

6th Annual
Opening the Door
to Mental Health
Symposium

**SPEAKERS AND
PLANNING TEAM BIOS**

Speakers, presenters, and panelists



Michael Ainger

Mike is a 16 year employee of the Correctional Service of Canada. While working at Beaver Creek Institution, Mike assumed a variety of roles (Correctional Officer, Crisis Negotiator, Emergency Response Team member, Security Maintenance Officer, Correctional Training Officer, and Correctional Manager. Additionally, Mike gained experience with the Union of Canadian Correctional Officers, where he contributed on local, regional and national level initiatives, and also as a union trainer.

He also assumed roles with CSC's Learning & Development as a Training Officer with the Correctional Learning and Development Centre, and at the National Satellite Training Academy. When possible, Mike continues to volunteer to deliver training sessions, particularly the New Employee Orientation Program, which allows him the opportunity to meet new staff as they begin their careers with CSC.

Most recently, Mike has worked within the Workplace Wellness and Employee Wellbeing Directorate. In this area, Mike worked on the foundation team for CSC's Workplace Health Management Unit and as a Regional Return to Work Advisor on various occasions. Currently, Mike assumes the role of National Manager, Employee Mental Health Unit, and endeavours to apply his experience towards enabling better outcomes for staff throughout the organization.



Dale Allen

Dale is a highly respected Leadership & Life Coach known for her expertise and contributions to personal and professional development. As a co-founder of ConsciousLead, Dale has spearheaded programs that empower individuals to unleash their potential and create positive change. Drawing on her background as a Non-violent Communication Practitioner,

Dale recognizes the importance of empathetic communication and work-life relationships in promoting growth and well-being. She believes true success comes from aligning one's soul with their professional endeavors, rejecting the notion that authenticity must be sacrificed in business.

Dale's journey into coaching began when she discovered her innate ability to support and empower others. Working with diverse populations instilled a profound understanding of human potential and the importance of meaningful connections. Dale's commitment to fostering conscious leadership led her to study neuroscience and neuro leadership.

Dale's coaching practice includes trauma-informed approaches, helping clients navigate challenges with resilience and authenticity. With Dale's guidance, clients embark on a journey of self-discovery and alignment, unleashing their true potential and cultivating a deep sense of purpose. Her unwavering commitment to helping individuals and organizations thrive has earned her accolades as a trusted advisor and catalyst for positive change.

Taylor Aplas

As an associate clinical counsellor, certified meditation guide, life coach, and workshop facilitator, Taylor is passionate about holding space for others to connect, heal, learn, and grow. She is driven by her mission to help people; through deep listening, collaboration, education, and honouring the complexities of the human experience. Taylor spent nearly a decade working in the tech industry, where she witnessed the impact of fast-paced and performance-driven environments on individuals' physical and mental health. Taylor's goal is to increase the awareness and accessibility of tools that help us to regulate and nourish our nervous systems, build our resiliency, and ultimately, live more full and meaningful lives. Taylor loves to host workshops for leaders and teams around topics such as stress management, wellbeing in the workplace, how to have difficult conversations, and more. Learn more and connect with Taylor here: <https://tayloraplas.com/>





Pierre Battah

Pierre Battah is an award-winning author and workplace leadership specialist. He is a long-time workplace columnist for CBC/Radio-Canada, a TEDx presenter, a former senior manager in HR and was previously an associate professor in management at Mount Allison University. Pierre holds an MBA and professional designations in HR, management consulting and as a professional speaker.

His book *Humanity at Work, Leading for Better Relationships and Results* won gold at the 2020 Nautilus Book Awards in the US. He is the new executive in residence and moderator at the University of New Brunswick's Wallace McCain Institute for Entrepreneurial Leadership and he recently received Rotary International's highest distinction, the Paul Harris Award for outstanding contribution to the community.

He lives with his wife Gabrielle in Moncton, New Brunswick where he performs on the double bass with several jazz and classical music ensembles.

Paul Bissonnette

Paul finds the sound of the gong to be like hearing the vibration of the Universe. Uni being one and verse being a string of feelings expressed together as a tone. Paul was introduced to the gong and singing bowls in 2004 by Grand Gongmaster Don Conreaux. After his first experience with this vibrational energy, Paul was Inspired and began playing and singing gong. As Don would say this is "The Way of the Gong." Paul has studied and continues to study Shamanism and energy medicine. There are many forms and styles of Energy medicine. At present Paul follows the medicine wheel teachings by Sun Bear. His personal mentors and friends are Foster Perry and Kristos Tsompanelis of The Golden Hummingbird. Shamanic experiences and teachings will continue for all of Paul's life. By combining the teachings of the Gong and Shamanism Paul has created a unique Vibrational experience. Paul is known as a Shamanic Gongmaster, a certified transformational breath facilitator/ teacher trainer and energy medicine Healer. Paul believes that by combining breath with the gong overtones and belief, anything is possible.





Tamara Davidson

[Photo credit: Georgie Lawson]

Tamara Davidson is a member of the Haida Nation and her Haida name is Laanas. She has worked for over 27 years in the federal public service with Indigenous Services Canada, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve, Haida Heritage Site and National Marine Conservation Area Reserve and PacifiCan. She has worked in the areas of land stewardship, strategic planning, community planning, tourism and indigenous public service. She is currently the Manager of the Strengthening Public Service Institutions Initiative under the BC Federal Council.

Tamara has previously served on the First People's Council and First People's Foundation boards. She is a current member on the Coast Opportunity Fund board and serves as the elected representative for Vancouver region on the Council of the Haida Nation.

Allan Dorff

Allan has been the Director of the Coastal & Central BC Tax Services Office of the Canada Revenue Agency (the "Agency") since April 2022, where he is accountable for the delivery of Income Tax Audit, Revenue Collections, GST/HST Audit, and Legislative Policy and Regulatory Affairs programs.

Allan is a graduate of the Agency's Middle Management Development Program and DirEXion Leadership Program, holds a Masters of Business Administration from Simon Fraser University, and is a Chartered Professional Accountant.

Allan grew up in Northern Ontario and is a proud member of Wahgoshig First Nation. He now resides in British Columbia and is raising twin daughters with his wife, Nabila.





David Didluck

David joined the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada in support of the Reconciliation agenda in response to the recent Government of Canada commitments on reconciliation. For nearly 25 years, he has worked consistently to eliminate socio-economic gaps facing Indigenous communities and build stronger Crown-Aboriginal relationships across Ontario and British Columbia. David spent 5 years working with Vancouver Island and coastal First Nations as a lands and self-government Negotiator for the Federal Treaty Negotiation Office of the former Department of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada.

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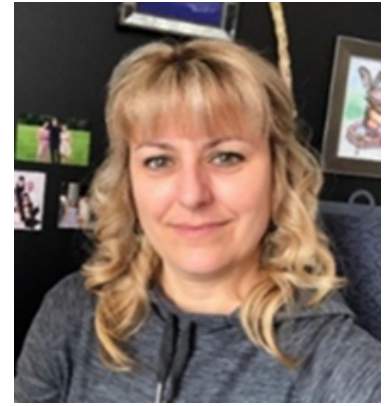
David spent 12 years working for the Province of Ontario - as Assistant Deputy Minister, Aboriginal Relations and Ministry Partnerships, and as Assistant Deputy Minister, Negotiations and Reconciliation - and helped create the province's first stand-alone ministry dedicated to Indigenous reconciliation. David also worked for the Ontario Ministry of Infrastructure as Director, Partnerships and Consultation, and with the Ontario Ministry of the Attorney General as Director, Corporate Policy and Tribunal Relations, and then as Director of Aboriginal Justice.

Most recently, David spent two years working with Indigenous Services Canada: firstly as Associate Director General, Regional Operations, Regional Infrastructure Delivery Branch, and finally as Associate Regional Director General, Ontario Region. David holds a Masters of Arts from the University of British Columbia, an Honours Bachelors of Arts from the University of Toronto, and conflict resolution accreditations from the Justice Institute of BC.

Having grown up as a kid on Vancouver Island, David's love of the outdoors extends to his family. On weekends you will be sure to find the Didluck's exploring local communities, swimming, biking or walking a local trail.



Michèle Elliott



Prior to joining the Public Service, Michèle was a schoolteacher for over 10 years. She then made the move to the Federal Government. Michèle successfully landed a supervisory role at First Nations and Inuit Health Branch (FNIHB) at Health Canada. In the Indigenous Programming Team, she was responsible for all of the Indigenous developmental programs, the cultural programming, the supervision of the Iskotew Lodge, the planning of the Indigenous Awareness Week (IAW), the Indigenous Student Employment Program (ISEP) and much more. On the side of her desk, she would follow her passion of helping Indigenous employees by offering them career advice and supporting them on their career journey.

In 2018, Michèle assumed the role of the first Indigenous Navigator at FNIHB, which by this time, was part of Indigenous Services Canada. In this new role, Michèle supported Indigenous recruitment, retention, and advancement within the department. She offered career advice and guidance to Indigenous employees. She helped managers who were looking to staff positions with Indigenous candidates. She assisted Indigenous employees, located across the country, with mapping out career paths, creating learning plans, providing advice on how to be successful in staffing processes, and helping them find staffing opportunities. Michèle then came to the Knowledge Circle for Indigenous Inclusion (KCII) to develop an Indigenous Career Navigators Program (ICNP) and implement Navigator roles in all departments and agencies across the Federal Public Service, as well as to provide advice on talent management initiatives. In the summer of 2022, Michèle was nominated as the Director of the Indigenous Talent Resource Centre (ITRC) which focalizes on Indigenous recruitment, retention, development, and advancement.

