

**Fall 2016 – Summer 2017: Report to Area Chiefs**

## History of the Greater Victoria Police Diversity Advisory Committee

The need to form a regional police diversity advisory committee was identified and supported by two documents: (1) *Needs Assessment Report on the Diversity Unit of the Victoria Police Department* (2000) and (2) *Making Peace – the Maturing Partnership of Capital Region's Minorities and their Police* (1998). The latter of these reports was commissioned by the Capital Region Race Relations Association.

In 2001, the Greater Victoria Police Diversity Advisory Committee (GVPDAC) was established. It was the first committee of its kind to bring representatives from the region's municipal police departments (Victoria, Saanich, Central Saanich, Esquimalt and Oak Bay) and RCMP detachments (Sidney/North Saanich and West Shore) together with representatives from a cross-section of community organizations.

From 2001 through 2010, the GVPDAC was co-chaired by a succession of Victoria Police representatives, beginning with Sergeant Derek Chow. From 2011 until his retirement in mid-2013, Staff Sergeant Doug Newman of Saanich Police served as the GVPDAC Police co-chair. From September of 2013 to the present, the GVPDAC Police co-chair has been Staff Sergeant Scott Treble of Saanich Police. Moussa Magassa of the Victoria Francophone community is the Community co-chair.

## GVPDAC Membership – Police and Community Representatives

**Police representatives** on the GVPDAC, effective June 2017, were the following;

Victoria Police Department

Saanich Police Department

West Shore RCMP Detachment

Sidney/North Saanich RCMP Detachment

Central Saanich Police Service

Oak Bay Police Department

Military Police Unit Esquimalt

- Constable Rae Robirtis
- Sergeant Greg Holmes
- Inspector Penny Durrant
- Staff Sergeant Scott Treble (co-chair)
- Auxiliary Constable Randie Johal
- Auxiliary Constable Dallas Perryi
- Constable George Phipps
- Corporal Dan Cottingham
- Sergeant Davindar Dalep
- Constable Alex Omoding
- Leading Seaman Andree Noye



**Community representatives** on the GVPDAC, effective June 2017, were the following;

Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria (ICA)  
Victoria Immigrant & Refugee Centre Society (VIRCS)  
India Canada Cultural Association (ICCA)  
African Heritage Association of Vancouver Island (AHAVI)  
Victoria Pride Society  
Victoria Native Friendship Centre (VNFC)  
Ismaili Muslim Faith Community  
Victoria Francophone Society  
Jewish Federation of Victoria and Vancouver Island

- Steven Baileys
- Alvaro Moreno
- Gordy Dodd
- Dr. Lisa Gunderson
- ChrYs Tei
- Kim Rumley
- Taheera Ferguson
- Moussa Magassa (co-chair)
- Selma Linzer



Selma Linzer, Matthew Best Andree Noye, Dan Cottingham, Scott Treble, Chief Andy Brinton (Oak Bay PD), Rae Robirtis, Oak Bay Mayor Nils Jensen, ChrYs Tei, Randie Johal, Alex Omoding, Deputy Chief Ray Bernoties (Oak Bay PD), Steve Baileys, Davindar Dalep, Dallas Perry, Taheera Ferguson

## About Us

The GVPDAC brings together members of our diverse communities with members from all of the Greater Victoria police agencies, to provide a continuing dialogue on issues of mutual concern, to problem solve and to establish close cooperation. This helps to build and maintain trust and positive relationships, which broadens our collective knowledge about issues of concern within our diverse communities.

## Mission Statement

The Greater Victoria Police Diversity Advisory Committee mission is to serve as a voice between our diverse communities and the police and to work towards maintaining and building positive relations.

