the Canadian Advisory of Woman Immigrants where she does work around sexual and reproductive health advocacy, research and education. Rehma and her team have conducted community-informed research that has been developed into inclusive and comprehensive sexual health curriculum, toolkits, workshops, resources and lesson plans for teachers, facilitators and educators to utilize that addresses topics such as anti-oppressive education, cultural sensitivity, stereotypes, healthy relationships, consent, and basics of sexual and reproductive health.



Marco Luciano

Marco Luciano is the director of the Alberta chapter of Migrante, a non-profit advocacy and self-help organization that recently celebrated its 10th Anniversary on September 9, 2023. Migrante have supported many non-status migrants to gain status in Canada and avoid deportation and has produced several research papers and policy submissions on these issues, all while working to address the immediate needs facing migrants and compatriots through referrals, advocacy and public campaigns. Marco has a wealth of knowledge and passion for advocating for the well-being, security and freedom of undocumented migrants and Newcomers. He is one of the founders of the National Committee of the Migrant Rights Network, founder and main leads of the International Migrants Alliance; he is also on the Alberta Labour History Board and Immigration and Settlement Partnership with the City of Edmonton. Marco was also one of the founding members of the Alberta Workers Association for Research and Education - AWARE, which helps undocumented and temporary visa holders. He has continuously led campaigns and advocated for undocumented migrants and temporary foreign workers for many years and met with leaders both provincially and federally to advocate for and push for changes on the issues of status, employment rights, deportation, human rights, and so much more. He encourages and centers youth and women to become leaders and gives them support, mentorship and space to do so. His nominators describe him as a force who often goes unrecognized for his efforts, as he does not like to be at the forefront, yet leads with kindness and courage, extending his heart and home to others. Marco ignites, strengthens, and motivates others to lead all while remaining humble for what he has accomplished and inspired.

Award Recipients

The Honourable Salma Lakhani Award for Leadership in Pluralism and Reconciliation



Adebayo Chris Katiiti

Adebayo is a Ugandan born Black transgender man widely recognized as the founder of Raricanow, an organization dedicated to supporting 2SQTGLBI+ refugees and newcomers in Canada. Adebayo came to Edmonton for the ILGA (International Lesbian Gay Association) swimming competition that happened in August 2016, following the traumatizing Ugandan police raids on the gay pride event. Since settling in Edmonton, Adebayo has dedicated himself to helping Newcomers navigate the labyrinth that is the refugee process and access services and support.

Driven by an unwavering dedication to eradicating all forms of oppression, Adebayo focuses particularly on combating anti-Black racism while advocating for mental health and social justice within gender-diverse communities. His commitment to these causes is rooted in the belief that true freedom can only be achieved when every individual is liberated. Adebayo is board member and QTBIPOC liaison at the LGBTIQ Wellness Center, a safety/wellness and cultural guide and Black Trans elder with Canadian Professional Association for Transgender Health, a key member of the Government of Alberta's Anti-Racism Advisory Council, and leader/organizer of Stonewall Canada Awards and Black Trans Lives Matter Movement rallies in Alberta. His work extends internationally as Adebayo also works with the transgender community in Jamaica through an organization called Transwave; he has also supported the work in refugee camps in Uganda, Zanzibar, and the transgender community within Kenya Kakuma Refugee Camp; Adebayo also works with the transgender community in Jamaica through an organization called Transwave.

Alongside his role as a passionate human rights activist, Adebayo is a multi-disciplinary artist, musician, and songwriter. He has written a play and produced a documentary to tell his story, titled "A Long Road to Peace" and working on developing other documentaries as well. He is a talented singer, going by the name KATIITI, releasing two singles in June 2022, and has released a Same Blood Album with 14 tracks this year. In addition to his activism and artistic pursuits, Adebayo has obtained certification as a Life Coach and is currently pursuing studies in Professional Counseling and Immigration and Citizenship Law. Through these endeavors, he aims to raise the bar on gender and racial equity, build inclusive and diverse spaces, and further empower marginalized communities and contribute to positive change on a systemic level.

Award Recipients

GERALD L. GALL AWARD



Professor Temitope Oriola

Temitope Oriola is professor of criminology/sociology and associate dean in the Faculty of Arts, University of Alberta. He is an exemplary scholar and public intellectual known for field-defining sociological research on terrorism and policing, leadership and service to his discipline, and commitment to mobilizing knowledge in support of informed public debate. Internationally, he is known for his work on terrorism studies. In Canada, Professor Oriola's scholarship focuses on policing and use of force and the implications for human rights, and is one of Canada's most sought-after public intellectuals on police reform.

A decorated researcher and teacher, Professor Oriola has received multiple national and international recognitions, including an Alexander von Humboldt Fellowship in Germany and a National Dorothy Killam Fellowship, one of only eight recipients in Canada. He has served as special adviser to the Government of Alberta on Police Act Review, providing recommendations that were passed into law through the Police Amendment Act, 2022; representing the broadest and most consequential set of changes to policing in Alberta in nearly 30 years. He is a member of the Board of Directors, Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences. Professor Oriola is also a recipient of the Governor General of Canada Academic Gold Medal (2011), Carnegie African

Diaspora Fellowship (2015 and 2017), Kathleen W. Klawe Prize for Excellence in Teaching (2020), the Confederation of Alberta Faculty Associations (CAFA) Distinguished Academic Award (2022), Arts Research Excellence Award (2022) and the Rosalind Smith Award (2023), among others.

On the recommendation of the Alberta Legislature in January 2023, Professor Oriola received the Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Medal for 'exceptional qualities and outstanding service to our province in the field of Advanced Education and Public Service'. Professor Oriola's academic and public engagements champion a healthy and harmonious relationship between police services and the communities they serve.

Special Thanks

The Lieutenant Governor's office, Their Honours for hosting and creation of the Honourable
Salma Lakhani Award for Leadership in Pluralism and Reconciliation
Councillor Michael Janz
Keynote Speaker- Professor Temitope Oriola
Entertainment by Sebastian Barrera and Donalee Inglis-Gorfer
Photography and Videography by Rare Earth Photographic Arts Outreach Foundation
The Human Rights Awards Committee
Community members who submitted nominations
Past award recipients and Honoured Guests
JHC Staff and Volunteers



Want to learn more about JHC?

We invite you to visit our website and explore our important work in the community; from youth leadership, education resource development, training and consultancy and adult education.

Sign up for our e-newsletter and stay informed on upcoming events and projects and ways you support and get involved!

www.jhcentre.org

We're on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter:

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Get in touch with us:

info@jhcentre.org

Know someone that should be nominated for a Human Rights Award?

2024 applications are open:

Nominate someone by scanning the QR Code:

