



**VANCOUVER POLICE DEPARTMENT**  
**2023 THIRD QUARTER AWARDS CEREMONY**

**VALOR. PROFESSIONALISM. DUTY.**

**November 16, 2023**

**3 p.m.**

**Mannahouse Church**

**14311 SE Mill Plain Blvd**

# VANCOUVER POLICE DEPARTMENT

## Vision

To reflect the rich diversity of Vancouver and make it the safest city for everyone to live, work and play.

## Mission Statement

We partner with the community to preserve life, protect property and enhance livability through equitable law enforcement and effective use of resources.

## We Value

**Ethics.** Doing the right thing; maintaining self- discipline, credibility and moral behavior.

**Respect.** Treating all people with compassion, respect and fairness; honoring diversity of thought, experiences and opinions.

**Honesty.** Upholding the principles of honesty and transparency.

**Communication.** Communicating with openness, active listening, fostering an environment of inclusion, trust and empowerment.

**Collaboration.** Actively seeking collaboration with each other and the community to achieve mutually desired outcomes.

## VPD EXECUTIVE TEAM

- ◆ **Chief** Jeff Mori
- ◆ **Deputy Chief** Troy Price
- ◆ **Assistant Chief** Kristine Buist
- ◆ **Assistant Chief** Erica Nilsen
- ◆ **Commander** Amy Foster
- ◆ **Commander** Nannette Kistler
- ◆ **Commander** Darren McShea
- ◆ **Commander** Michael Whitney
- ◆ **Assistant City Attorney** Sara Baynard-Cooke
- ◆ **Human Resources Business Partner** Rob Prociak
- ◆ **Administrative Assistant** Heather Abbott
- ◆ **Records Manager** Olga Dacy
- ◆ **Finance and Logistics Supervisor** Daphine Harris
- ◆ **Public Affairs Manager** Kim Kapp
- ◆ **Administrative Assistant** Teri Kenning