Michèle's ancestors are of Mi'kmaq, French, and Algonquin heritage. She is happily married and a proud mother of three, two daughters and a son. She has a Degree in Psychology and a Degree in Education. She loves staying active, being surrounded by nature, spending time with family and friends, as well as helping people get to where they want to go! 😊



Ikponwosa "I.K." Ero

I.K. is a public speaker and a senior executive with a passion for human development at the individual and system levels. She began her career at the Federal Department of Justice, Canada. She was later appointed to serve as the first United Nations Independent Expert on the enjoyment of human rights by persons with albinism (2015 – 2021) where she practiced disability law and human rights law against harmful practices. I.K. received the International Advocate Award by the United States' Council on Disabilities and was recognized by UNESCO among the top 70 women speakers worldwide. She is an avid landscape photographer.



Alexis Ford-Ellis

Alexis is a Gwich'in woman from the Fort MacPherson Band located around Aklavik / Inuvik in the North West Territories. She grew up in a chronic abusive and substance-using environment, and has lived through many traumatizing experiences. Through the teachings of many wonderful Elders and healers, she learned to change her anger and hatefulness into love and forgiveness along her journey of healing.

Alexis is currently on secondment with the Knowledge Circle for Indigenous Inclusion (KCII) as the Director of the Indigenous Wellness Resource Center.

Previously she was a faculty member of the Canada School of Public Service (CSPS) for the Indigenous Learning Program (2019); Director, Wellness with Justice Canada (2015-2019); and Regional Director of Human Resources, Prairie Region with Justice Canada (2010 - 2015).

In 2010, Alexis completed her master's degree in psychology counselling through City University in Seattle Washington at the Edmonton satellite campus. As a student psychologist, Alexis interned at an Aboriginal Youth Treatment Center, and did research on How is the Medicine Wheel Considered in Therapeutic Practice (2010), which was recently published in the Journal of Concurrent Disorders , Special Edition, Indigenous Mental Health, September 2019. She has 4 beautiful daughters, 3 granddaughters, and many adopted sons, daughters, and grandchildren. Alexis loves running, hot yoga, writing and sewing. With her personal experience as a Gwich'in woman, 25+ years of human resources experience in the federal public service, and her education in psychology, she is able to bring a wealth of expertise and lived experience in delivering mental health messages.



Trilby Gouch

Trilby is a movement guide, writer and Holistic Nutritionist based in Vancouver, BC. Her focus is sharing tools and techniques that promote longevity and joy, whether it be through moving the body, nourishing the body, or incorporating lifestyle rituals like breathwork and meditation to increase well-being and support the nervous system.

She writes weekly on her substack, Poetry in Motion, as a means of making wellness inspiring and accessible, and you can find her spreading joy on Instagram @trilby_.

Link to substack: <https://poetryinmotion.substack.com>

Jennifer Grace

Jennifer Grace is the Co-chair of the BC Federal Council's Community of Interest on Mental Health. She graduated with an M.Sc. in psychology from the University of Surrey in the UK. She joined the Correctional Service of Canada in 2010. She has since worked as a member of various mental health teams within the CSC before taking an assignment within the department's Office of Informal Conflict Resolution. She has had the opportunity to take on leadership roles allowing her to support mental health professionals in their provision of services. She has a passion for employee wellness and for creating and maintaining respectful work environments which led her to taking on the role within the Council's Community of Interest on Mental Health. When not advocating for mental health, she can be found riding her bicycle through beautiful trails around BC.





Dr. Lisa Gunderson

Dr. Lisa Gunderson (she/her) is a psychologist who provides justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) training, racial equity education and consultation services to organizations, government, educational institutions, and businesses. For the past 25 years she has been engaged in mental wellness issues that impact racialized populations in US and Canada, including anti-Black and anti-racism services to those who have experienced and perpetuated racialized violence in work and school environments. She also is a registered clinical counsellor in BC and provides clinical/peer supervision to counsellors who service IBPoC clients.

A former tenured US psychology professor, she is a sought after speaker that has taught courses in Victoria's secondary schools, colleges, and universities. She has received a bachelors degree in psychology and social sciences and communication, and a Masters and Ph.D. in clinical psychology from the University of Southern California.

Gunderson has won numerous awards for her work and is one of the current nominees for the 2024 BC Multiculturalism and Anti-Racism award. Her latest co-authored publications are in a 2023 free, open-source ebook called *A Practical Guide for Counsellors: Co-Creating Safe and Culturally Responsive Relational Spaces*. Currently, the Deputy Leader of the BC Green Party and the former elected Vice-President English for the Green Party of Canada, she is the first person of African-descent to assume either role. She lives with her partner and 2 children in Victoria, BC. Dr. G. enjoys spending time with her family, reading, traveling, baking and watching movies. You can learn more at [www.One Love Consulting.com](http://www.OneLoveConsulting.com).



Dr. Bill Howatt, PhD., Ed.D., Post Doc UCLA

Dr. Bill Howatt is the founder of Howatt Human Resources Consulting and an international expert in Workplace Psychological Health and Safety.

As a behavioural scientist, he is passionate about supporting employees and leaders to create thriving workplaces.

Dr. Howatt's 30-plus years of professional experience includes providing services in clinical mental health, teaching courses for colleges and universities, being a committee chair, and filling various senior leadership roles in Canada and the United States, including the Wall Street financial district. His firm provides HR consulting globally, focusing on employees' psychological safety.

