



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

6th Annual Police Services Hero of the Year Awards Program Launches Today

Public Encouraged to Nominate Their Local Police Heroes

Tuesday, February 2, 2021 – Today, the Police Association of Ontario (PAO) launches its sixth annual Police Services Hero of the Year Awards program, encouraging Ontarians to nominate police personnel in their communities who have gone above and beyond.

From February 2 – March 15, members of the public can nominate their local police heroes for one of three awards at [PoliceHero.ca](https://www.policehero.ca):

- **On-Duty Difference Maker – Uniform/Sworn Police Officer** (*Officer(s) who has gone above and beyond the expectations of the job while on-duty*)
- **On-Duty Difference Maker – Civilian Police Service Employee** (*Civilian police service employee(s) who has gone above and beyond the expectations of the job while on-duty*)
- **Community Role Model** (*Police officer(s) or civilian police service employee(s) who has made a difference in their community while off-duty*)

As a reminder, Civilian Police Service Employees include 9-1-1 dispatchers and communications personnel, court services personnel, forensics identification personnel, victim services units, special constables, and many other important roles within a police service.

Last year, the awards program garnered over 370 nominations from Ontarians. The stories of last year's Police Services Hero of the Year award winners represent some of the finest individuals and teams that have chosen to dedicate their lives to the policing profession:

- [Cst. Fil Wisniak, Kingston Police Service: 2020 On-Duty Difference Maker – Uniform Officer](#)
- [Special Constables Michael Bednarek & Susanne Kelly, Ottawa Police Service: 2020 On-Duty Difference Maker\(s\) – Civilian Police Service Employee\(s\)](#)
- [Cst. Evan Harrison, London Police Service: 2020 Community Role Model](#)

“Every single day, Ontario’s police officers and civilian police service employees put their personal health and well-being on the line to ensure the safety of others, and go above and beyond the expectations of their roles to make significant contributions to protect their communities,” said PAO President, Bruce Chapman. “This has been amplified during the COVID-19 pandemic. Whenever our members begin a shift, neither they nor their loved ones can predict what adverse and potentially life-altering interactions may arise or how those situations may impact them,” he continued. “I regularly hear stories from the PAO’s 47 member associations across Ontario about serious and potentially negative situations our local police officers and civilian personnel have faced that were successfully resolved because of their



actions – often just regarded as a normal day ‘at the office’ – so the PAO is honoured to help the public acknowledge the efforts of our police personnel,” said Chapman.

Ontarians are encouraged to submit their nominations online at [PoliceHero.ca](https://www.policehero.ca) or via direct message on social media ([Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#)). Nominations will be accepted until March 15, 2021, and award winners will be formally announced during the PAO’s virtual Annual General Meeting in June.

About the Police Association of Ontario (PAO):

Founded in 1933, the Police Association of Ontario (PAO) is the official provincial representative body for over 28,000 sworn and civilian police personnel from 47 police associations across Ontario. A unifying voice for advocacy in policing, the PAO provides its member associations with representation, resource, and support.

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Websites: [PoliceHero.ca](https://www.policehero.ca) | [PAO.ca](https://www.pao.ca)
Facebook: [@PoliceAssociationofOntario](https://www.facebook.com/PoliceAssociationofOntario)
Twitter: [@PoliceAssocON](https://twitter.com/PoliceAssocON)

- 30 -