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**Jim Potts Award - 2003**

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**CRITERIA:** significant contributions to policing in First Nations communities.

**NOMINEE:** P/C Patrice Gonzalez Badge # 7180 Hearst Detachment

**NOMINATOR:** A/S/Sgt. Grant Ayres Badge # 7057 Hearst Detachment

**SUMMARY:** P/C Gonzalez took over the responsibility of presenting the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) to grade 6 students at the Clayton Brown Public School in Hearst. The class was comprised mainly of students from Constance Lake First Nations Territories. This was their first time attending school out of their community. P/C Gonzalez recognized he had to make changes to the program in order to achieve success. He called the event "Bridging the Gap" hoping to bring together the two communities and cultures (First Nations and French Canadian non native) at graduation.

**SYNOPSIS:**

- Changed the program to suit the needs of the students
- Planned a special ceremony in Constance Lake for graduation since the majority of the students came from that community, viewed as an opportunity to promote the program and the OPP
- Arranged for a Piper and a youth Drummer Group, The Chief, Mayor, North East Regional Command staff and NAPS to attend graduation
- Invited parents and families from Hearst and Elders and families from Constance Lake to attend organizing bus transportation
- P/C Gonzalez acted as master of ceremonies as well as presenting the class video
- Had 100% participation in the graduation ceremony as well as 100% of the students completed the program, a first for the school
- Brought his own family to the graduation sending a message of its importance in the community

**JIM POTTS AWARD - 2004**

**Nominee(s): Chief Superintendent Al Dawson  
(Commander, North East Region)**

**Summary: C/Supt Dawson is recognized for his demonstrated commitment to ensuring that policing makes a viable contribution to the well being of Aboriginal communities. His diligence in promoting awareness and understanding of Aboriginal history, culture and issues is a basis for positive interaction and relationship building with First Nations communities and police services across Northern Ontario.**

**Synopsis:** In his capacity as Regional Commander, C/Supt. Dawson has worked diligently to build cultural awareness and understanding internally and to address the needs and concerns of northern First Nations communities. His proactive leadership in First Nations policing includes holding regular meetings with regional Grand Chiefs and the formation of a Regional Advisory First Nations Committee in North East Region. He initiated numerous tours of remote locations for OPP Regional and Bureau staff to show the challenges inherent in policing remote locations and to establish rapport with the local leaders. His focus on positive interaction included development of a First Nations emergency response scenario to help First Nations leaders and community members understand the challenges involved. He implemented a cooperative, multi-agency Winter Road Initiative to prevent alcohol, drugs and solvent abuse items from being transported on winter roads in First Nations Territories. He initiated an Aboriginal Officers conference for North West Region and ensured delivery of nine Aboriginal cultural training sessions in 2002 - 2003. First Nations issues are standard matters for discussion at every Detachment Commander and NCO meeting in his Region. Through leadership and commitment, C/Supt. Dawson continues to make tangible contributions to positive police-First Nations community relations.

## JIM POTTS AWARD

**Nominee(s): Staff Sgt. Terry Wright, Sergeant D.S. Whaley, Provincial Constables M. Golding, R.L. Grosenick, J.G. Bergsma, R.J. Malone, M.A. Norlock, S.K. Norris, T.E. Smith, R.W. Saikkonen (Ears Falls Detachment/Red Lake Detachment, North West Region)**

**Summary: The commitment of these officers shows dedication to an important programme, which has tremendous influence in the lives of many First Nation youths.**

**Synopsis:** The Northern Eagle Transitional School is a high school in Ear Falls that educates First Nations students in grades nine and ten. The students attend the school from various First Nations Communities in remote North Western Ontario. When not attending school, the students reside at the Northern Eagle Student Centre, which employs counsellors and staff to accommodate the student's needs. The school has been in Ear Falls for approximately twelve years. There are nearly fifty students in attendance at the school at any given time. Sergeant Whaley began an informal program with the school when transferred to Ear Falls detachment in 1997. This enabled officers to deal with students on a proactive basis. Officers were encouraged to participate in special functions sporting events, etc. These actions promoted positive interaction and were the foundation for the positive relationship between students and police today. In 1999, officers oversaw the preparation of a grant proposal to the Federal Government in order to further educate and increase the bond already started with officers and students. In 2002, the funding was approved and used to bring high-profile, positive role models to speak to the students. During 2002 and 2003, the funding was also utilized as an incentive for students, who best exemplified standards. They would accompany two officers to enjoy new cultural and educational experiences as well as attend professional sporting events, in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Officers have also developed skills and implemented new programs that teaches Aboriginal youth cultural integrity and is designed to bring them back to their roots.