

Featured Keynote Speakers

Conference Opening Speaker

Saturday April 27 8:15 am



Education Minister **Demetrios Nicolaides**

Demetrios Nicolaides was sworn in as Minister of Education on June 9, 2023. He previously served as the Minister of Advanced Education.

Prior to his service as an elected official, Mr. Nicolaides served as the head of the Calgary office for a national communication-consulting firm. In this role, he worked with senior business leaders across Canada and Alberta, working closely with key players in Alberta's energy sector.

An expert in conflict resolution, he has extensive training in arbitration, is an accredited mediator and has a PhD in the field. Mr. Nicolaides was active in peacebuilding and reconciliation activities in Cyprus and has consulted in high-stakes arbitrations and regulatory hearings in Alberta, B.C. and Manitoba.

Mr. Nicolaides is a born and raised Calgarian and long-time resident of Calgary-Bow. He lives in Cougar Ridge with his wife and 2 daughters, and volunteers extensively in his community.

Demetrios Nicolaides was first elected as the Member of the Legislative Assembly for Calgary-Bow on April 16, 2019 and was re-elected on May 29, 2023.

Conference Keynote Speaker



Saturday April 27 10:45 am

Barbara Coloroso

Just Because it's not Wrong, Doesn't Make it Right

"Just because it's not wrong, doesn't make it right - teaching kids to think and act ethically."

A presentation packed with solid practical advice on how to use the stuff of everyday life to teach children to act with integrity, civility, and compassion. Beginning with the idea that it is in us to care, that we are born with an innate capacity for compassion, Barbara Coloroso shows professionals, educators, and parents how to nurture and guide children's ethical lives from toddlerhood through the teen years using everyday situations at home, at school, in social settings, and in the world at large.

- How to develop an ethic rooted in deep caring with principles, virtues, and values that are in the service to and at the service of that caring.
- The why and how to teach our children to think and act ethically.
- The possibilities and pitfalls of character education programs.
- Nurturing in children the three antidotes (care deeply, share generously, help willingly) to the virulent agents that are ripping apart the fabric of our human relationships (hating, hoarding, and harming ourselves and others).

- How rigid moral absolutism and shifting moral relativism interfere with raising ethical human beings.
- Media: The Good, the Bad, the Ugly, and the Indifferent—how we can help children use these tools and not be used or consumed by them.
- The difference between punishment and discipline—why one works and the other only appears to.

The story about our human nature in today's social and cultural climate is part and parcel of our human nature and our social and cultural climate. Our story is also guided by our compassion and loving kindness, which recognizes that there is no I without Thou, no We without Community and no way to survive without honoring both our unique individuality and our common humanity.

Barbara Coloroso is an international bestselling author and for the past 53 years an internationally recognized speaker and consultant on parenting, teaching, school discipline, positive school climate, bullying, grieving, nonviolent conflict resolution and restorative justice.

She has appeared on Oprah, CBS, NBC, ABC, CNN and NPR and has been featured in the New York Times, Time, U.S. News & World Report, Newsweek, and other national and international publications.

Her uniquely effective parenting and teaching strategies were developed through her years of training in sociology, special education, and philosophy, as well as field-tested through her experiences as a classroom teacher, laboratory school instructor, university instructor, seminar leader, volunteer in Rwanda, and mother of three grown children. She is the author of four international bestsellers: *kids are worth it!* *Giving Your Child the Gift of Inner Discipline*; *Parenting Through Crisis—Helping Kids in Times of Loss, Grief and Change*; *The Bully, the Bullied, and the Bystander—From Pre-School to High School, How Parents and Teachers Can Help Break the Cycle of Violence*; and *Just Because It's Not Wrong Doesn't Make It Right—From Toddlers to Teens, Teaching Kids to Think and Act Ethically*. Barbara's latest book is *Extraordinary Evil: A Brief History of Genocide...and Why it Matters*. She also has two critically acclaimed video programs *Winning at Parenting...without beating your kids* and *Winning at Teaching...without beating your kids*.

www.kidsareworthit.com

Plenary Presentation



Saturday April 27 12:30 pm

Justice David Hancock

Family and Youth Court – Working us out of Work!

Strengthen your commitment as an engaged parent! Engaged parents create a nurturing space for a child's growth, offering guidance and positive role models to curb delinquency and boost resilience.

Justice Dave Hancock shares his insights rooted in legal, government and education experience, describing how family engagement empowers parents, shaping positive outcomes and steering kids away from the justice system. Engaged parents know and understand that their most important duty is to the best interest of the child, but sometimes forget that means keeping them out of and away from the family disputes. Brain research clearly shows the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) on a child's development. Learn how you can help to reduce the work of the Family and Youth Court, through understanding how adversarial family breakdowns and Family Law situations can unnecessarily impact children, often causing behaviours that result in those children entering the justice system.

Justice David Hancock brings with him a wealth of experience in both the legal and political fields as well as a strong focus on community building. His early years were in small indigenous communities in northern BC (Hazelton) and Alberta (Fort Vermilion) where his father served as store manager for the Hudson's Bay Company (the last fur-trader/factor buying fur in the store) and his Mother taught school.

After graduating from High School in La Crete, Alberta his educational journey includes a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, Economics, and History (1976) and a Bachelor of Laws (1979) both from the University of Alberta. Justice Hancock also received an Honorary Bachelor of Applied Science from Olds College (2006), an Honorary Doctor of Laws from the University of Alberta and a Doctor of Laws from Athabasca University (both in 2015).

In addition to his experience in law practicing with Matheson & Company for 18 years, Justice Hancock served as a Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) for the Edmonton-Whitemud constituency from 1997 to 2014.

During his time in office, Justice Hancock held many ministerial positions including Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs, Justice (Attorney General and Solicitor General), Advanced Education, Health and Wellness, Education, Human Services, Innovation and Advanced Education as well as Deputy Premier.

In different portfolios Dave was proud to lead major policy developments including the:

- Aboriginal Policy Framework (Alberta government dealing with First Nations and Indigenous peoples on a Government-to-Government Basis)
- Government of Alberta 20 Year Strategic Plan – Today's Opportunities, Tomorrow's Promise – Unleashing Innovation, Leading in Learning, Competing in a Global Marketplace & Making Alberta the Best Place to Live, Work and Visit
- Access to the Future Act
- A Learning Alberta – Advancing Education (Adult and Postsecondary)
- Setting the Direction – Meeting the educational needs of students with disabilities and diverse needs
- Inspiring Education - What does an educated Albertan look like 30 years from now?
- Alberta's Social Policy Framework
- Alberta's Children First Act

He actively participated in committees such as Agenda and Priorities and Treasury Board within the Executive Council. Also, he served as the vice chair or chair of the Legislation Review Committee and was Government House Leader for most of his time in the Assembly. He capped his time in government serving as Alberta's 15th Premier.

Following his political career, Justice Hancock worked as counsel at Dentons Edmonton, on their Government Affairs and Public Policy team. His areas of interest included Innovation and Technology, International Trade for Alberta's small and medium-sized businesses, Education, and Aboriginal and First Nation economic opportunities.

Dave has also served on many governance boards, both for-profit and not-for-profit organizations, primarily in the enumerated fields, including Classroom Connections Learning Foundation, First Nations Education Fund, BioNuetra Global Inc., Serious Labs Inc., and TEC Edmonton.

On December 5, 2017, Justice Hancock was appointed to the Provincial Court of Alberta (now known as the Alberta Court of Justice). His journey through the political and judicial realms reflects an unwavering commitment to public service and access to justice.