



# PRESENTERS & PRESENTATIONS

2026 ALBERTA HOMICIDE CONFERENCE

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## Presenters & Presentations

### 2026 Alberta Homicide Conference

This presenter information handout brings together the conference sessions in presentation order, with session summaries and biographies for the investigators, police leaders, and forensic professionals contributing to the program.

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### Lapu Lapu Mass Casualty Investigation

**Presented by** Detective Conrad Nemeth and A/Sergeant Kerry-Anne Horgan – Vancouver Police Department

### Session summary

On April 26, 2025, a mass casualty attack occurred during the Filipino Lapu-Lapu Day Festival in Vancouver when a vehicle was deliberately driven into a large crowd. The incident resulted in 11 fatalities, ranging in age from 5 to 65, and left dozens more injured. The event posed immediate and complex challenges for frontline responders, investigators, and incident commanders operating under extreme time pressure, public scrutiny, and emotional intensity.

In this session, members of the Vancouver Police Department will provide an

operational overview of the response and investigation, with a specific focus on lessons learned for critical incident commanders and investigative teams managing a large-scale, community-impacting event. Beyond tactical and investigative considerations, the presentation will highlight the often-overlooked wellness and mental health impacts on members tasked with leading, coordinating, and investigating mass casualty incidents.

## **Presenter biographies**



### **A/Sergeant Kerry-Anne Horgan**

Kerry-Anne holds a Master's degree in Public Health Management and previously served as a director for non-profit organizations in Africa, the United States, and Canada. She joined the Vancouver Police Department in 2011, beginning in Patrol before moving into investigative roles in the General, Special, and Homicide Investigation Units. She has led several high-profile investigations, including serving as a lead investigator during the 2025 Mass Casualty Incident response.

Kerry-Anne is the lead facilitator for the File Coordinator Course, an instructor on the Part VI Course, and an assessor for the Forensic Interview Course. Her awards include the Order of Merit, the 2023 Police Officer of the Year Award, and several commendations for leading complex investigations. She is also committed to community education, having developed a program that educates teens on sexual offences, and volunteers with the Women's Personal Safety Team.



### **Detective Conrad Nemeth**

Conrad joined the Vancouver Police Department in 2012 after finishing education from the University of Victoria in English and History, then a Masters of English Literature from the University of Wales. Initially working as a patrol officer in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside, in 2018, he joined the Major Crime Section as a detective, first the Robbery, Arson and Assault Unit, and in 2021, the Homicide Unit. Conrad has led significant homicide investigations including the apprehension of a hitman in rural Alberta connected to Vancouver's lower mainland gang conflict, as well as a lead investigator for the Lapu Lapu Mass Casualty investigation.

Conrad has instructed the VPD Forensic Interviewing course since 2021, and serves as a guest lecturer at Kwantlen university, where he speaks on police investigations. He is a long-time member of the VPD Public Safety Unit, the VPD Forensic Interview and Assistance Team, and the VPD Police Athletic League. Conrad has been the recipient of numerous chief and deputy commendations, primarily related to project-based policing initiatives targeting violent offenders. Outside of his professional life, Conrad lives in North Vancouver with his wife and young daughter, and enjoys travelling, snowboarding and spending time with his family.

### **Crystal Saunders Homicide**

**Presented by** Sergeant Tyler Hildahl – NCO i/c of RCMP “D” Division Historical Case Unit

## Session summary

On April 19, 2007, 24-year-old Crystal Saunders was found deceased in a water-filled ditch near St. Ambroise, Manitoba, after last being seen the previous evening in Winnipeg’s West End. The investigation determined she had been working in the sex trade at the time of her death and that she died by strangulation. Although investigators recovered an unknown male DNA profile, it did not initially meet the threshold for upload to the National DNA Data Bank, and the homicide remained unsolved for more than 16 years. Following a comprehensive review by Project DEVOTE and advances in forensic DNA technology, investigators identified Kevin Charles Queau as a viable suspect. Recognizing that DNA evidence alone would be insufficient to prove the circumstances of the homicide, the RCMP “K” Division Undercover Program, in partnership with investigators from the RCMP “D” Division Special Projects Team, undertook a complex, multi-jurisdictional undercover operation targeting a suspect living a wealthy lifestyle in downtown Vancouver. This presentation examines the integration of historical case review, forensic DNA, and undercover investigative techniques, while discussing some of the operational, logistical, and court related challenges encountered during a lengthy homicide investigation.

## Presenter biography



## **Sergeant Tyler Hildahl**

Sergeant Hildahl has served with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police for over 22 years. He began his policing career in the isolated northern Manitoba First Nation community of Oxford House (Bunibonibee Cree Nation) before transferring to Portage la Prairie, Manitoba, where he served in General Duty policing and the General Investigation Section.