# MEET OUR NEW PROFESSIONAL STAFF



**Nancy Azpeitia**

Police Records Specialist

Joined VPD September 11, 2023



**Stephen Gomez**

Police Records Specialist

Joined VPD September 18, 2023



**Vincson Green**

Police Records Supervisor

Joined VPD July 24, 2023



**Maddie Vogelsang**

Digital Forensics Investigator

Joined VPD August 21, 2023

# MEET OUR NEW POLICE OFFICERS



## **Officer Zachary Auld**

Joined VPD: January 9, 2023

Graduated from Basic Law Enforcement Academy:  
September 19, 2023

Informal swearing in: September 25, 2023



## **Officer Mauricio Cruz**

Joined VPD: November 21, 2022

Graduated from Basic Law Enforcement Academy:  
July 27, 2023

Informal swearing in: August 7, 2023



## **Officer Andrew Davis**

Joined VPD July 10, 2023

Previous agency: Winter Garden Police Department  
March 2021- July 2023

Informal swearing in: July 11, 2023



## **Officer Stuart Drynan**

Joined VPD: January 9, 2023

Graduated from Basic Law Enforcement Academy:  
October 3, 2023

Informal swearing in: October 5, 2023



## **Officer Raymond Figuracion**

Joined VPD: January 23, 2023

Graduated from Basic Law Enforcement Academy:  
October 3, 2023

Informal swearing in: October 5, 2023

## MEET OUR NEW POLICE OFFICERS (CONTINUED)



### **Officer Laura Frost**

Joined VPD December 19, 2022

Graduated from Basic Law Enforcement Academy:  
September 19, 2023

Informal swearing in: September 25, 2023



### **Officer Albert Hill Jr.**

Joined VPD: July 10, 2023

Previous Agency: Pawtucket Police Department  
May 2021 - July 2023

Informal swearing in: July 11, 2023



### **Officer Christopher Holmquist**

Joined VPD: January 9, 2023

Graduated from Basic Law Enforcement Academy:  
September 19, 2023

Informal swearing in: September 25, 2023



### **Officer Austin Warner**

Joined VPD: July 17, 2023

Previous Agency: Woodland Police Department  
December 2021 - July 2023

Informal swearing in: July 18, 2023

# PROMOTIONS



**Emma Widmer**

Promoted to Lead Records Specialist September 16, 2023



**Sergeant Dennis Devlin**

Promoted to Sergeant September 1, 2023



**Sergeant Rocky Epperson**

Promoted to Sergeant September 16, 2023



**Sergeant Chadd Nolan**

Promoted August 16, 2023



**Sergeant Tyson Taylor**

Promoted July 1, 2023

## PROMOTIONS (CONTINUED)



**Lieutenant Pat Kennedy**

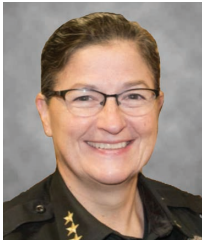
Promoted to Lieutenant August 16, 2023



**Lieutenant Tim Martin**

Promoted to Lieutenant September 1, 2023

## SPECIAL RECOGNITION



**Washougal Police Chief Wendi Steinbronn**

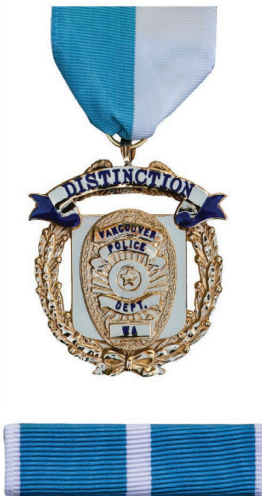


# AWARDS AND MEDALS

Lifesaving



Medal of Distinction



Meritorious Service



Team Commendation



Department Citation



Medal of Valor



Career Service



## LIFESAVING AWARD

The Lifesaving Award is given to an officer or citizen who is directly responsible for the saving of a human life. Documentation and supporting evidence, which may include statements of witnesses, physicians, or supervisors, must be included to substantiate the award. This award is also appropriate in those circumstances where the action of an officer prolonged human life to the extent of the victim being released to the care of medical authorities, even though the victim may have died at a later time.



**Officer Brandon Riedel**  
Lifesaving Award



**Officer Micah Willis**  
Lifesaving Award

On April 5, 2023, Officer Brandon Riedel and Officer Micah Willis responded to a disturbance call involving a person possibly having a medical emergency. Officer Willis arrived first on scene and focused on the medical component. He located a female unconscious and without a pulse. Officer Willis began administering CPR. Officer Riedel arrived on scene and obtained an AED. Officer Willis continued to apply CPR while Officer Riedel applied the AED pads to the patient. The AED provided three shocks to the patient in between Officer Riedel and Officer Willis administering CPR. Officer Riedel and Officer Willis provided lifesaving care in the critical moments immediately after the medical emergency. They continued care until Vancouver Fire Department personnel arrived. As a result, the patient regained a pulse when she arrived at the emergency department. According to an EMS supervisor, the patient was admitted to the hospital and received care for 4 days before she passed away. Because of the medical aid she received from Officer Willis and Officer Riedel, her life was prolonged, and she was able to donate several organs to people who were facing life threatening conditions.

# LIFESAVING AWARD



**Officer Conrad Iranon**  
Lifesaving Award



**Officer Tibor Naray**  
Lifesaving Award

On July 19, 2023, Officer Naray and Officer Iranon responded to a suicidal subject call. A woman was reported to be sitting on the 39th St. bridge overpass looking like she was going to jump onto the railroad tracks below. When Officer Naray and Officer Iranon arrived, they located the woman sitting on top of a handrail above the highest portion of the bridge. Her legs were over the edge of the bridge, and she was leaning over the edge. She appeared to be in emotional distress. Officer Naray believed she would fall any moment, either by accident due to the precarious nature of where she was sitting, or that she was going to jump off in an attempt to commit suicide. Officer Naray assessed the predicament and recognized that the short wall below the railing provided an area of safety that helped officers avoid being pulled over when they decided to intervene. Officer Naray then told Officer Iranon that they would have to pull the female off the railing to prevent her from committing suicide. Officer Naray continued speaking to the woman while Officer Iranon moved to a better position to grab her. Once in these positions, Officer Naray and Officer Iranon saw a moment of opportunity and pulled her from the railing and onto the ground. The woman was transported to the hospital for evaluation.

