



COMMISSION ON SEXUAL & DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Inspiring and coordinating community efforts to address sexual and domestic violence

March 8, 2022

Executive Satpal Sidhu
311 Grand Avenue
Bellingham, WA 98225

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WHATCOM COUNTY
EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE

Dear Executive Sidhu,

The Bellingham-Whatcom County Commission on Sexual & Domestic Violence would like to recommend the appointment of Katie Plewa Olvera, licensed professional counselor at KPO counseling and professor at Western Washington University, for the domestic violence/sexual assault victim service provider position with Whatcom County.

Katie has been serving on the DV Commission since 2015 as an appointee by the City of Bellingham. Katie recently moved out of the City limits and now resides in unincorporated Whatcom County.

Katie has been an engaged, involved, and knowledgeable member of the DV Commission. She is currently the Chair of the Commission and led the agency through a transition in Director this past fall. Katie also was a member of our multi-disciplinary team which led the audit of the criminal legal system response to sexual assault in Whatcom County; Katie was an essential voice on that audit team for understanding the impact of trauma on survivors as they navigate the legal system.

Katie currently is a counselor in private practice, with a caseload that consists almost completely of survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and child abuse. She specializes in understanding trauma and trauma responses. She has provided training to law enforcement, prosecutors, advocates, and judicial officers on these topics, as well as on the impacts of and mitigating vicarious trauma in our agencies.

Feel free to let me know if you have any questions or comments about any of this recommendation.

Sincerely,

Susan Marks (she/her)
Director