

# 2023 WORKER MEMORIAL DAY

APRIL 27, 2023

Commemorating workers who  
died in Washington as a result of  
job-related injuries and illnesses.





# 2023 WORKER MEMORIAL DAY

April 27, 2023 | L&I Auditorium

## *Welcome*

**Joel Sacks**, Director, Department of Labor & Industries

## *Posting of the Colors*

**Thurston County Honor Guard**

## *Invocation and Benediction*

**Jeffrey Jones**, DOC Chaplain,  
Cedar Creek Corrections Center

## *Speakers*

**Governor Jay Inslee**

**Cherika Carter**, Secretary Treasurer,  
Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO

**Bob Battles**, General Counsel and Government Affairs  
Director, Association of Washington Business

**Karen Michael**, Industrial Hygiene Manager,  
L&I, Division of Occupational Safety and Health

**Catherine Pederson**, Program Manager,  
L&I, Claims Specialty Services

**Mandi Kime**, Director of Safety, Associated General  
Contractors of Washington; Kids' Chance Board Member

## *Musical Tributes*

**Scott Dellinger and Shawn Lamb**,  
Puget Sound Fire Fighters Pipes and Drums

**Tumwater High School Noteables Choir**

## *Bell Ringer*

**Shawn Crimmins**, Assistant Chief,  
Tumwater Fire Department

## *Sign Language Interpreters*

**Terry Dockter and Colleen Jones**



*Tributes provided by  
family and friends of  
workers lost in 2022*





### **Jonas Brown, 35**

Jonas worked the graveyard shift as a security officer at Olympic Medical Center in Port Angeles. It was here that he contracted COVID-19. In his short 35 years, Jonas' life took him on some incredible experiences. He was often the most positive and brightest light in the room and was well-liked by all who knew him. A Corporal in the USMC included a tour of Iraq during Operation Enduring Freedom. God, family and country always came first. He had a strong passion for sports and theater. Though we may not understand, many were touched like never before, giving strength in ways we could never have imagined. Forever in our hearts, goodnight sweet prince! Semper Fi! Ooh Rah!

— Sonja Brown, Mom



### **Karen Brown, 64**

Karen contracted COVID-19 while working as a booking clerk for the Yakima Department of Corrections (YDOC). She battled post-COVID pulmonary fibrosis for 16 months before she passed. She worked for the YDOC for 14 years and enjoyed going to work every day because of the people she worked with. When not at work, Karen enjoyed spending time with her family. She was a loving mother and devoted grandmother who gave all of herself to those she loved. She had many passions including traveling, genealogy, cross-stitch, baking, reading and gardening. She is deeply missed every day.

— Jennifer (Brown) Lewis, daughter



### **David Ellis, 43**

David passed away in a motor vehicle accident involving his work van. He was an amazing father to three beautiful daughters, Alexis, Vanessa and Destiny Ellis. He was a hard worker and very rarely told his boss at Parkinson's Painting "no" when he was asked to come in early or work late—even on his days off. David was an amazing human being who was loved by many and will be missed by some many more.

— Dawn Sands, wife



### **Wade Erban, 31**

Wade was a self-professed nerd, a Dungeons and Dragons enthusiast, writer, and all around nice guy with so much patience and love to give. He was newly engaged, gave the best hugs and was a totally awesome dancer! He was a man who gave the impression he was wearing a top hat, even when he wasn't. Wade was at work swimming with the autistic kids, doing belly flops to make them laugh, when the "perfect storm of terribleness" happened — he hit the water at just the wrong time, stopping his heart. He leaves behind his fiance Jordan, Mom Leah, Sister Jenna and Dad Mike, his cat Gary and Murphy the Corgi.

— Leah Erban, mother



### **Kyle Ford, 33**

Kyle was working as a security guard when he was hit by a vehicle that careened into his guard shack at a Shelton lumber mill. He spent his childhood years living in the Skokomish Valley where he made lifelong friends. At 17, Kyle followed in his father's footsteps joining Mason County Fire District 9 where he spent several years serving his community as a firefighter/ EMT, eventually becoming Assistant Chief. He later went to work for ASC security and was named to the leadership team in 2018. Kyle was a beloved son, brother, uncle and friend. We miss him every day.

— Tracy Ford, mother



### **John Garner, 45**

John died suddenly from heart issues after intensive water rescue training as a firefighter at Central Pierce Fire and Rescue. He lived in Tenino with the love of his life, Carlyn Parker, his son Preston and dog Ruby. John was very proud of his man cave and showed it off to anyone who stopped by. His new hobby was smoking whiskey and he would love to show off his newly found skill. John not only dedicated his life to a profession that served others, but also dedicated his personal life to doing the same. John's life may have been cut short, but he touched the hearts of many while he was here with us.

— Laura Bohannon, sister



### **Armando Gómez-Reyes, 25**

Armando was a housekeeper at a motel when he was fatally stabbed. He was a son, father, brother, uncle, and nephew. He loved spending time with his family and he worked hard to provide for his two beautiful daughters. He loved pets and he really enjoyed barbecuing. Armando had a heart of gold. He would help anyone that needed it by putting others first before himself. He brought joy with him wherever he went, always made everyone laugh no matter what the situation was. We miss him terribly. He will forever be in our hearts and we will keep his memory alive.

