

# Health centre worker honoured for community safety efforts

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EMC News — When Abid Jan started working at the South-East Ottawa Community Health Centre in 2004, he thought he'd be through his assigned task with time to spare in his contract.

His job was to train community leaders, something he had lots of experience with from previous employment. In fact, Mr. Jan said he expected he would complete the task in the first month, and have a few months off to sleep. He couldn't have been more wrong.

After months of little to no participation from community members, Mr. Jan developed a new process of community development, one that would work with area residents and service providers to create a safe and healthy environment. The end result was No Communities Left Behind, a framework so successful in the city's south end, that it's been adopted in communities across the city as a new way of working through issues.

During the first ever Crime Prevention Ottawa (CPO) awards last week, Mr.



Abid Jan, from the South-East Ottawa Community Health Centre, was honoured during the Crime Prevention Ottawa awards ceremony last week. Mr. Jan developed the No Communities Left Behind initiative, which is now being used to promote crime prevention and community safety across the city.

Jan received the Community Safety Leader award for his efforts.

"I think it's great," he said of the award. "I'm looking at it from the perspective of

the many service providers we're involved with."

One of the greatest problems Mr. Jan faced in south Ottawa was the level of fear residents had about getting

involved in their community. He said the fear of retribution from gangs was high and parents faced pressure from their children to stay out of community building activities.

"It was a huge, huge challenge," he said.

"I remember one of the initial meetings; I brought the police in to meet with the community. The community members were hanging in one corner of the room and the police were hanging out in the other side of the room."

Six months later, Mr. Jan said, the police and community members were working together so well that police said they'd acquired more information in a few months than they'd ever learned from the community during the past 10 years.

"We've come a long way from then," he noted.

Mr. Jan said that while he is honoured to be selected for this award, it is important to realize that many people contributed to getting the initiative to where it is now.

"One person is nothing," he said. "There's so much input from so many organizations. It's been team work."