In 2012, Sgt. Hildahl transferred to “D” Division Major Crime Services in Winnipeg, Manitoba where he dedicated most of his career to investigating major crimes, primarily homicides. During his tenure with Major Crime Services, he has served in the Major Crime Unit, Serious Crime Unit, the Interview Team, Project DEVOTE, the Special Projects Team, and the Historical Case Unit. Throughout his career he investigated and supervised a wide range of complex homicide investigations, including historical homicides.

Sgt. Hildahl currently serves as the NCO i/c of the “D” Division Historical Case Unit. In this role, he oversees investigations into unsolved homicides, leading investigators in applying contemporary investigative strategies, forensic advancements, and proactive investigative

## **Homicide of OPP Provincial Constable Greg Pierzchala**

**Presented by** Detective Inspector Chris Folz and Detective Inspector Randy Gaynor – Ontario Provincial Police

### **Session summary**

Provincial Constable Grzegorz (Greg) Pierzchala, a 28-year-old officer and member of the Haldimand County Detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police (O.P.P.), was tragically shot and killed in the line of duty on December 27, 2022. Following his death, the O.P.P. Criminal Investigation Branch initiated a comprehensive and coordinated investigation, including an extensive manhunt, to identify, apprehend, and prosecute those responsible for the murder of P/C Pierzchala.

### **Presenter biographies**

## **Detective Inspector Chris Folz**

Detective Inspector Chris Folz is a senior investigator with the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP), bringing over 28 years of policing experience to major crime investigations. He began his law enforcement career with the Hamilton Police Service before transferring to the OPP, where he has spent the past two decades working in Major Crime. In 2022, Detective Inspector Folz was appointed to the Criminal Investigations Branch, where he now provides leadership and strategic oversight on complex, high-profile investigations. His career reflects a deep commitment to investigative excellence, mentorship, and public safety.

## **Detective Inspector Randy Gaynor**

Detective Inspector Randy Gaynor is a senior case manager with the Ontario Provincial Police.

Detective Inspector Randy Gaynor has been a police officer for 36 years with the OPP spending 29 years conducting and case managing criminal investigations. Randy worked as a Detective Constable at the Kirkland Lake Detachment until being promoted to Detective Sergeant in 2002, Northeast Region, deployed to the East Algoma Detachment. In 2009, Randy was promoted to Detective Staff Sergeant, Organized Crime Enforcement Bureau, Sudbury. In 2012, Randy transferred to West Region where he where he was responsible of the supervision of six crime units and the Regional Support Team. In 2017, Randy was promoted to the rank of Detective Inspector, Criminal Investigations Branch, where he remains today providing leadership and strategic oversight on complex, high-profile investigations. His career reflects a deep commitment to investigative excellence, mentorship, and public safety.

# **Post-Conviction Interviews: Lessons Learned**

**Presented by** Sergeant Christian Reister – RCMP

## **Presenter biography**

### **Sergeant Christian Reister – RCMP**

Sergeant Christian Reister is a 25-year veteran of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), with the last 10 years dedicated to full-time major crime and

homicide suspect interviewing. Throughout his career, he has conducted more than 300 homicide suspect interviews and has developed extensive expertise in advanced investigative interviewing techniques. Recognized internationally for his experience in the field, Sgt. Reister has delivered interview and interrogation training and presentations to law enforcement, internationally and locally. His work focuses on evidence-based interviewing practices, investigative strategy, hostile witness interviews, defending the confession in court and obtaining reliable information in serious criminal investigations. Drawing on decades of operational experience, Sgt. Reister continues to support major crime investigations while sharing practical insights and lessons learned with policing professionals across jurisdictions

## **R v Okeymow – From Investigation to Conviction**

**Presented by** Staff Sergeant Eric Stewart, Staff Sergeant Erik Bjarnson, Constable Michael Chafe and Crown Prosecutor Adam Garrett

### **Session summary**

This session examines R v Okeymow, the landmark Alberta prosecution in which a firearms trafficker was convicted of manslaughter for the deaths of two Edmonton Police Service officers; Constables Travis Jordan and Brett Ryan, and a civilian. These deaths caused not by his own hand, but by a rifle he unlawfully trafficked to a 16-year-old six weeks earlier. Presenters will walk through the coordinated multi-unit investigation named Project WOEFUL, including the ballistic match that first linked two crime scenes, digital evidence recovery from seized devices, undercover operations, and the biometric warrant used to unlock the accused's phone. The session highlights how three separately initiated files, firearms trafficking, homicide, and attempted murder were unified into a single evidentiary record.