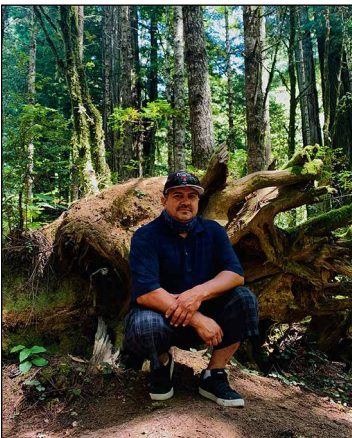
— Jessie Gómez, mother; Alexis Chivers, girlfriend; Angelina, Sylvia and Selena Gómez, sisters



### **Jose Guerrero Rosario, 43**

Jose was on his way to work at Dovex Fruit Company when he was killed in a car accident. He was a farmworker at Dovex for more than 20 years. Jose was born in a small ranch in Oaxaca, Mexico called El Liró. He was loved by many people in Quincy, the small town where he lived. Jose enjoyed working on cars and loved his home. His death left a great impact on his family and friends. We will forever remember my dad and are proud of everything he worked so hard for.

— Yazmin Guerrero, daughter



### **René Huizar Jara, 44**

René was working as a construction laborer when he died in a fatal fall. He was a loving, caring, adventurous, free spirited, smart, strong, and happy individual who made everyone laugh. He loved cooking and spending time with family and friends in the outdoors, which he called “into the wild.” René had a great sense of humor and endless nicknames like, “Rana, Sasquatch, Hulk, Popeye, and Amore” were always funny to his nieces and nephews. He would say, “I want y’all to remember me the way that I am.” René was my greatest supporter. He was my everything. He will always be missed and live in our hearts forever. We love you, Rana!

— Belen Cardenas, wife



### **Dave Knoedler, 48**

Dave passed away when he fell from atop a 20-foot ladder. Dave was a loving husband, father, son, and brother. He lived life passionately and left us with countless memories of laughter and adventure. He climbed many mountains including Mt. Hood, Mt. Shasta, and Mt. Rainer. He owned and operated Advance Lighting, LLC and served his customers and employees with kindness and efficiency. His legacy of light lives on through his business, his employees, and through his wife and children. The light Dave shone was a reflection of the God he worshipped and who he is now with. Dave's life is a testimony of joy and faith in the goodness of God.

— Anne Knoedler, wife



### **Thomas Lorezca, 40**

Thomas was working as a plumber for Beacon Plumbing when he was shot and killed. He was a lifelong resident of Kent and a 2000 graduate of Kent High School. Thomas was a devoted son to his parents, Nelson and Crispina, and a great brother to Christopher, Boris, and Kenny. Thomas was an avid car enthusiast. A real “jack of all trades” and a problem solver who often took on difficult projects at work or around the house. He was a playful uncle to Raylen and a loving “dog dad” to his five-year-old dog, Alpine. He is deeply missed by his family, friends, coworkers and countless others.

— Crispina Lorezca, mother



### **Chadwick Mittleider, 52**

Chad passed away after suffering a heart attack while working as a firefighter with the Aberdeen Fire Department. Chad left a legacy of selfless service. Chad's journey in the fire service began in 1990. He was also as the owner/operator of Mitts Tractor Works. Through his company, he donated time and equipment for improving athletic fields in the area. If there wasn't a field to play on, he would build it. He loved teaching life skills and mentoring through coaching sports, especially basketball and softball. He enjoyed fishing and hunting. Most of all he enjoyed spending time with family.

— Danielle and Kaydee Mittleider, wife and daughter





### **Don Sahota, 52**

Officer Don Sahota died protecting his family and community. He served as a law enforcement officer for 28 years at the Gresham, Port of Portland, and Vancouver Police Departments. He strived to make his community a safer place and he loved working towards that goal with his law enforcement family. Don was a devoted husband and father, which was evident in the many activities, trips, and hobbies he shared with his family. He was a man of many talents and skills, and always ready to help those in need. We will always remember his contagious smile and love of life. He will remain in our hearts forever.

— Dawnese Sahota, wife



### **Demetrius Sellers, 32**

Demetrius was working in a trench when it collapsed on him. Affectionately called "Meechie", he was loved by so many people especially his family. Demetrius always did what he could to help others. He will always be remembered and forever loved.

— Barbara Harris-Bojang, mother



# The State of Washington



## Proclamation

**WHEREAS**, in 2022, job-related injuries and illnesses cut short the lives of more than 100 workers in Washington; and

WHEREAS, loved ones, friends, and co-workers of fallen workers experience untold pain and suffering; and

WHEREAS, the families of fallen workers experience economic hardship, as well as emotional devastation; and

WHEREAS, business, labor, and government must remain diligent in their efforts to prevent workplace deaths, injuries, and disease; and

WHEREAS, a memorial ceremony provides all in Washington an opportunity to pay tribute to fallen workers and rededicate ourselves to workplace safety and health;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Jay Inslee, Governor of the state of Washington, do hereby proclaim April 27, 2023, as

### *Worker Memorial Day*

in Washington, and I encourage all people in our state to join me in this important observance.

