

September 25, 2019

## **The gift of our wounds - A Sikh and a former white supremacist find forgiveness after hate**

Edmonton – In partnership with the City of Edmonton, this year's Understanding Hate Series will focus on building empathy and compassion after a tragic and hate fueled event. The story is one of triumph of love over hate and of two men who breached a great divide to find compassion and forgiveness.

"Our speakers – Pardeep Kaleka and Arno Michaelis – were brought together after the 2012 shooting in a Sikh Temple (Gurwara) in Wisconsin, where six people were killed," said Irfan Chaudhry, director, Office of Human Rights, Diversity and Equity at MacEwan University. "One of the individuals killed was Pardeep's father – leader of the Gurwara."

Kaleka was devastated. His father was now dead. He wondered why this was happening to him. His family had immigrated from India when he was young and had done everything right. Meanwhile, Arno Michaelis, a former skinhead and founder of one of the largest skinhead organizations had spent years committing terrible acts in the name of white power. When he heard about the attack, waves of guilt washed over him and he knew he had to take action and fight the very crimes he used to commit.

"It's important to listen and learn from those stories, especially in these polarizing times, as it provides us with hope and empathy in the face of hatred, bias, and extremism," says Chaudhry. "Through storytelling, Kaleka and Michaelis will showcase how to practice compassion and encourage the audience to explore their own experiences."

When: October 4

Time: 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Where: CN Conference Theatre, 5-142 (Building 5 room 142)

This is a free presentation. [Click here to RSVP.](#)

*Founded in 1971, MacEwan University inspires its students with a powerful combination of academic excellence and personal learning experiences. Offering more than 65 programs including undergraduate degrees, applied degrees, diplomas, certificates, continuing education and corporate training, the university provides a transformative education in a creative, collaborative and supportive learning environment where creativity and innovation thrive. Located in Edmonton, Alberta Canada, MacEwan University offers a unique student experience that opens up diverse pathways for achievement and growth.*

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