The session progresses to cover off the legal framework and litigation strategy that secured conviction on all 17 counts. Attendees will explore the Crown's approach to proving the elements of the offences and trial decisions that shaped the outcome. The decision establishes significant precedent on the criminal liability of those who illegally sell firearms for the downstream violence their weapons cause, a development with implications for police investigators, Crown prosecutors, and firearms enforcement across Canada.

## Presenter biographies



### **Staff Sergeant Eric Stewart – Edmonton Police Service**

Eric Stewart is a Staff Sergeant with the Edmonton Police Service currently serving in the Investigations Branch. With 24 years of policing experience, Eric has built an extensive investigative background, including 15 years in Organized Crime, where he spent the last eight years specializing in firearms investigations. Throughout his career, he has led and supported complex investigations targeting organized crime groups, firearms trafficking, violent offenders, and other serious criminal activity. In his current role, Eric oversees the Investigative Response Team, responsible for complex priority crime investigations, the Institutional Investigation Unit, which manages investigations arising from federal and provincial correctional institutions, and the Arson Unit.



### **Staff Sergeant Erik Bjarnson – Edmonton Police Service**

Erik Bjarnason is a Staff Sergeant with the Edmonton Police Service, currently serving in the Digital Forensic Section overseeing the Forensic Video Unit and Technological Crime Units. With 19 years' experience Erik has served in a variety of investigative and operational roles with the Edmonton Police Service, including patrol, community policing, organized crime and drug enforcement, firearms investigations, child exploitation investigations, and digital forensics. He spent several years investigating organized crime, drug trafficking, firearms offences, and shooting investigations, leading complex projects involving covert and overt investigative techniques. Following a period with the Northern Alberta Internet Child Exploitation Unit, he investigated child exploitation offences and developed expertise in digital evidence.

### **Constable Michael Chafe – Edmonton Police Service**

Michael Chafe is a Constable with the Edmonton Police Service, currently serving in the Firearms Investigation Unit within the Organized Crime Branch. With 13 years' experience, Mike has extensive expertise in complex Major Case Management investigations, with a focus on organized crime-related shootings, firearms trafficking, and illicit firearms manufacturing. Michael has played a key role in regional and national investigations targeting criminal networks involved in firearms trafficking and the production of firearms, including emerging threats associated with 3D-printed and privately manufactured firearms.



### **Adam GARRETT – Senior Counsel Alberta's Appeals and Specialized Prosecutions Office**

Adam Garrett is Senior Counsel, Firearms Prosecutions with Alberta's Appeals and Specialized Prosecutions Office and Team Lead of the Firearms Crime Group. Since becoming Alberta's first Firearms Prosecutions Counsel in 2019, he has led key provincial and national firearms prosecution initiatives, chaired multiple firearms working groups, and authored the annual Firearms Prosecutions Guidebook. Called to the bar in 2009, Adam joined the Alberta Crown Prosecution Service in 2010 and has extensive experience prosecuting complex firearms, organized crime, homicide, terrorism, firearms trafficking, and 3D-printed firearms cases.

## **The Murders of Darwin Tirado-Sanchez and Damon Kellum**

**Presented by** Sergeant Matthew Bouch and Detective Denise Montalvo of the Chicago Police Department, Area 3 Detective Division

### **Session summary**

Detectives from Area 3 responded to a homicide at 767 W. Waveland, where Darwin Tirado-Sanchez was fatally shot while seated in a Hyundai Sonata. The investigation determined that Marquese Hill and Marshawn Sanders approached the vehicle, Sanders fired the fatal shot, and both offenders fled in the stolen

Hyundai.

Approximately 40 minutes later, Area 1 Detectives responded to a second homicide at 3478 S. Lake Park Ave. Detectives learned Hill and Sanders arrived in the stolen Hyundai, approached Damon Kellum in his Nissan Altima, and Hill fatally shot him. The offenders then stole Kellum's Nissan and fled.

Hill and Sanders subsequently attempted an armed vehicular hijacking of Steven Bates at a BP station at 4248 S. Wentworth Ave. After unsuccessfully attempting to steal Bates' Lexus, they fled in the stolen Nissan. They later approached Kokoh Lewis, a CTA employee, at 8652 S. Lafayette Ave, forced him from his Chevy Malibu at gunpoint, and stole the vehicle, which was later abandoned in Gary, Indiana.

Detectives used POD cameras, LPR technology, facial recognition, cellular and GPS data, CTA surveillance, and private video footage to track the offenders throughout the offenses. Multiple witnesses also identified both Hill and Sanders during the crime spree.