Corey Jackson

Corey is the Regional Director, Policy and Economic Analysis for Fisheries and Oceans Canada, as well as Co-chair of the BCFC (British Columbia Federal Council) Community of Interest on Mental Health and the DFO Pacific Region Executive Champion for Mental Health. Corey graduated from the University of Victoria with a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science (2001), and a Masters of Public Administration degree in 2004.

Corey began his career in the public service with Health Canada, where he helped establish the Mental Health Commission of Canada. Corey joined DFO, Pacific Region in 2007 where he held several roles, including Regional Manager and A/Director, Aquaculture Management Division; and A/Director, Aboriginal Programs Division. Corey has helped advance a number of key priorities, including renewal of the Pacific Salmon Treaty, the Wild Salmon Policy, and the development of recovery measures for Southern Resident Killer Whales. Corey was born and raised in Campbell River, BC, and lives in North Vancouver with his wife and two children. He maintains a strong interest in mental health and well-being.





Kevin Lunianga

Kevin Lunianga is the Deputy Director in the Human Rights Division at Global Affairs Canada. He joined the federal government in November 2018 as a Case Management Officer with the Canada Student Loans Program at Employment and Social Development Canada. Prior to joining the public service, Kevin worked as a flight attendant for two years with WestJet Airlines and had the opportunity to travel the world.

Born to a Rwandan mother and Congolese father, he spent his youth in Canada (Ottawa) and Zimbabwe. In his spare time, Kevin enjoys traveling, meeting new people and dancing (afrobeats, soca and hip-hop).

Denise Macgillivray

Denise oversees three different national programs responsible for protecting the health of Canadians, and the environment – including from risks posed by environmental factors and pesticides. Denise has spent the majority of her public service career in the scientific and regulatory fields of Health Canada. She began her career as a scientific evaluator and Section Head at the Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA). She has subsequently held various management positions of increasing responsibility across the Department.



Prior to joining Health Canada in 2004, Denise worked for as a research associate and project manager in a biopharmaceutical company in Vancouver, BC. Denise holds a Bachelor of Science (Biomedical Toxicology) from the University of Guelph and a Masters of Science (Pharmacology and Therapeutics) from the University of British Columbia.



Elisabeth Martin

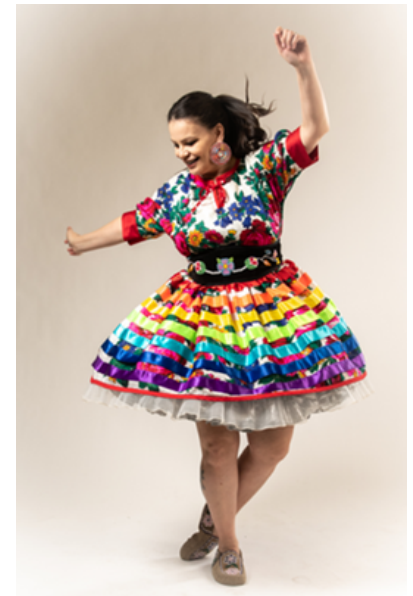
Elisabeth (Liz) is a jurist by training and an advocate at heart. Her three favorite words are “why?” and “why not?” Her mantra is “Purpose over popularity”. She challenges status quo and believes in the power of grassroots movements. She led several events dedicated to the mental health of federal Black public servants. Liz organized the first national collaborative, grassroots, and Black-led speed mentoring/coaching events dedicated to non-executive federal Black public servants. She is a former member of the Anti-Racism Ambassador Network (ARAN)’s core team and the former co-chair of the FBEC BC Chapter.

Madelaine McCallum

A Cree/j dancer originally from Ile a la Crosse, Saskatchewan. She is a member of the Canoe Lake Cree Nation. Though she is well known for Métis dance (she's been jigging since she could walk!), she dances all forms including Pow Wow, contemporary, Hip Hop and just movement from the soul. Madelaine has performed for many stages.

Performing was a natural progression into choreographing.

Madelaine has a passion for sharing her knowledge of dance and culture. Madelaine also shares her story of survival and how dance has been her outlet and savior throughout her life. Her belief in sharing knowledge with her community to empower and strengthen them and her deep love of dance and firm belief in its healing powers, for the audience as well as the dancer, is what makes Madelaine McCallum such a name to look out for!



Jonathan Morris

Jonathan (Jonny) Morris, CEO of the Canadian Mental Health Association, BC Division (CMHA BC), is a visionary leader with over two decades of experience in community mental health care. He has held key roles in advocating for mental health and system transformation in suicide prevention, early intervention, and addictions programs. Jonny's profound commitment to mental health advocacy extends beyond his role at CMHA.

He is a sought-after speaker, thought leader, and an advocate for policy changes at the local, provincial and national level, tirelessly pushing for a more inclusive and empathetic approach to mental health in Canada. Jonny's comes to this work with his own lived and living experience, with a background in research and practice in suicide prevention, combined with his experience as a counselor, professor, and facilitator. He played a crucial part in shaping the new Provincial portfolio of Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions and currently leads CMHA BC, focusing on advocacy, community-led programs, stigma reduction, and leadership education across the province.