## Mandate

- To help police officers better understand the diverse cultures, value systems, unique perspectives and conditions and religious beliefs of the minority groups they serve
- To act as a consultative and advisory body to police agencies in the Greater Victoria area

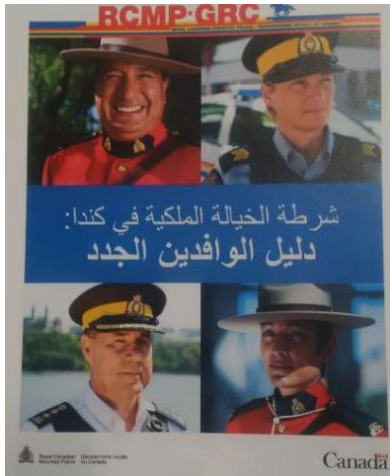


## Selected Highlights of Activities and Accomplishments

### Police Information Session with Arabic Interpreter– Masjid Al-Iman:

In August of 2016, the GVPDAC partnered with the Masjid Al-Iman, the ICA and VIRCS to plan and deliver a Police Information Session for Newcomers at the Mosque. Information posters in both Arabic and English were shared with community members, a number of whom were Syrian refugee newcomers to Greater Victoria. Introductory comments were provided by Imam Ismail Nur and Chief Del Manak of Victoria Police. The info session was presented by several police officers, with the assistance of an Arabic interpreter, to approximately forty (40) community members. Topics included, “The Role of Police, How to Contact Police, Interactions with Police, Relationship Violence, Hate Crimes and Crime Prevention.” The publicly-available national RCMP “Welcome Guide to Canada” publication was shared with those present, made available in both Arabic and English.

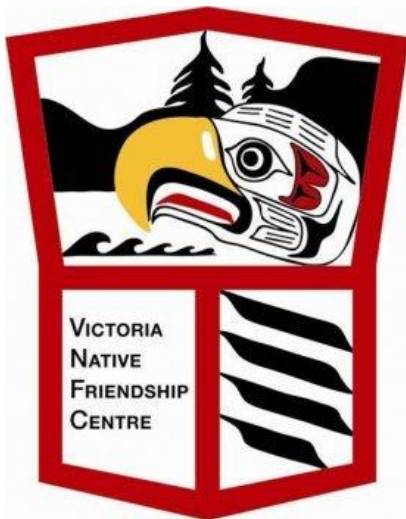
A Question & Answer session was held following the presentation, with many interesting questions asked by younger community members in particular. Recruiting material for local police forces was put on display for anyone who was interested. Food and refreshments were shared at the end of the afternoon session. Feedback from the audience and police participants was very positive. GVPDAC member and VIRCS representative Alvaro Moreno took the opportunity to advise the group that Victoria Police experts in Domestic Violence investigation were going to be providing a presentation the following week which was intended for the primary benefit of Syrian newcomers to Canada. A few months later in February of 2017, Victoria Police provided an additional presentation at the Masjid Al-Iman, focused on a youth audience and on social media awareness and protection training.



### **Dialogue and Dinner Event– Victoria Native Friendship Centre (VNFC):**

In November of 2016, a large police/community dialogue and dinner was hosted by the Victoria Native Friendship Centre. Approximately thirty (30) members of the Indigenous communities from Greater Victoria were present, including three Band Chiefs (with late regrets from two others). Approximately twenty-five (25) representatives from local police forces were present (West Shore RCMP, Victoria Police, Saanich Police, Island District RCMP, Oak Bay Police, Sidney/North Saanich RCMP, Central Saanich Police, West Shore RCMP and the MPU (Military Police Unit) Esquimalt).

A number of people had the opportunity to share difficult personal stories in relation to the historical and present-day difficulties that they, their family members and friends have had during contacts with the police. Positive stories about the police were also shared and several community members expressed appreciation for the police guests providing them with the opportunity to share their comments in a safe setting. Feedback sheets were circulated in order to receive comments about the benefits and challenges which are inherent in such a gathering. The VNFC's representative on the GVPDAC, Gina Robertson, emphasized that building and maintaining strong relationships with the police was very important for their communities and they were very eager to start planning for a follow-up dialogue sharing event.