## **Presenter biographies**

### **Detective Denise Montalvo - Chicago Police Department, Area 3 Detective Division - Violent Crimes**

Det. Montalvo joined the Chicago Police Department in 2012, working patrol and as part of a tactical team on the west side of Chicago. In 2016, Detective Montalvo was assigned to Gang Investigations, where she worked as part of a team conducting long-term state and federal investigations. In 2022, she was promoted to Detective. Detective Montalvo was assigned to work violent crimes in the Area Three Detective Division, before being selected to work homicides in 2023. In 2024, Detective Montalvo was selected to work as part of the Chicago Police Departments newly conceived Homicide Team program.

### **Sergeant Matthew Bouch - Chicago Police Department, Area 3 Detective Division - Violent Crimes**

Sergeant Bouch joined the Chicago Police Department in 2002, working patrol and as part of a tactical team on the west side of Chicago. In 2017, Sergeant Bouch was promoted to Detective and assigned to work violent crimes and then Homicides in the Area North Detective Division. In 2020, Sergeant Bouch

transferred to the Area Four Detective Division, as a Detective, working as part of team conducting homicide investigations. In 2022, he was promoted to Sergeant and assigned as a Homicide Sergeant over-seeing an eight-man homicide team in the Area Five Detective Division. In 2023, Sergeant Bouch transferred to the Area Three Detective Division, and was assigned as a violent crimes supervisor. In 2024, Sergeant Bouch was selected to be a Homicide Sergeant, supervising an eight-man team, as part of the Chicago Police Departments newly conceived Homicide Teams.

## **From Scene to Autopsy: The Pulchaski and Poole Death Investigations**

**Presented by** Detective Patrick Campeau of the Edmonton Police Service and Doctor Cecilia WU of the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner

### **Case 1 summary**

This presentation reviews the death investigation of a 49-year-old woman who was found deceased in her residence with a knife embedded in her chest. Although the circumstances initially suggested a possible suicide, forensic examination revealed that the knife's orientation at the scene was inconsistent with the wound patterns identified on the skin, sternum, and heart. Independent toolmark analysis confirmed that the fatal stab wound was inflicted with the knife oriented opposite to the position in which it was found. These findings made self-infliction highly improbable and supported the conclusion that the victim was stabbed by another individual, who subsequently reinserted the knife to alter the scene. Additional investigative findings, including scene evidence and relationship dynamics, further supported the classification of the death as a homicide.

### **Case 2 summary**

This presentation examines the death of a 5-week-old infant who was found unresponsive by his father in the early morning hours. While the history provided suggested a possible fall from a couch, hospital investigations identified findings that were inconsistent with the reported mechanism of injury. Diagnostic imaging revealed significant intracranial hemorrhage requiring emergency neurosurgical

intervention, while a skeletal survey and ophthalmologic examination identified additional injuries, including fractures and retinal hemorrhages. Despite intensive medical treatment, the infant progressed to brain death and life-sustaining measures were withdrawn. The case highlights the forensic and investigative assessment of suspected non-accidental trauma in an infant, including the integration of clinical, radiologic, and autopsy findings in determining the cause and manner of death.

## **Presenter biographies**

### **Detective Patrick Campeau – Edmonton Police Service**

Detective Patrick Campeau joined the Edmonton Police Service in 2006 and has served in patrol, drug enforcement, organized crime, and homicide investigations throughout his career. After working in Northeast and West Division patrol, he served with the Patrol Support Team and later the Edmonton Drug and Gang Enforcement Unit, developing extensive experience in complex investigations. Promoted in 2016, Detective Campeau continued as a drug expert until transferring to the Homicide Section in 2022, where he currently serves as a Detective. He has participated in seven Part VI investigations, including two as Primary Investigator, and has led a Mr. Big investigation as Primary Investigator and has been the affiant of one Part VI authorization. Over the course of his homicide career, Detective Campeau has assisted in more than 90 homicide investigations, serving as Primary Investigator on 14 files, File Coordinator on 16 files, and Affiant on 7 files.

### **Doctor Cecilia Wu – Office of the Chief Medical Examiner**

Dr. Cecilia Wu is a board certified anatomic, forensic and cardiovascular pathologist in both Canada and the United States. She earned her medical doctorate from the University of Washington in Seattle Washington. She completed her residency in clinical and anatomic pathology and a fellowship in forensic pathology at University of New Mexico in Albuquerque New Mexico. Additionally, she also completed a fellowship in cardiovascular pathology at Mayo Clinic at Rochester Minnesota. She has served as the assistant chief medical examiner at the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner in Edmonton Alberta for the past 11 years. She is appointed as a clinical professor at the University of Alberta School of Medicine and has served as the program director for the forensic pathology subspecialty training program. When time allows, she

reviews cases on a pro bono basis for The Innocence Project based in New York City.