



**ONTARIO ASSOCIATION
OF PARAMEDIC CHIEFS**



For Immediate Release – October 8, 2025

Exceptional individuals recognized by the Ontario Association of Paramedic Chiefs for outstanding contributions to paramedicine

(Toronto) – At its annual Honours and Awards Ceremony and Dinner held in London, Ontario on September 25, 2025, the Ontario Association of Paramedic Chiefs (OAPC) presented several special awards to deserving recipients.

The OAPC President's Award recipients are:

Retired Chief Michael C. Sanderson of Hamilton Paramedic Services
Deputy Chief Melissa Roney of Greater Sudbury Paramedic Services
Deputy Chief Sarah Francom of Halton Paramedic Services

The Richard J. Armstrong Leadership Award recipient is:

Chief Joseph Nicholls of Greater Sudbury Paramedic Services

OAPC Humanitarian Award recipients are:

Superintendent Craig McCleary and Deputy Chief Santo Pasqua of Hamilton Paramedic Services

“As the OAPC celebrates its 25th anniversary and this year’s symposium theme of “Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow + AI, the paramedic system in Ontario is being built with the strong advocacy and support of many individuals for the betterment of Ontarians,” said OAPC President Greg Sage. “We’re proud to recognize these individuals who have served selflessly to help advance that system.”

Please refer to the attached Backgrounder for further details. Photos available upon request.

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BACKGROUNDER

The following awards were presented at the 2025 Ontario Association of Paramedic Chiefs' Honours and Awards Ceremony and Dinner held on September 25, 2025. The awards are given in recognition of excellence in paramedic services and the practice of paramedicine in Ontario.

The OAPC President's Award

The OAPC President's Award may be awarded annually to an individual recognized for both outstanding leadership and significant contributions to Paramedicine in Ontario. The award may be presented for a particular action or a continuing commitment that the President of the OAPC views as worthy of recognition.

A recipient of the 2025 President's Award is Michael C. Sanderson, retired Chief of Hamilton Paramedic Services.

With a career spanning over five decades, Chief Sanderson has dedicated his life to advancing paramedicine at the local, provincial, national, and international levels.

A graduate of Humber College's Ambulance and Emergency Care program in 1977, Chief Sanderson has held numerous roles throughout his career, including paramedic, educator, and executive leader. Prior to his appointment in Hamilton, he served as Executive Director at BC Ambulance, where he led EMS operations during the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics and Paralympics.

Chief Sanderson is a recipient of the Premier's Award for Health Sciences from Humber College and has been honoured with the EMS Exemplary Service Medal, receiving the rare Third Bar in recognition of 50 years of service—an honour held by only a handful of paramedics across Canada. He has served as the President of the OAPC, on the Executive of the Paramedic Chiefs of Canada and is currently the past-president of our association.

Additional Recipients of the 2025 President's Award are Melissa Roney, Deputy Chief of Greater Sudbury Paramedic Services and Sarah Francom, Deputy Chief of Halton Region Paramedic Services.

Deputy Chief Roney and Deputy Chief Francom Co-Chair the OAPC Women in Paramedic Leadership (WIPL) Committee. The important work of this committee began as the vision of Past President Peter F. Dundas to focus on equity and inclusion within the ranks of Ontario's paramedic services. Building on that vision, Melissa and Sarah have worked tirelessly to raise awareness of the challenges women face in pursuing leadership roles within the profession and to find solutions for meaningful change.

The Richard J. Armstrong (RJA) Leadership Award

The Richard J. Armstrong Leadership Award, named for our dear friend and "Father" of the association, may be awarded annually to an individual recognized for both outstanding leadership and significant contributions to Paramedicine in Ontario. The award may be presented for a particular action or a continuing commitment that the committee views as worthy of the award. It was presented for the first time at the Annual AMEMSO conference in London, in September 2008. It is important that we recognize



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Ontario's finest Chiefs, Deputy Chiefs and Managers.

The recipient of the 2025 Richard J. Armstrong Leadership Award is Chief Joseph Nicholls of Greater Sudbury Paramedic Service.

Chief Nicholls has demonstrated outstanding leadership in advancing clinical paramedicine practice by championing the successful implementation of multiple high-impact technologies and protocols that directly enhance prehospital patient care and paramedic education. Through his unwavering support, paramedics within the service have been equipped with advanced tools and evidence-based protocols, reinforcing a culture of clinical excellence and continuous learning. Chief Nicholls has created an environment where innovation is matched with robust instructional support. His leadership has directly contributed to elevating clinical confidence and performance across the paramedic service.

OAPC Humanitarian Award

The OAPC Humanitarian Award (introduced in 2012) recognizes an act or acts of unselfish donation of time and/or money by paramedic or emergency medical services professionals to relieve the suffering of humanity. Such activities may include disaster relief (at home or abroad) or the compassionate and altruistic support provided to refugees.

The recipients of the 2025 OAPC Humanitarian Award are Superintendent Craig McCleary and Deputy Chief Santo Pasqua of Hamilton Paramedic Services (HPS)

For the past 20 years Craig and Santo have been the driving force behind the annual City Kidz Toy Drive, which brings joy and hope to underprivileged children who might otherwise go without during the holiday season. Both have worked tirelessly to make the annual City Kidz Toy Drive a resounding success. They work with local businesses, community leaders and volunteers to gather toys and monetary contributions to donate to the local children's charity. Every year Craig and Santo work with a local Walmart, community partners and volunteers to park several ambulances outside and encourage people to stuff both ambulances with unwrapped, unopened toys that will later be donated to City Kidz. No matter the weather, Craig, Santo and an HPS crew of volunteers bring energy and excitement to the Walmart parking lot, encouraging people to donate what they can to a good cause. With many toys and donations, the annual toy drive ensures that each child receives a gift under the Christmas tree.