Signed this 7<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2023

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jay Inslee".

Governor Jay Inslee



Nicholas Aceves ▪ Christopher L. Adams ▪ Zakariya Ahmed  
David Ameh ▪ Brian J. Anderson ▪ Dale V. Archer  
Joseph E. Arient ▪ Darian P. Atkinson ▪ Luis G. Bastian Flores  
Oliver Bastien III ▪ Luis I. Batayola ▪ Gregory A. Bates  
Gerardo Bautista León ▪ Tracy E. Berry ▪ Tyler M. Boitano  
Christopher L. Braae ▪ Douglas Brant ▪ Scott A. Brenneman  
Jordan B. Brown ▪ Jonas S. Brown ▪ Karen M. Brown  
Lois A. Bumgarner ▪ Rodney C. Buoy ▪ Justin M. Burke  
Marylin J. Byerley ▪ Dominique B. Calata ▪ Dean A. Crosswhite  
Cong K. Dam ▪ Hoa Duong ▪ Jimmy E. Duschel  
Frederick W. Duzan ▪ Candi J. Ehresmann ▪ David Ellis  
Wade M. Erban ▪ Michael E. Erickson ▪ Justin D. Evans  
Leslie G. Faelnar ▪ Kyle J. Ford ▪ Ryan A. Gallemore  
Robert F. García ▪ John M. Garner ▪ Surjit S. Gill ▪ Myrl Gjestrum  
Armando C. Gómez-Reyes ▪ Hirineo L. Gonzáles Chávez  
Brian T. Granstrom ▪ Jose Guerrero Rosario ▪ Gregory D. Hall  
Daniel F. Heberer ▪ Melecio Herrera Viveros ▪ Phillip D. High  
William W. Hill ▪ Len A. Hill Jr. ▪ Douglas L. Howe  
René Huízar Jara ▪ Jordan T. Jackson ▪ Margaret M. Jimenez  
Elmer D. Joe ▪ Fernando Juarez Lopez ▪ Kevin K. Kasper  
Alvin H. Keck ▪ Joseph B. Killian ▪ Doyle G. Klemetsen  
Leland H. Knapp III ▪ David Knoedler ▪ Justin R. Krumbah

Nathan Lachendro ▪ Raymond Lam ▪ Maximiliano Lara-Patracá  
Pedro Larez López ▪ Troy J. Larson ▪ George P. Laverty II  
Richard D. Ledford ▪ Thomas M. Lorezca ▪ Scott A. Martin  
Gerald L. Massengale ▪ Joseph Masterson ▪ Felix D. Melero  
Ray A. Midkiff ▪ Amos Milan Nieblas ▪ Chadwick J. Mittleider  
Howard F. Monta ▪ Gavin B. Morse ▪ Andrew D. Moseley  
Dennis W. Mulford ▪ Oscar Navidad Velázquez ▪ Susan L. Noble  
Kenneth North ▪ Edward J. Norton ▪ Kenneth K. Nylund  
David J. Ohler ▪ Pete E. Orgill ▪ Gilberto Paniagua  
Mauro Partida ▪ Seth E. Parvin ▪ Dan W. Patterson  
Isidoro Pérez Mata Jr. ▪ David C. Perkins ▪ Glennis L. Piper  
James L. Plaisted ▪ Nathan W. Precup ▪ Patrick J. Price  
John M. Randazzo ▪ Justin T. Roberts ▪ David W. Robles  
Daniel C. Rocha ▪ Matthew T. Runte ▪ Donald L. Sahota  
Christopher P. Sanders ▪ Douglas W. Scoggins  
Demetrius L. Sellers ▪ Barry L. Sharer ▪ Jose Silva González  
Clint J. Silves ▪ Larry J. Spohn ▪ Aaron W. Spoon  
Glenn E. Starks Jr. ▪ Adam M. Sutner ▪ Michael L. Tu  
Michelle M. Turner ▪ Froylán D. Valdivia ▪ Óscar J. Valero  
Bryan T. Van Brunt ▪ Jeffrey E. Van Gompel ▪ Jerry R. Velásquez  
Abelardo Villanueva García ▪ Daniel E. Wampole  
Duane M. Wharton ▪ Jason B. Winters







The Worker Memorial Garden, on the grounds of the Department of Labor & Industries headquarters in Tumwater, serves as a year-round remembrance of fallen workers.

In 2007, a brass bell sculpture by artist Tom Torrens was donated by the Washington State Building and Construction Trades Council and installed in the garden.

The garden and bell are dedicated to all Washington workers who died from a workplace injury or illness. Each year at the annual Worker Memorial Day ceremony, family and friends ring the bell in honor of their loved ones.