**GVPDAC member Inspector Penny Durrant of Victoria Police Department**



## **LGBTQ2S Aboriginal Youth Conference – Victoria Native Friendship Centre (VNFC):**

In November of 2016, GVPDAC agencies participated in and staffed an information booth at this large 2<sup>nd</sup> annual youth conference at the VNFC. The focus of the Conference was, "...on informing Aboriginal LGBTQ2S youth that "they are loved" and acknowledged for who they are despite their sexual orientation and identify, and that services, supports and agencies are available to help them feel safe and cared about."<sup>1</sup> There were 167 youth registrations for the two day event. One of the presenters was Constable Niki Hodgkinson (now Sundher) of Saanich Police, who shared that she self-identified as Queer and has been advocating for LGBTQ2S rights for over ten years. Niki's interactive workshop focused on the message that everyone has challenges and she shared a variety of wellness and positive mentorship-centred goal-setting techniques to help individuals to thrive in their personal lives. Conference attendees were invited to put a 'star' sticker next to the booths they rated most highly and the GVPDAC booth was rated as #1 out of the 28 booths at the Conference.



<sup>1</sup> Conference Report and Evaluation: Aboriginal LGBTQ2S Youth Conference, Victoria BC Nov 25-26, 2016. Prepared by: Trans Care BC & Kahui Tautoko Consulting Ltd. For the Victoria Native Friendship Centre, December 2016 p.3.

## **GVPDAC Presentation – Pathways to Prosperity Partnership National Conference**

In December of 2016, GVPDAC member and ICA representative Steve Baileys attended this 4<sup>th</sup> annual national conference on immigration policy and practice. The conference theme was, “Shaping Immigration to Canada: Learning from the Past and a Vision for the Future.” During the plenary session, “Creating Welcoming Communities and Combating Racism and Discrimination”, Steve’s slide show and video presentation was entitled, “Improving Relationships between Police and our Diverse Communities: Greater Victoria Police Diversity Advisory Committee.” He received very positive feedback from delegates living all over the country, who felt that the GVPDAC sounded like a very unique, safe model to encourage personal dialogue and collaboration between people from diverse communities and police officers.

## **Black History Month Events with AHAVI (African Heritage Association of Vancouver Island)**

In February of 2017, AHAVI President Alfred Okot Ochen attended the monthly GVPDAC meeting as a guest and he provided a presentation on Black History Month. GVPDAC members participated in Black History Month events including the annual “Africa Celebrates” dinner and dance event hosted by AHAVI (African Heritage Association of Vancouver Island), who are represented by Dr. Lisa Gunderson on the GVPDAC.



S/Sgt. Scott Treble and Dr. Lisa Gunderson at “Africa Celebrates” event.



Photos with “Ace” were a hit with adults and children alike.

## **Dialogue Engagement Events – Compilation Document**

In March of 2017, Karen Hira (Vic PD practicum student employee) completed a compilation document for the GVPDAC which pulled together various themes and recommendations or strategies from the five large Police Community Engagement Events which were held during 2015 and 2016. These were large dialogue events facilitated and structured with the Global Café participation format and followed by a shared meal. These events were planned and delivered in partnership with the Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria (ICA), with the Masjid Al-Iman Mosque community, with the African Heritage Association of Vancouver Island (AHAVI), with the Sikh and Hindu communities, and with the Victoria Native Friendship Centre (VNFC). Through her compilation document, Karen later provided short term and long term recommendations to the Area Chiefs.



