

For April 16, 2018

Moving Forward: 2018 ADWA Annual General Meeting

Our eighth Annual General Meeting will be held on Monday May 7, 2018, starting at 4:30 pm at the Radisson Hotel Edmonton South as part of the annual ACDS conference. We will report on our financial position, advocacy, certification pilot and other member priorities. We will vote on a bylaw change and new board members. There will be discussions to help us move forward, prize draws and chocolate.

Proposed bylaw change: Currently, ADWA has a standard President and Vice-President leadership structure which creates a heavy workload for the President as ex-officio member of all our committees, in addition to meetings with government and partner organizations and much behind-the-scenes work. Traditionally the Vice-President steps in only when asked and may or may not wish to become the next President. We propose to solve the workload and succession issues by adopting a Co-Chair leadership structure instead. The current President and Vice-President descriptions would be replaced as follows:

14. a. Co-Chairs

One of the co-chairs shall be an ex-officio member of each committee. Either one of the co-chairs shall chair all regular and special Board and General Membership meetings and the Executive Committee; undertake the evaluation of the senior staff; act as a Signing Officer for the Association; and be the official spokesperson of the Association.

Your advice is needed: Changes to Employment Standards made January 1, 2018 increased wages paid on [general \(statutory\) holidays](#) and increased [overtime rates](#). It is still unclear whether the government will pay agencies for these costs. Getting contract dollars that cover minimum wage increases is also still in question. We need you to discuss these issues with us so that ADWA can move forward on your behalf. Also, Minister Sabir has promised to give workers a voice in the upcoming PDD review. We need to know how we can ensure that workers will be able to participate. As well, what changes need to happen within PDD services to make it easier for workers to fulfil their role?

Board nominees: This year, ADWA members in good standing will have the opportunity to vote for four of the following six individuals to join the board for a 3-year term. We are pleased to present profiles of this year's candidates for your consideration in reverse-alphabetical order.

Tracy Yaremko currently chairs the Communications Committee and serves on the Finance and Membership Committees. Tracy has worked in the human service industry for 16 years, starting as a group home worker. She earned a diploma in Rehabilitation Studies then became involved in the Diversion Services program under Children's Services for a few years. Tracy was a Service Coordinator for the Alberta Brain Injury Network for over 10 years. Her current position is a Home Living Supports Coordinator at St. Paul Abilities Network where she oversees 9 programs funded through PDD and Alberta Health Services. Tracy has been an active ADWA "champion" at SPAN, learning what is being done to advocate for the disability workers and updating her co-workers "on what ADWA is doing for us."

Tracy Ralph has been an ADWA member since 2016 and is a participant in the ADWA certification pilot. Tracy works for two Calgary service providers and does respite in her home. She serves on the Positive Behaviour Supports Committee in Calgary. Tracy hopes to join the ADWA board because, as she says, "I have a passion for my career." Her mission is to make the world a better place by educating communities about the value that people with disabilities can provide when we explore their talents and gifts. Tracy's education is in exercise for diverse populations, such as seniors and persons with disabilities. She taught a "Programming for Diverse Populations" course in the 2-year Fitness and Health Promotion Program at

Ontario's Fanshawe College. Tracy co-chaired the "Stepping Out Safely" Falls Prevention committee, and co-facilitated a Parkinson Disease support group, among other professional commitments. Tracy is no stranger to politics and advocacy, having run for the London, ON City Council in 2010.

Lindamarie Gossen is a provisional Counselling Psychologist, teaches in Bow Valley College's Disability Studies diploma and FASD certificate program and is the mother of 3 children with varied diagnoses. Lindamarie has over 25 years of experience working with individuals, families, couples and children across numerous support settings including the Native Services, Calgary Counselling Centre, Calgary Catholic Board of Education and the Government of Alberta (FSCD). Her specialization is in Autism Spectrum Disorder, family supports, inclusion and personal advocacy. She has sat on the Autism Calgary Association and Opening Gaits Therapeutic Association boards. Alberta Recreation & Parks Association recognized her work in advancing the field of recreation for people with disabilities. Lindamarie is eager to give back by bringing her advisory skills and background in human services to our organization.

Eldad Ebong is an On-call supervisor and front line worker with Calgary SCOPE Society and has been an ADWA member since 2014. He holds a Bachelor degree in Nursing and a post-graduate diploma in Oncology Nursing. Eldad also has certificates in diversity, intercultural and frontline leadership, and dementia basics. Eldad is seeking a board position in order to "have the opportunity to collaborate with my colleagues to foster and implement ADWA's mission, vision, values and to seek ways establishing a cordial work relationship...between the employer and employee." Among the many issues that Eldad sees as important to ADWA's members are stress in the workplace; meaningful work; job security and career growth opportunities; and better wages and better working conditions. He also wishes to be part of ADWA's efforts to collaborate with the government, promote fairness and dignity, and to promote a high level of self-awareness and sensitivity among disability workers.

Alyssa Deutscher currently works for MirkaCare Services as a team lead, Mandt and Positive Behaviour Supports trainer, and complex behaviour supports administrator. Alyssa started in the field when she was 18 years old. She completed a Social Work diploma at MacEwan University in 2014 and is a registered social worker. Alyssa is "very passionate about supporting and enhancing the lives of the citizens that are supported within the PDD and greater disability services realm." She values the work done to enhance professionalism in our sector and advocate for fair compensation for our workforce. "ADWA allows Community Support Workers' voices to be heard." Over the years, Alyssa has been active in committee work in the Edmonton and North Central regions (e.g., Complex Needs Programming Network, Behaviour Review Committee and MirkaCare's Employee Recognition Committee) and networking across human service sectors (e.g., Edmonton Young Offenders Centre, Primary Care Network, FCSS and CONNECT).

Darren Bennett currently serves on the Certification Committee and chairs the Membership Committee. "As a member of ADWA's board over the past few years, I have seen what ADWA has achieved and I have been supportive in the South region by promoting and educating employees and other service agencies about the vision of ADWA," says Darren. He is responsible for discovering the Perkopolis perks program that now saves our members money on all kinds of purchases. This year he has helped develop and promote the new "ADWA Champions" strategy that will help keep our members better informed and connected with ADWA. Darren has worked in the field for 28 years, starting as a front line worker up to his present job as Executive Director of SASH. He is actively involved with the South Region council of service providers and is a member of the newly-formed ACDS Provincial Human Resources Committee.

Remember, if you cannot be at the Annual General Meeting in person and you are a Full or Student Member in good standing, you can send your proxy votes with another ADWA member who will be there using the proxy vote form found at <https://www.adwa.ca/news-and-events/adwa-events.html>.

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Connect

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