

Calgary



Racial Justice Conference

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Anti-Racism Program Staff Biographies



Bailey, Damon Research Social Planner

Damon Bailey is currently the temporary Research Social Planner with the Anti-Racism Program for The City of Calgary. With a background in International Relations and Development, Damon holds a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and Sociology from Grant MacEwan University and a Masters in Internal Trade Law Policy from the Universities of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus, Barbados. As a social justice advocate, Damon has worked in various roles within the international organization realm, government and not-for-profit sector in Barbados and Canada. Her research and policy work on poverty reduction and gender rights has contributed to university curriculum and national reports. Damon is excited to be part of a team that is tasked with addressing racism.



Boakye, Paul A. Ph.D. Strategic Advisor, Calgary Housing Company

Dr. Paul A. Boakye is a research and policy analyst with over 15 years' experience in community building and advocacy. He is currently the Anti-Racism Strategic Advisor, Calgary Housing Company. Prior to this role, he was as a Lecturer with the University of Ghana where he taught courses in Political Research, Development Studies and Policy Monitoring and Evaluation. He was also a Director of Community Ministries with the Salvation Army, Kindersley, Saskatchewan, and a Researcher with the Public Services Commission of Ghana. Paul has a PhD in Public Policy from the Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy, University of Saskatchewan, and a Master of Arts and Philosophy degrees in Political Science from the Universities of Calgary and Ghana respectively. His research interest includes social policy, anti-racism, education, governance, and political institutions. His most recent publication is 'Actors, bricolage, and translation in education policy: a case study from Ghana' published in the Journal of Modern African Studies in 2022.

Feisal Kirumira, Team Lead, Public Safety

Feisal is the Public Safety Lead, Anti-Racism Program, City of Calgary. Feisal has extensive experience teaching in post-secondary institutions in Canada and Germany, including languages, applied linguistics, humanities, Black studies, and community service-learning pedagogy. Feisal has delivered scholarly presentations and published on anti-racism pedagogy through an Afro-centric lens as well as racially just public safety service design and delivery. Prior to joining The City, Feisal served as founding member of the Alberta Anti-Racism

Advisory Council and inaugural Vice-Chair, City of Edmonton Anti-Racism Advisory Committee. Feisal is currently pursuing a PhD in Secondary Education on anti-racism pedagogy using an Afro-centric lens.



Higgins, Lorelei Team Lead, Community

Lorelei Higgins Parker is a Métis Canadian Cultural Mediator, a Rotary Peace Fellow and Positive Peace Activator as well as a Governor General's Canadian Leadership Program alumna. She has worked on community-based projects locally and internationally with government agencies, non-government organizations and the business sector. These projects centre on peace and conflict transformation, Indigenous matters and the elevation of female voices in leadership. Lorelei has worked across the globe in communities in Africa, Asia, Europe, North America and South America. Lorelei is the Community Lead for the City of Calgary's Anti-Racism Program and is working to advance The City of Calgary's commitments to anti-racism and Truth and Reconciliation. Lorelei is also a consultant with Mediators Beyond Borders International and Canadian Equity Consulting, cultivating projects that focus on Indigenous relations and enhanced diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging efforts. Lorelei has an MBA, with a specialization in leadership. She is passionate about creating bold, open spaces for building peace through cross-cultural learning and the establishment and nurturing of enduring, positive relationships. As the reigning Mrs. Unity World Canada and Mrs. Canada Globe 2020-2023, Lorelei is leading efforts to increase female leadership in peacebuilding efforts locally and globally. She is often found adventuring around the world with her family.

Jing Fang, Cindy Policy Consultant

Cindy Jing Fang, MSW, RSW, graduated from Master of Social Work program from University of Calgary. Cindy has over 15 years of experience working in social services sector, including leading a variety of social research projects, providing training and consultation to a wide range of social service programs, and working with community leaders and members from diverse racialized communities. With her passion, commitment and dedication to Anti-Racism, Cindy is working to advance The City of Calgary's commitments to Anti-Racism through policy changes.

Grewal, Jyoti Learning and Development Consultant

Jyoti Grewal is a proud Indo-Canadian residing in Calgary. Throughout her career, she has honed her abilities in teaching, facilitation, subject matter expertise, and curriculum development. Her own lived and living experiences lend to her commitment to making work and public spaces safe through equitable practices that address systemic inequities. Jyoti considers herself a life-long learner taking formal and informal opportunities to view the world through multiple lenses. Committed to listening, learning, growing and sharing, her passion lies in making this world a more just place where historically disadvantaged and underrepresented groups have a voice.

Nakao, Hiroko Strategic Advisor

Hiroko Nakao is a dedicated social worker with over 15 years of experience combatting poverty and injustice. She currently serves as a Strategic Advisor at the City of Calgary, leveraging her expertise to create positive change. Previously, she worked at Momentum Community Economic Development Society, assisting individuals with mental health and addiction challenges in improving their financial well-being. Hiroko was also a community engagement leader and an advocate for anti-racism initiatives, having chaired the Board at ActionDignity. She holds a Master of Social Work from the University of Calgary and is a Registered Social

Worker and Accredited Financial Counsellor in Canada. Outside of work, she enjoys traveling, gardening, reading, and exploring fabric art.



Oyasiji, Abisola Ph.D., Team Lead, Organizational

Abisola Oyasiji holds a PhD in Urban and Regional Planning. Her research and work experience have centered around addressing complex social issues such as social inequities among vulnerable populations, marginalization, social determinants of health, policy development, and racial equity. In 2019, Abisola led community-based research on the impact of racism on Racialized parents, youth, and school workers in Calgary’s K-12 education system. She also co-authored a resource toolkit to empower youth to address interpersonal and systemic racism within the school system. Abisola is currently the Acting Organizational Lead in the Anti-Racism Program at The City of Calgary.



Sureshkumar, Anne Strategist Racial Trauma & Anti-Rate

Anne is an educator, speaker, counselor and a registered Social Worker. She is a Strategist for Racial Trauma and Anti-Hate, Anti-Racism Program, City of Calgary and the founder of Unique Pathways Counselling Services. Anne’s professional work in India was in public health and counselling. In Canada, she focuses on immigrant populations and counselling. Her experience of working internationally as a social worker in India and Canada lends her the insight on how collective and individualistic societies function thus rendering Anne with the competencies to engage with immigrant populations. Her areas of interest include anti-racism work, mental health, domestic violence, intersectionality, identity development for ethnic and sexual minorities, research, public speaking and free-lance writing. Preventing women from being limited in the name of ‘honour’, breaking the silence and reconstructing social norms remains close to her heart. Anne’s public speaking experiences include speaking internationally and in Canada.



Reina, Ruth Strategic Advisor

Ruth Reina is an Anti-Racism Strategic Advisor who was specifically hired for the Calgary Fire Department. Her experience working within two different law enforcement agencies allows her to bring a rare firsthand understanding regarding mental health and wellness among members of law enforcement and first responders. She holds a Master of Social Work from the University of Toronto, with a specialization in Social Justice and Diversity and a collaborative specialization in Community Development. Ruth is passionate about advancing social justice and promoting collaboration between service providers and users, to bring about meaningful change.