### **Sponsorship for YCI Camp (Youth for Change and Inclusion):**

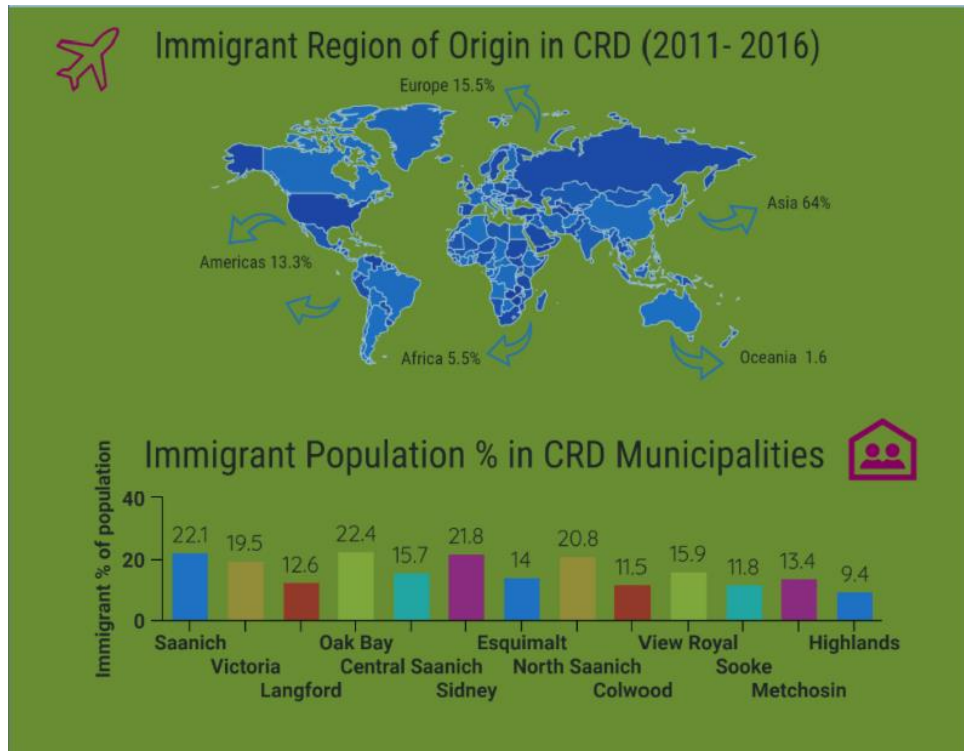
A request for full or partial sponsorship of six youths by the GVPDAC to attend the May 2017 YCI Camp was approved. Funding was allocated from the Surplus Police Camp Fund, which is a non-budgeted fund earmarked for events and activities promoting the partnership of local young people and police officers in areas which support diversity and inclusion. A total of \$240.00 was approved to fully sponsor three students from SJ Willis Education Centre, with another \$240.00 to provide 50% sponsorship for six immigrant or refugee students from Greater Victoria to attend. There were a total of 78 youth participants at this annual camp, including all three school districts in Greater Victoria. Included among the participants were immigrants/refugees from Argentina, Phillipines, China, South Africa, India, Iran, Syria, Turkey and other countries. GVPDAC co-chair Moussa Magassa was one of the featured speakers, on "Social Transformation & Peacebuilding" and Chief Constable Del Manak of Victoria Police gave a presentation on "Leadership.". The youth did personal action letters and feedback which demonstrated the significant impact and personal growth, with each school authoring action plans for implementation which will set the foundation for a vibrant and inclusive environment at their schools. One month after the YCI Camp, YCI founder Sgt. Paul Brookes of Victoria Police attended the monthly GVPDAC meeting with several of the youth participants, who provided a compelling summary of the positive impact that was experienced by all of the young people in attendance.





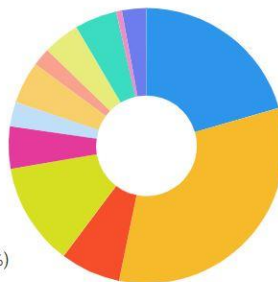
## Why have the GVPDAC?

As can be seen in the following statistics, there is a significant population of immigrants living in all thirteen municipalities within the Greater Victoria area. Through the GVPDAC and our relationships and partnerships with so many diversity-focused community agencies and organizations, we are able to provide one-on-one opportunities for many people to meet with police officers which they otherwise would be less likely to receive. In addition, individual or community concerns can be more effectively shared through the GVPDAC representatives with the Area Chiefs of all of the police agencies serving the people of this region.



## % Population of Visible Minority Groups in CRD (2016)

- South Asian (2.9%)
- Chinese (4.6%)
- Black (1.0%)
- Filipino (1.7%)
- Latin American (0.7%)
- Arab (0.4%)
- Southeast Asian (0.7%)
- West Asian (0.3%)
- Korean (0.6%)
- Japanese (0.7%)
- Unidentified Visible Minorities (0.1%)
- Multiple Visible Minorities (0.4%)



**Total visible minority population of the CRD is 50,310  
(14.1% of the total CRD population)**

While not all immigrants are of visible minority and vice-versa, recognizing minority groups can improve efforts to include minorities in services and program design and delivery.

