

Meet the “Unsung Heroes” Battling Domestic Violence Calgarians Honour Frontline Workers at the 2009 HomeFront Selinger Awards

CALGARY, ALBERTA – There is no question that domestic violence is a serious issue in our country, our province and our city. Often the issue receives attention when an incident or homicide has taken place, but what is frequently ignored is the amazing work being done to combat this issue and recognize those who are making the difference. Tonight, the 2009 HomeFront Selinger Awards will do just that.

In Calgary alone, there is an army of frontline workers, who dedicate themselves to helping families break the cycle of violence in their homes; there are volunteers and crisis lines that support families 24/7; there are police, lawyers and judges who commit to ensuring our communities remain healthy and safe; there are health providers who heal and educate; and of course there are everyday Calgarians who take a stand against domestic violence.

Beginning with a toast from Chief of Police Rick Hanson, host Susanne Fox (Citytv), and members of the corporate sector will recognize and celebrate the hundreds of frontline workers and volunteers from the community and law enforcement sectors at an evening reception - Tuesday November 17, 2009 at the Jack Singer Concert Hall Lobby at 4:30pm.

Selected by a panel of independent judges, the following three outstanding individuals will be named the HomeFront Selinger Awards Winners for 2009:

- Dr. Pauline Head, *Medical Director of the Domestic and Sexual Assault Response Team at Alberta Health Services.*
- Constable Dan Walker, *Domestic Conflict Unit, Calgary Police Service*
- Jane Oxenbury, *a volunteer who has dedicated years to high-lighting same-sex domestic violence.*

These individuals demonstrate commitment, excellence, innovation and affective approaches to the problem of domestic and sexual violence, making significant contributions to families impacted by this crime. Join us in celebrating their achievements.

When: November 17, 2009 4:30-6:30. Speeches begin at 5:00pm. Jack Singer Concert Hall Lobby, EPCOR CENTRE for the Performing Arts. 205 8th Avenue S.E.

Proudly presented by Willow Park Wines & Spirits.

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Background:

Behind every statistic is a frontline worker ensuring individuals affected by domestic violence receive the appropriate support they need, ultimately keeping our homes and communities safer.

We are often overwhelmed by the numbers that suggest domestic violence will always be a part of our society. But here are some numbers that reflect positive change:

- ✓ According to Statistics Canada, Police-reported spousal violence and spousal homicides has steadily declined over the past 10 years, decreasing 15% between 1998 and 2007. Rates of spousal homicide have declined over the 3 decades from 1978 to 2007. In 2007, the spousal homicide rate was the lowest in over 30 years.
- ✓ Alberta has one of the highest reported rates of domestic violence. This is a good thing! It means in our province there is more awareness, more public education and acceptance that domestic violence is wrong, and that help is available. It means people are speaking out and breaking the cycle.
- ✓ Prior to HomeFront's collaborative approach, approximately three in ten abusers re-offended within three years time. In Calgary today, it is estimated only one in ten offenders return to perpetrating acts of domestic violence.

A collective of systems, HomeFront coordinates an improved and integrated justice response to domestic violence to bring about positive change and ensure our homes and communities remain safe. The 2009 HomeFront Selinger Awards is an opportunity for HomeFront to recognize the devoted work of our community partners and peers.

The awards also pay tribute to Former Chief Crown Prosecutor Jerry Selinger, who always recognized the important role of "unsung heroes" in the frontline battle against domestic violence and abuse. HomeFront is proud to host the 9th Annual Selinger Awards honouring the memory of a truly courageous and dedicated man and the individuals he so admired.