



## Media Release

### International Association of Women Police – Community Service Award, 2019 Detective Constables Sandy Avelar and Anisha Parhar, Vancouver Police, BC, Canada.

Detective constables Avelar and Parhar began working together in 2016 as part of the Vancouver Police Department's gang unit, fulfilling a desire they both had to help women involved in organized crime. In 2017 they began an anti-gang initiative 'Her Time' which is an outreach and prevention initiative aimed at addressing a lack of education and access to resources for females involved in, or vulnerable to, organized crime.

'Her Time' is designed to prevent girls from entering and help those already in, gangs, by utilizing the experiences of women who have lived through and survived gang life. 'Her Time' educates adolescent girls and young women about the dangers of becoming involved in organised crime.

This ground breaking initiative is run by the detectives in their own time and external funding has been sourced by them to ensure its establishment and sustainability. To date they have engaged with over 5000 students, effectively rescued 9 women from the lifestyle and provide mentoring for 4 girls between the ages of 12 and 15 years. Plans to expand 'Her Time' throughout 2019 are progressing with plans to expand into more schools and developing a partnership with Crime Stoppers BC as well as local bars through the Vancouver Police 'Bar Watch' program in order to raise awareness of the issue.

Another important aspect of the initiative is providing a direct line of communication to the detectives for women already involved in organised crime, so an exit strategy can be designed. 'Her Time' has access to services and agencies that are able to assist the women to implement their exit strategy.

Organised Crime is an international problem, and in this age of globalization its reach and impact are providing ever increasing challenges to policing across all communities. 'Her Time' has been recognised internationally as good practice with detectives Avelar and Parhar delivering presentations to United States institutions and conferences.

Detective Constables Avelar and Parhar will be honoured at a formal luncheon during the IAWP's 57<sup>th</sup> Annual Training Conference due to take place between 23<sup>rd</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> September in Anchorage, Alaska, USA.

IAWP President Deborah Friedl, "For the past 104 years, IAWP has promoted the role of women in policing. IAWP champions change to enable women to play their full part in delivering an inclusive service to their local communities. Without our annual recognition programme many phenomenal women and men would go unrecognized for their efforts".

The **Mission** of the IAWP is: To strengthen, unite and raise the capacity of women in policing internationally. The **Vision**: IAWP envisions a world where police reflect the diversity of the communities they serve and where human rights are protected.

For more information about IAWP visit [www.iawp.org](http://www.iawp.org)

For further information on the 2019 recognition programme, permissions or award sponsorship opportunities please contact Jane Townsley, [executivedirector@iawp.org](mailto:executivedirector@iawp.org)