**Top 3 non-official languages spoken at home in the CRD**

- 1 Cantonese**
- 2 Mandarin**
- 3 Tagalog**

10,830 CRD residents speak a language other than French or English at home.

### World Partnership Walk:

In May of 2017, the GVPDAC once again participated in the World Partnership Walk at the University of Victoria. Several thousand community members took part in the events which were part of a national program with the Aga Khan Foundation of Canada. Several dozen community agencies and organizations were represented and a good time was had by all!



Gordy Dodd (India Canada Cultural Association), Steve Baileys (ICA), "Ace" & Taheera Ferguson (Ismaili Muslim Faith Community)



### **GVPDAC Collaboration with UVic Master's Student:**

Michael Regis' University of Victoria Master of Dispute Resolution project on behalf of the GVPDAC, "Policing in Greater Victoria: A Study in Addressing the Gaps in Engaging Greater Victoria's Diverse Communities" was successfully defended at UVic in June of 2017, with GVPDAC co-chairs Moussa Magassa and S/Sgt. Scott Treble being invited to sit in with the academic panel.

The objective of his project was to identify the perceptions and experiences that Muslim, Aboriginal, African-Caribbean and Chinese residents of Greater Victoria have had in interacting with the police agencies of the region, and to provide recommendations which will improve trust and relationships.

The primary research question for his study was, How can the Greater Victoria Police Diversity Advisory Committee (GVPDAC) address gaps in engaging Greater Victoria's diverse communities?

Secondary questions were:

1. Which communities are underrepresented by the GVPDAC?
2. What communities should the GVPDAC be most interested in engaging with?
3. What strategies should be utilized to engage priority communities?

Community members who self-identified as Muslim, African-Caribbean, Chinese and Aboriginal participated on a voluntary basis and provided information about their personal experiences and impressions of police officers in Greater Victoria and of police officers in general. Mr. Regis later presented a summary of his findings and recommendations to the Area Chiefs and his full report can be found on the GVPDAC website.

### **Social Media - Twitter:**

In June 2017, the GVPDAC launched its first social media platform with its [@gvpdac](#) account on Twitter. This medium has proven to be a very effective way to share information and photos with the community, highlighting the events and activities of the GVPDAC



### **Website Development and Launch:**

The lack of a website and on-line public profile for the GVPDAC was recognized as a limiting factor which hampered the Committee's abilities to effectively engage and communicate with members of the community. An objective was established to launch a basic, clean and professional-looking website for the Committee. Budget funding was approved to fund website design, development and related host server costs, along with initial maintenance and operating expenses for the website. A sub-committee was established which worked with a vendor to begin the design of a website for the GVPDAC through the operating platform Squarespace.

In response to some inquiries from the Area Chiefs, a briefing note was prepared by the sub-committee which included information on the set-up and maintenance costs, a breakdown on the budget funding details, general management and security practices and options for the measurement of the website's effectiveness.

In June of 2017, the website [www.gvpdac.org](http://www.gvpdac.org) was launched which included a number of pages providing information about the purpose of the GVPDAC, its events, activities, members and agencies, a photo gallery, resources and reports and frequently asked questions. The successful establishment and continued operation of a website for the GVPDAC has provided the Committee with a modern communications platform with which to share general information, photographs, resources, reports and diversity links with the public.

## Victoria Pride Parade:

In July of 2017, the GVPDAC coordinated with Victoria Pride Society for the fourth consecutive time to include the participation of every Greater Victoria police agency in the Victoria Pride Parade. Regular and Auxiliary/Reserve members, support staff members, volunteers, family members and friends took part. As usual, strong representation was provided by many senior police managers from the various GVPDAC agencies. Gordy Dodd and other community members of the GVPDAC assisted as usual by participating in the Parade while carrying the GVPDAC banner. Police involvement in the Parade was not without some controversy, following similar concerns being raised in other communities across the country by some individuals and groups who did not support it. The President and Board of Victoria Pride Society welcomed the traditional participation of the local police agencies, under the umbrella of the GVPDAC, including having a police car from each of the local police forces. Public reaction to the dozens of walkers in the GVPDAC entry was overwhelmingly very positive and enthusiastic, with the thousands of mini-rainbow Pride flags distributed by our participants being eagerly snapped up by the enormous crowd. A large number of young persons from Youth for Change and Inclusion (YCI) and the Victoria Police Chiefs Youth Council (CYC) participated in the parade with the GVPDAC.



