



VANCOUVER POLICE DEPARTMENT

James P. McElvain, Ph.D.
Chief of Police



January 14, 2016

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter in support of Katherine Garrett's nomination for an Iris Award. As a Law Enforcement Officer for more than 25 years I have had a range of experience working with community members including those living on the streets. For the year of 2015, I also served on Share's board and had a bird's eye view of how issues around homelessness were seen from their perspective. 2015 also brought a significant amount of public awareness to the issue of homelessness, as the number of people visibly living on the streets escalated.

My work, has given me many opportunities to see a variety of struggles that can largely remain hidden from the general public. In the past year, I have been repeatedly impressed by the work of Katherine Garrett as she continually expresses compassion and understanding for people whom others may turn away from. Katherine's 14 years of experience has not jaded her but rather inspires her to advocate and encourage people who are homeless to have hope and to move forward in bettering their lives. This past fall, Katherine and I worked hand in hand, setting aside traditional barriers between the police and social service providers to collaborate on our joint goal of having a healthy and safe community for all. We worked alongside each other to ensure that those who had difficulty caring for themselves would not be forgotten on our streets.

I feel continuously inspired and motivated by community members who are dedicated to causes bigger than themselves. Katherine has proven herself to be one of those tireless proponents. She has joined community efforts to pick up trash, repeatedly sought to find a way to squeeze in another person so that people would not be exposed to potential harm on our streets, especially in the coldest months. She has been and incredible resource to the community, especially downtown as businesses struggle to find the best way to address homelessness on their doorstep.

Proudly, I support Katherine Garrett's nomination for the Iris Award and I ask that you recognize her passion and commitment with this honor. Please contact me if I can provide any further helpful information.

Sincerely,

Amy Foster, Commander Vancouver Police Department
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