## LIFESAVING AWARD



**Officer Gerardo Gutierrez**  
Lifesaving Award



**Officer Andrew Davis**  
Lifesaving Award

On September 27, 2023, Officer Gerardo Gutierrez and Officer Andrew Davis responded to an AED request for an unconscious 76-year-old male who was possibly in cardiac arrest. Officer Davis was aware of the urgency of the call and that his location was nearby. Officer Davis and Officer Gutierrez arrived and began to perform CPR on the male until medics arrived. The patient's pulse was re-established and he was transported to the hospital for additional care.

# LIFESAVING AWARD



**Officer Desmond Haske**  
Lifesaving Award



**Officer Audrey Hing**  
Lifesaving Award



**Officer Sean Suarez**  
Lifesaving Award

On August 8, 2023, Officers Haske, Hing, and Suarez responded to a reported attempted burglary-domestic violence call. The suspect had fled on foot prior to police arrival. While searching the area, officers located the suspect unconscious, hanging from a tree. Officer Haske picked the suspect up while Officer Hing used trauma shears to cut the ligature that was tied around his neck. Officers Haske and Hing guided him to the ground and began communicating with him, while also dispatching AMR medics to their location. While speaking with the suspect he began to wake up. He was transported to the hospital for treatment. He survived his suicide attempt.

## MEDAL OF DISTINCTION

A Medal of Distinction is awarded for outstanding performance beyond the ordinary course of duty during hazardous situations. The officer must demonstrate alertness, perseverance, or timely judgment in the performance of a difficult task that results in the protection of life, the recovery of stolen property, the prevention or solving of a major crime, or the apprehension of an armed or dangerous person. The action of the officer must be truly exemplary, as opposed to competent and professional.



**Sergeant Jason Mills**  
Medal of Distinction

On July 23, 2021, Clark County Sheriff's Office Detective Sergeant Jeremy Brown was shot and killed while conducting surveillance outside a Vancouver apartment complex. The Vancouver Police Department Major Crimes Unit was assigned to investigate the incident and Detective Jason Mills was assigned as the lead detective. While all homicides can create a stressful environment, the investigation of an officer-involved, line-of-duty death is extremely rare and arguably more stressful than any other investigation. Within days, Detective Mills and his team arrested multiple people involved in the murder of Sergeant Brown, including the shooter, who was sentenced to life in prison; the getaway driver who was sentenced to 27 years in prison; and another co-defendant, who was sentenced to 25 years in prison.

# MEDAL OF DISTINCTION



## **Officer Dustin Nicholson**

### Medal of Distinction

On September 21, 2023, Officer Dustin Nicholson responded to a call of a suspicious auto located in an alley. The reporting party provided information that the female was associated with a nearby residence. Officer Nicholson went to that residence and the person who answered the door confirmed that the truck belonged to the female's boyfriend. Officer Nicholson checked the name of the male and was alerted that he had multiple outstanding warrants, including a murder warrant and a warrant for unlawful possession of a firearm. Officer Nicholson called for additional officers, but while he was waiting for their arrival, the male and the female began walking toward the truck. Officer Nicholson recognized that the male was a dangerous murder suspect and if not stopped would continue to be a danger to the public. Officer Nicholson made the decision to intercept the two before they could get away. Officer Nicholson activated his lights, approached the two, and directed officers to the area to make the arrest. This quick action resulted in the apprehension of an armed and dangerous wanted person.

# MEDAL OF DISTINCTION & MERITORIOUS SERVICE AWARD

The Meritorious Service Award is given to an officer for very competent and professional performance. This award recognizes an officer that performed competently in a stressful situation, in a stress position over an extended period of time, or that performed duties beyond normal expectations in the investigation and case preparation of an unusual or special case.