Elder Francois Prince

Elder Francois Prince is from Nak'azdli Whut'en and belongs in the Beaver Clan (Lhts'umusyoo). He grew up around knowledge holders who raised him in the environment of the ancestors, with no running water and no electricity during the years of 7 to 10 years old. He learned stories and how to live off the land. His language came later on and he now teaches the Dakelh writing system known as the Carrier Syllabics.



When he began involving himself in the communities in the local areas, his focus soon lead him to teach and contribute to children. With his stories, art and music, his hope is to give the beautiful portrayal of their tribe the harmony it possessed with the land, animals, and people. Creating connections and promoting reconciliation, culture and language can bring out the most beautiful train of thought, full of serenity, acceptance, courage, and wisdom. He never really knew the concept of what language and culture was because it was just a way of life. He strongly believes that if anyone wants to learn culture it is best experienced by allowing it to become a way of living in connection to the land, animals, and people.

Soo whenaondleh (do your best)



Chantal Schryer

With more than 20 years of experience as a public servant at various levels, Chantal's skills and knowledge in emotional intelligence, leadership and HR management combined with her coaching abilities allow her to support employees who are going through difficult times. As the Ombuds, she can generate powerful breakthroughs through integral listening and raise departmental awareness to systemic issues. As the Ombuds, she provides a safe place for all persons working at the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard to voluntarily raise, discuss and explore options to constructively resolve work-related issues. The Ombuds reinforces a workplace culture that focuses on values, respect, teamwork, fairness, civility, responsibility and accountability.

"I believe that each person is unique and I am a strong advocate of equity. I am here to listen to your workplace concerns and explore options to find solutions that can engage growth in a caring way."



Dr. Joti Samra

Dr. Joti Samra, R.Psych. is a national thought leader on issues relating to psychological health, wellness and resilience. She is the CEO & Founder of [MyWorkplaceHealth](#), a full-suite national workplace consulting firm and the [Psychological Health & Safety \(PH&S\) Clinic](#), a virtual counselling and resilience/leadership coaching practice.

Dr. Samra is a highly-regarded expert in psychological health and safety (PH&S). Over the past two decades, she has been involved in numerous national initiatives that have contributed to policy change in Canada, and is a Founding & Ongoing Member of the CSA Technical Committee that developed the [National Standard of Canada for Psychological Health & Safety in the Workplace \(CAN/CSA-Z1003-13/BNQ9700-803/2013\)](#). This Standard is the first of its kind in the world, and has shaped policy development for workplace PH&S at the international ISO level.

Dr. Samra is the lead Research Scientist who created [Guarding Minds at Work: A Workplace Guide to Psychological Health & Safety](#), in which the psychosocial factor frame adopted by the Standard was developed. She is also the developer of the [Psychologically Safe Leader Assessment](#), an assessment and action planning resource that aligns leaders' skills with the requirements of the Standard. Dr. Samra is also the developer of comprehensive, 15-hour [PH&S Certificates](#) for People Leaders and Employees which align with ISO/ANSI continuing education standards and IACET principles.

Dr. Samra and her team have extensive expertise in helping organizations implement initiatives related to workplace PH&S including implementation of the CSA Standard; providing leadership development, training & coaching services across a broad range of areas, including emotional intelligence, psychologically safe leadership and mental health awareness; and, providing a breadth of services to enhance employee psychological health, wellness and resilience.

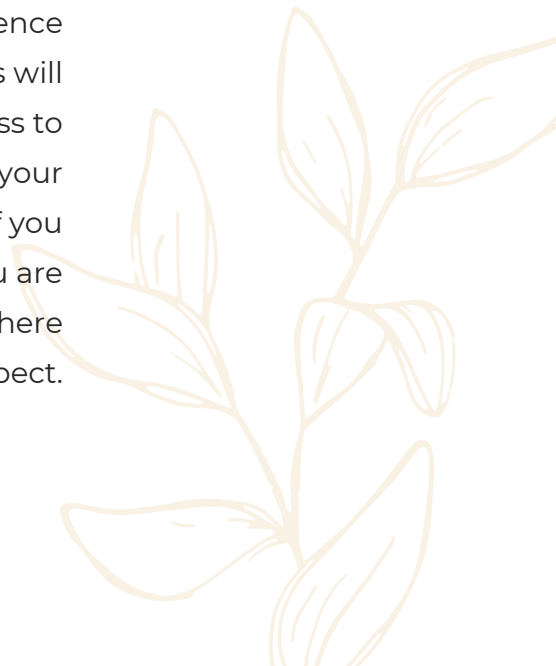
Dr. Samra has received a number of awards and accolades for her clinical and research work. She is proud to be the recipient of the Canadian Psychological Association's New Researcher Award and the British Columbia Psychological Association's Advancement of the Profession of Psychology Award. She is also the former President of the BC Psychological Association and past Chair of the BC Psychologically Healthy Workplace Awards Committee.