Supt. Jim Faulkner (Island District RCMP), Chief Andy Brinton (Oak Bay PD), Deputy Chief Scott Green (Saanich PD), Deputy Chief Derren Lench (Central Saanich Police Service) & Chief Del Manak (Victoria PD)



### **Reconciliation Mural by Indigenous Youths: Police Partnership with VNFC Community:**

There are many commendable police-community diversity initiatives every year that, while not involving specific GVPDAC-led participation, are worthy of mention. The reconciliation-themed mural painting partnership between Victoria Native Friendship Centre (VNFC) youth, Saanich Police, the District of Saanich is one such example. The initiative began with a police officer from Saanich making a successful grant application to the B.C. Civil Forfeiture Office. Funding was approved and a team of youth and young adult artists of Indigenous descent were selected to plan, design and complete the 50 foot mural at the intersection of Seaton Avenue and the Galloping Goose Trail. Over the course of several weeks in the summer of 2017, the team of artists produced an impactful mural with deep personal connections.



### **Police Station Visits and Tours**

Continuing on from earlier police station tours at Victoria Police which were led by Cst. Rae Robirtis of the GVPDAC, there were some new opportunities for this positive community engagement with newcomer immigrants and refugees. The photos below show a group of young men from Syria and other countries in the Middle East who visited the Saanich Police station for a talk, tour and a police car photo op.



### 2017 Budget:

In the fall of 2016, a proposed budget for the 2017 calendar year was submitted to the Area Chiefs group. The proposed budget total was \$9200, which was a reduction of \$500 from budget year 2016. Included in the submission was a new line item of \$1250 for cost-sharing of Administrative Assistant support costs, which had previously been absorbed by Saanich Police Department on its own. It was agreed by the Area Chiefs that no change was required, therefore with the elimination of this item the approved 2017 budget was \$7950 in total.

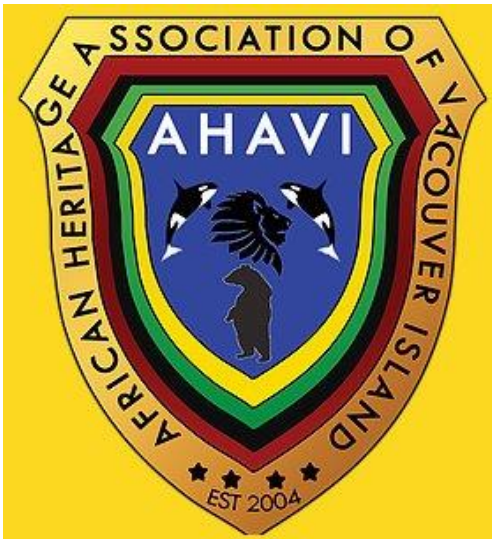
<b>Approved 2017 Budget</b>	
Police-Community Dialogue Engagement Events	\$2,700.00
Community Sponsorship	\$500.00
Event Registrations & Supplies	\$1,000.00
Youth Leadership Bursaries	\$2,100.00
Meetings	\$700.00
Strategic Planning	\$150.00
Website Development	\$800.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$7,950.00</b>

<b>2017 Budget Allocation</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>\$</b>
Central Saanich	4.34%	\$345.03
Oak Bay	4.92%	\$391.14
Saanich	28.27%	\$2,247.47
Victoria	36.61%	\$2,910.50
West Shore	15.60%	\$1,240.20
North Saanich	3.30%	\$262.35
Sidney	3.46%	\$275.07
Sooke	3.50%	\$278.25
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$7,950.00</b>

Staff Sergeant Scott Treble, GVPDAC co-chair  
March 6, 2019







Inter-Cultural  
Association  
of Greater Victoria



victoria pride society