**Sgt. Rick Lagerquist**  
Medal of Distinction



**Fmr. Ofc. Sammy Abdala**  
Meritorious Service  
Award



**Ofc. Josh Deffebbo**  
Medal of Distinction



**Det. James Dewey**  
Meritorious Service  
Award



**Ofc. Ken Hess**  
Meritorious Service  
Award



**Ofc. Shawn McKenzie**  
Medal of Distinction



**Ofc. Dustin Nicholson**  
Meritorious Service  
Award



**Ofc. Tibor Naray**  
Medal of Distinction



**Ofc. Melissa Sager**  
Meritorious Service  
Award



**Ofc. Calden Santiago**  
Medal of Distinction



**Ofc. Ken Suvada**  
Meritorious Service  
Award



## MEDAL OF DISTINCTION & MERITORIOUS SERVICE AWARD

On February 15, 2023, a suspect violently assaulted his wife in her apartment and kidnapped their son (whom he did not have custody of nor the means to care for). The son lived with the mother. The following day, VPD responded to a welfare check that Detective James Dewey generated based on updates that a phone belonging to the kidnapping suspect was at this location. Officers Naray, Suvada, Nicholson, Hess, Sager, DeFebbo, Santiago, and Mckenzie responded in the area to develop a plan for contact at the location to rescue the child. Officers Mckenzie, Naray, Santiago, and DeFebbo were assigned as part of the entry/contact team to respond if information was provided that the child was inside or if the suspect exited. Officer Sager, a former Crisis Negotiator, used skills she had learned on the job to gather intelligence on the location and eventually was able to develop text contact with the suspect and a possible unit number where the suspect might be. Officers Suvada, Nicholson, and Hess were assigned as containment/contact. Shortly after text contact was made, a female exited a unit where the suspect was believed to be and she confirmed that the suspect and child were inside her apartment. Officers were able to obtain a key from the female and the contact team made their way to the door, opened it, and the suspect was called and came into view of officers at the door. The suspect was taken into custody and the child was located uninjured.

# MERITORIOUS SERVICE AWARD & MEDAL OF DISTINCTION



**Sergeant Rick Lagerquist**  
Meritorious Service Award



**Officer Josh DeFebbo**  
Meritorious Service Award



**Officer Cody Esau**  
Meritorious Service Award



**Officer Chelsey Santos**  
Meritorious Service Award



**Officer Alex Zaferis**  
Medal of Distinction

On May 29, 2023, Officer Cody Esau, Officer Josh DeFebbo, Officer Chelsey Santos and Officer Alex Zaferis responded to the report of a missing and endangered adult female who had been diagnosed with numerous mental health conditions and had run away from the care facility she was at, armed with a knife. Arriving officers located the female and began communicating with her. The female then began to cut her arm and wrist with a knife. Officers remained calm and worked together to collect information from the care facility to determine any triggers or calming techniques that could be useful. Officers set up a contact team that gave officers the ability to utilize time, distance, less lethal options, and shielding should she become aggressive toward the officers. The female started to walk toward officers with the knife in her hand and after an unsuccessful Taser deployment and one unsuccessful less lethal 40mm deployment, Officer Zaferis made the decision to deploy the second 40mm less lethal round at her hand that was holding the knife. This round caused her to drop the knife and allowed officers to safely take her into custody. She was treated for her self-inflicted injuries and the injury to her hand, all which were non-life threatening. During this dangerous encounter, the squad worked together to de-escalate and demonstrate the sanctity of life model and provided appropriate police services to a person suffering a mental health crisis.

## CAREER SERVICE MEDAL

The Career Service Medal is awarded to officers who complete at least 20 years of active civilian law enforcement service, of which at least 15 years were served with the Vancouver Police Department. This medal is presented to eligible sworn officers.



### **Corporal Jeremy Free**

Hired by the Vancouver Police Department in July 2003. Has held assignments in the Tactical Emergency Medical Services Unit and SWAT, Neighborhood Response Team, Patrol, Missing Persons Unit, and is currently assigned as the District 4 Neighborhood Police Officer.

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