Karen Sokol



Prior to beginning her secondment with the Joint Learning Program in the fall of 2021, Karen Sokol acquired 15+ years of experience in the Learning, Training, Development and Performance Management fields within the federal public service. During her previous tenures with Transport Canada and the RCMP, Karen has built internal programs and resources for career development, talent management and performance management initiatives from the ground up. Considered a subject matter expert on Public Service Performance Management (PSPM), Karen has presented and appeared on discussion panels with executive and senior management on the subject of PSPM for the National Managers Community and the Canada School of Public Service. As a past community of practice leader in learning and development, she was excited to bring her program management, facilitation and coordination skills to her current role as the Regional Field Coordinator representing the Employer for the Joint Learning Program. Karen, along with her Union counterpart, represents the Prairies & NWT Region managing and coordinating the JLP's unique workshop program for many other federal government departments and agencies.

Karen's presentation includes subject matters that some audience members may find upsetting and/or traumatizing – this will include references to themes on suicide. A reminder that access to the Employee Assistance Program is available through your departments, or you can call 9-8-8 from anywhere in Canada if you or someone you know is thinking about suicide. You are encouraged to look out for one another and foster an atmosphere of sensitivity and mutual respect.



Amanda Vistman



Amanda Vistman joined the Government of Canada in 2005 with the Correctional Service of Canada. She started her career in CSC working with the offender population, primarily delivering programs and treatment to federally incarcerated women with mental health issues. Amanda went on to work in Informal Conflict Management with CSC for 7 years before coming to Justice in 2019. She has a BA in Sociology and Justice & Law Enforcement from the University of Winnipeg and has completed the Conflict Resolution: Mediation/Third-Party Intervention Certificate and Associate Certificate in Leadership and Conflict Resolution Certificate at the Justice Institute of BC. Amanda recently completed her coaching certification through Erickson Coaching International. In addition to formal education, Amanda has been trained in peace making circles, restorative justice and transformational team building. She is also a certified Emotional Intelligence Coach and is certified to facilitate Myers-Briggs Personality Type Indicator workshops. Amanda has extensive experience and a passion for developing and facilitating training.

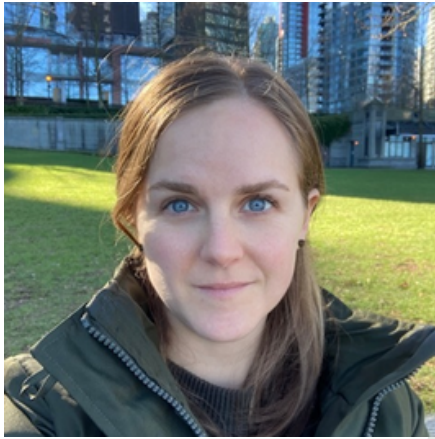
Open Door 2024

planning team



Martine Deault

Martine is a proud advocate for mental health awareness and has been volunteering with Open Door since 2020. Her self-care game changers include holistic nutrition, mindful movement/yoga, quality time with loved ones, journaling and long hikes with her Australian Shepherd, Tehya. Martine loves learning and networking with the panelists and presenters but admits it's Carole and the planning team's infectious positivity, collaborative spirits and can-do-attitudes that keep her coming back each year.



Elissa Dow

Elissa started volunteering with the BCFC and the Pacific Wellness Team in June 2023, and in November 2023 she was hired as the Pacific Wellness Team Administrator. She is grateful to work and volunteer in spaces that serve to bolster the mental health and wellbeing of those around us. Elissa is a mental health advocate, therapy enthusiast, and a believer in the healing power of compassionate support and education. Her self-care looks like quality time with loved ones, her cat, drawing, and practicing mindfulness.

Carole Eros

Carole is the Mental Health and Wellness Coordinator for the British Columbia Federal Council and the lead organizer for this event. Carole has worked for Fisheries and Oceans Canada in Pacific Region for 22 years in various resource management and marine planning roles. In September 2019 she made a career shift to workplace wellness. Carole has personal experience in, and knowledge of, mental health. She is passionate about fostering mental health and wellness in the workplace and taking as many steps as possible to eliminate stigmas. Personally, Carole loves (and needs) to move and can't get enough of yoga, exercise, music, animals, nature and first and foremost, hugs from her teenage son.





Michele Fogal

As a communications advisor, Michele is excited by the chance to support the Wellness team. As a queer cisgender woman, the diversity and inclusion components of wellness are part of my daily life, and led me to become an Ambassador and Trainer with our Positive Space Initiative.

Prior to joining DFO, Michele worked as an LGBTQ2+ diversity and inclusion educator, providing workshops, consultation and strategies to facilitate cultural evolution beyond tolerance, through acceptance, and into celebration of the divine wealth that diversity offers. A healthy ecosystem is a diverse ecosystem, and she believes this is true for human collaborations as well. With the daunting challenges ahead of us as Canadians, she has seen the vital importance of having all voices at the table, and all hands on deck. Michele is a parent, a storyteller, a reader, a tea drinker, and her pronouns are she/her.

