



BC Association of Social Workers  
#402 – 1755 West Broadway  
Vancouver, BC V6J 4S5

E: [bcasw@bcasw.org](mailto:bcasw@bcasw.org)  
T: 604.730.9111

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For immediate release

### BC SOCIAL WORKERS RECOGNIZED FOR DISTINGUISHED SERVICE

(Vancouver) As part of BC Social Work Week celebrations hosted by the BC Association of Social Workers, Minister of Children and Family Development Grace Lore will present awards to two BC social workers who have distinguished themselves through exemplary service to others and their communities.

The 2024 Canadian Association of Social Workers Award (BC) will be presented to Karen Lok Yi Wong and Gary Thandi.

Karen Lok Yi Wong is a PhD candidate and sessional lecturer in the School of Social Work at the University of British Columbia. She is a registered social worker and researcher and has been practising and researching in diverse settings related to older adults, such as community senior services centre, long-term care, and geriatric acute care. She serves on the Seniors Community of Practice and the Anti-Racist and Cultural Advocacy Committee of the BC Association of Social Workers. She is a long-term volunteer of Alzheimer's Society. Karen was the recipient of the Inspiring Social Worker of the Year in 2021, which acknowledged her contribution to her advocacy work with people with dementia from diverse cultural communities.

Gary is the founder and current Executive Director of Moving Forward; an agency that empowers underserved communities through accessible counselling. He started Moving Forward because he saw that people needed support where they didn't have to fill out multiple 'checkboxes' to be eligible for help and then wait months or years if they made it past the eligibility criteria. Gary also identified the need for early intervention and prevention in the work of the agency. Moving Forward's small staff oversee an agency with over 275 part-time counsellors, social workers, and interns on post-secondary practica, providing support to some of our most vulnerable communities. This unique, made-in-BC model allows the agency to offer timely, affordable (including free) short-term and long-term counselling and support

“Karen Lok Yi Wong and Gary Thandi are exceptional and compassionate social workers who have made significant contributions improving the lives of British Columbians and it is our

pleasure to recognize them with these awards.” says Michael Crawford, President of the BC Association of Social Workers.

Minister Lore will present the awards at a ceremony held via Zoom, set for noon, Monday, March 11, 2024 (Pacific). Registration link – <https://tinyurl.com/ms2hxnzu>

More information about BC Social Work Week events – <https://tinyurl.com/3jsjbw4y>

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#### Contacts:

Michael Crawford, MSW, RSW | President (he/him)  
BC Association of Social Workers  
W: <https://www.bcasw.org>

BCASW is a voluntary, not-for-profit membership association that supports and promotes the profession of social work and advocates for social justice. BCASW is one of the provincial/territorial social work associations in partnership with the Canadian Association of Social Workers (CASW). Through CASW we support the work of the International Federation of Social Workers. BCASW was incorporated in 1956 and has branches and members (including students) throughout BC.

*BCASW acknowledges that our office is in the unceded territory of the Coast Salish Peoples, including the territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations and that our members live and work in unceded territories across British Columbia. We also express appreciation to Métis and Inuit peoples across British Columbia.*