Jon Hoogerdyk

Jon started his adventure with the NMC on October 23, 2023, as the new Regional Lead for British Columbia and Yukon. Jon previously worked for the Correctional Service of Canada where he worked as Manager, Assessment and Intervention, and has been with CSC for 25 years where his focus was Public Safety and safe reintegration of offenders within the community.

Jon is an active facilitator with the Joint Learning Program. He is a certified conflict coach and mediator who values dynamic communication with counterparts and collateral resources as means or creating solutions exploring creative options. He is looking forward to this opportunity to make new connections and assist in creating positive change.



Muhammed Ali Khan

Ali is a Diversity and Inclusion lead and currently works at Indigenous Services Canada. He is a cofounder of the Anti-Racism Ambassadors Network - a grassroots interdepartmental initiative aimed at supporting existing efforts in the public service to dismantle systemic racism with an intersectional lens. Ali maintains the Career Development In The Public Service site providing resources on mentorship and networking along with the Informal Learning Network can be used by public servants across departments and levels find project collaborators, mentors and/ or guest speakers. Ali enjoys supporting employee driven networks across the government of Canada particularly those with a focus on career development and health and wellness.

Twitter: @alikhangc

LinkedIn <https://www.linkedin.com/in/ali-khan-769330185/>



Andrea Law

Andrea is a Program Advisor with Fisheries and Oceans Canada's Reconciliation and Partnerships branch in the Pacific Region. Her love of event planning brought her to work on teams ranging from IMPAC5 in 2023 to her first role with Open Door, and is looking forward to seeing everyone enjoy and get the most out of the event. Andrea balances a busy life and prioritizing mental health by finding ways to work movement into the body, from reigniting her passion for dance at her local studio or dropping in for a hot yoga session in the evenings. She also adores creating and painting nail designs to match the beauty of the seasons.



Teresa Martin

Currently an HR Specialist Advisor with Public Services & Procurement Canada Pacific, Teresa is also a Co-Chair with the National Managers' Community (NMC) for BC/Yukon. For 2021 and 2022, Teresa worked as the BC Yukon Regional Lead for the NMC, connecting managers in the region with national initiatives and supporting grassroots collaboration here in the region. In her 14 years with the Federal Public Service, Teresa has worked in a variety of positions from Issues Management to Change Management to Research Librarian. Before coming to the government, she worked at Simon Fraser University's Faculty of Education, as well as in a variety of private and publicly traded companies. She has also been self-employed. Teresa holds a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, is a Certified Prosci™ Change Management Practitioner and a Certified Erickson Solution Focused Coach.

Teri O'Donnell



Teri has worked for Correctional Services Canada for 17 years in several different capacities. She is the most at home in nature, camping and hiking with her partner and dogs. Teri lost a beloved family member to suicide and to honor his legacy she has become passionate about suicide and mental health awareness.

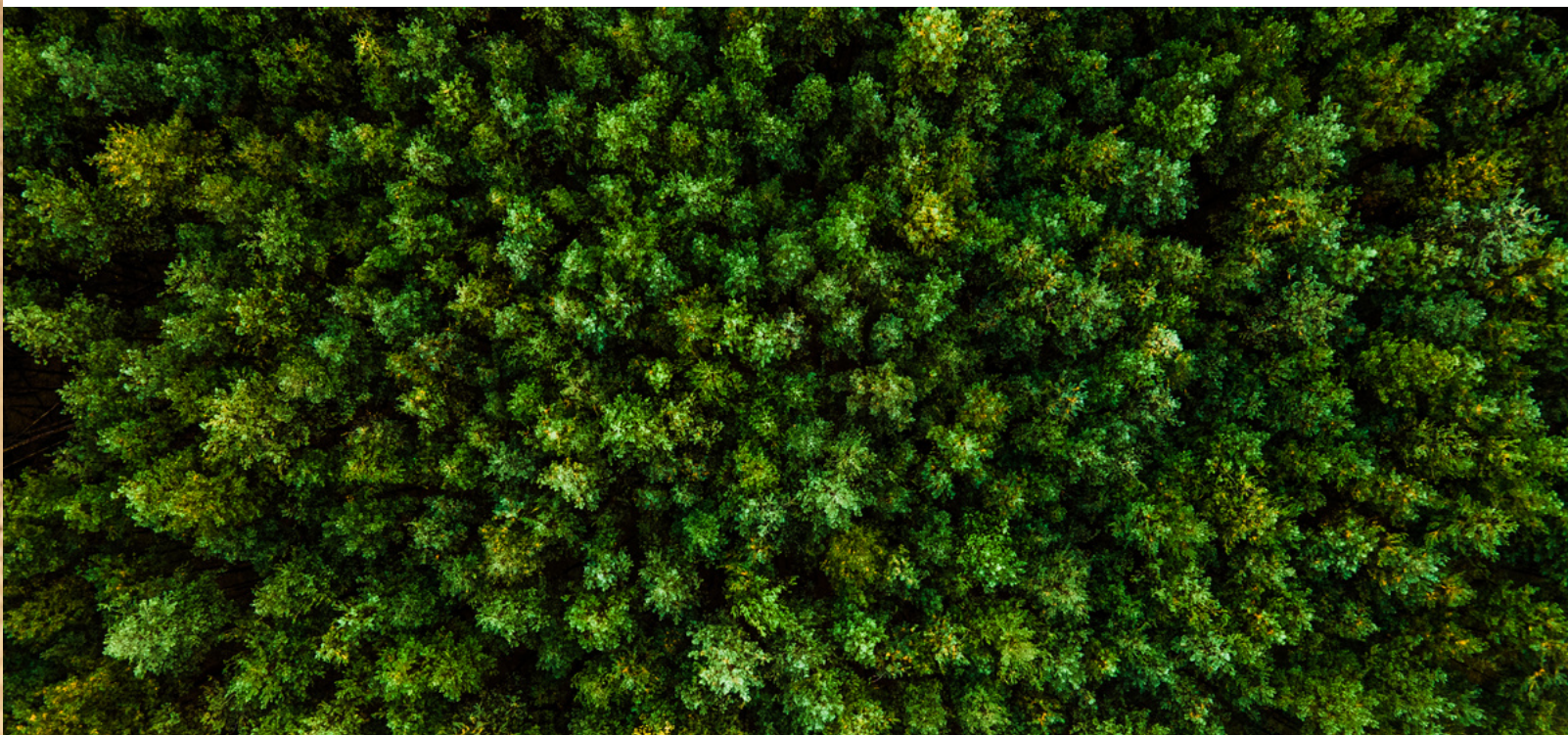
Megan Otu

Megan Otu (they, she) is a Senior Advisor with Employment Equity, Diversity & Inclusion and a Positive Space Ambassador with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard. She started her career at DFO as an Aquaculture Regulatory Science biologist in the Ontario and Prairie Region but moved into a Human Resources role following the upwelling of several social justice movements during the pandemic. Megan enjoys connecting with people, being active, in nature and surrounding herself with animals.



Ed Panis

Edward, or “Ed” to his colleagues, has been with DFO Communications team since 2018, as a Communications Adviser. Away from the office, you can find Ed with his 2 young sons and wife roaming the city or on the golf course enjoying a relaxing 18.



Roxanne Renaud-Coderre

Roxanne Renaud-Coderre recently joined the Mental Health and Diversity and Inclusion Program at Public Service and Procurement Canada as a team lead. Before that, she was at Employment and Social Development Canada for 8 years gaining experience in administration, analytics and communications. She has a passion for mental health and wellness and believes that everyone can always be a better version of themselves. She loves to organize social events and partake in social committees, having joined her first one back in high school and is an advocate for the LGBTQ2IA+ community. For self-care, Roxanne loves to read, do yoga, listen to music that makes her dance, take a walk in the forest behind her house or take a hot bath with candles.



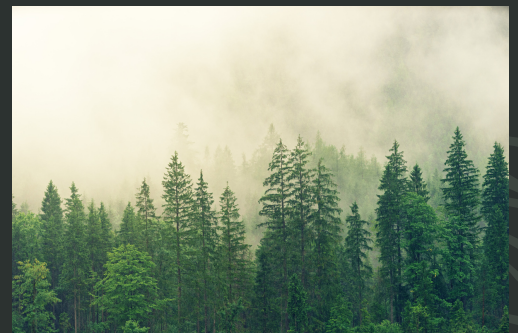
Danae Slater

Danae Slater is the BC Wellness Coordinator and Employee Co-Chair of the Occupational Health and Safety Committee for Indigenous Services Canada, BC Region and Crown Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada, Treaties and Aboriginal Government Negotiations West. Over her 17 years of employment with the federal government, Danae has also worked at the Canada Border Services Agency (Customs and Immigration), Transport Canada (Communications) and Indigenous Services Canada, BC Region (Social and Education Programs). Danae Slater is the BC Wellness Coordinator and Employee Co-Chair of the Occupational Health and Safety Committee for Indigenous Services Canada, BC.



Jill Townsend

Jill is a Senior Analyst within the Fisheries and Oceans Canada's Ombuds Office.



Anik Tracey



Anik Tracey is an advisor and coordinator on the National Mental Health team at DFO since May 2023. During her 21-year career in the Public Service she has held various administrative roles in Ministers' Offices, Deputy Ministers' Offices, the Farm Products Council of Canada and Privy Council Office. Mental health is a subject that has always been important to Anik as many of her family members struggle with mental illnesses such as bipolar disorder, anxiety and depression. When she had the opportunity to become the Mental Health Champion at the Farm Products Council of Canada several years ago, it opened a new career path.



Ginny Van Pelt

Ginny is a Senior Policy Analyst with Fisheries and Oceans Canada's Reconciliation and Partnerships branch in the Pacific Region. This is Ginny's first year on the planning team for Open Door and she is excited to be part of this important event as she has grown increasingly passionate about the importance of mental health and wellness in her work and personal life. Some of Ginny's favourite self-care activities are reading, going for walks, packing lunches, playing with her cat, and watching Star Trek!