

Election and Candidate Information

The inaugural board members will have the exciting opportunity to work with our Executive Director to shape the strategic direction of SWAA, provide governance leadership, increase membership, and serve, engage and involve members.

There are 13 positions available and each SWAA member can vote for up to 13 candidates. Voting will be confidential and facilitated through an online platform.

SWAA wants to ensure all members have the opportunity to participate in voting for their board. **As a result, voting will take place from September 12-19 via an online platform.** A link to the vote will be shared with all members on September 12. Voting members who are present at the AGM will vote on a motion to elect the winners of the online vote. We had an exceptional response to the invitation to run for election and thank all the great candidates for being willing to serve on the board. Candidates are all members of SWAA in good standing.

Term

Board terms are for two (2) years with a maximum of three (3) consecutive terms. To support staggered board turnover, members of the interim board who are elected to the inaugural board will serve a one-year term and other elected members are asked to commit to a two-year term.

The term for directors elected at the AGM commences at the end of the AGM on Thursday, September 21, 2023.

Information that each candidate provided is below.

We encourage you to review the information carefully before the AGM. Consider the mix of skills, knowledge, experience, including experience on boards or committees, diversity and diversity of perspectives, that are needed on the new board. For More information about board roles and requirements see: <https://www.myswaa.ca/news/seeking-board-members>

SWAA bylaws are also available at:

https://www.myswaa.ca/s/62837069_2_Final_Bylaws-of-the-Social-Workers-Association-of-Alberta_June-21-2022docx.pdf

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Rasheal Charles

Why do you want to become a board member?

I currently serve as the Vice President and would like to continue for the Board in a different capacity. I really enjoy giving back to the profession in a meaningful way and raising the awareness about the profession including learning and developing new skills to advocate for Social Workers within the province.

What skills and experience would you bring to the board?

Rasheal Charles is a vibrant and humble woman who hails from Edmonton, Alberta and of Caribbean descent. She holds both her Bachelor and Master's degrees in Social work from the USA. Over the past 15 years she has worked with children with emotional and behavioral challenges, young people who were sexually exploited, adult women and men in conflict with the law, families in conflict and seniors that experienced domestic violence and abuse. She has spent 20 years in leadership positions and currently, has a private practice in psychotherapy and consulting and works as a Corporate Director for Covenant health. She uses a mindfulness, strengths based approach in all her interactions.

I bring the skills of conflict resolution, problem solving, leadership, public speaking, planning and organizing. I like working on teams and working together to address issues and concerns, is also a great skill set that I bring. I enjoy collaboration and bring a great deal of knowledge of mental health, issues on diversity as it relates to BIPOC and Black communities including Social work students and psychotherapy.

Which role do you feel most suited for and why?

I would be happy to serve as a Committee member.

Keith Goertzen

Why do you want to become a board member?

As the current President of the Interim Board for The Social Workers Association of Alberta, I think it is important to bring continuity to SWAA's first elected board. As a Social Worker with experience in child welfare, addiction and mental health and health policy, I am very excited by the opportunity to promote the profession of Social Work, while advocating for social justice. Many issues relevant to social work are being discussed in the media, amongst other advocacy organizations in, in health care and within government. I think SWAA has an incredible opportunity to promote social work as an option for improving health and mental health care, addiction treatment, harm reduction, child welfare, school mental health and social supports, and community policing.

Additionally, I am excited by the opportunity to create networks of support and professional development for Social Workers across the province who may be experiencing isolation and burnout, or who are looking for opportunities to grow in their social work practice. Having started to build relationships with key groups in Alberta and across the country, I would love the opportunity to continue and advance this work.

What skills and experience would you bring to the board?

I was born and raised in Edmonton, Alberta on Treaty 6 territory. I am a Registered Social Worker with a BSW from the University of Calgary and a Masters in Business Administration (Community Economic Development) from Cape Breton University.

My frontline work experience includes Child Welfare, Community Development with the City of Edmonton, working as the Concurrent, Disorders Specialist on an Assertive Community Treatment team with Radius Health (formerly Boyle McCauley Health Centre). 6 years ago, I joined Alberta Health Services and worked on a number of Addiction and Mental Health policies, as well as providing provincial leadership to establish the AMH Rural Central Access program. Currently, I am the Director of Provincial Policy Services for AHS. I bring experience as a frontline Social Worker as well as leadership experience in governance and partner engagement.

I aspire to be a collaborative leader who builds relationships with people by asking good questions, creating an environment of collaboration and trust, and together accomplishing shared goals.

Joining the Interim Board has been a humbling experience. As our membership grows, I am excited to continue to see SWAA grow in size and impact.

Which role do you feel most suited for and why?

I am open to filling the role of past-president, depending on who else is elected to the board. I may also be open to continuing as president, if required.

Mickey Ikuta

I am a registered social worker with an MSW in International Community Development. I live in Calgary and currently I work for Bow Valley College as well as a research team at the University of Calgary. Throughout my career, I have been involved in a diverse range of practices including community development, social justice work for women and girls, research, as well as education and mentorship.

Attributes and values I hold:

- Dependable with a strong sense of commitment to the community and its mandate
- Relational and collaborative – I believe working together with trust and respect is foundational to building a robust and vibrant community.
- Committed to fostering diversity, inclusion, and reconciliation both strategically and through actions at organizational and societal levels.
- Committed to leveraging the strength of diversity to identify and achieve collective goals and successes.
- Committed to supporting and advancing the social work profession

Why do you want to become a board member?

Since January 2022 I have been serving as a member of the SWAA Interim Board. My reason for putting my name forward for the Inaugural board is to provide continuity and support as the new board embarks on the work of leading our newly formed Association. Our Association was

founded a year and a half ago, and though we have laid the foundation, there remains substantial developmental work ahead. I am excited and curious to find out what the next phase of our Association holds.

What skills and experience would you bring to the board?

Board and Committee Experience:

- SWAA: Interim board member, Governance Committee chair, Recruitment Committee member, AGM Committee member 2023
- Calgary Buddhist Temple: Board member, Fundraising Committee chair, Engagement Committee chair 2023
- Human Rights Conference Committee member (Buddhist Temples of Canada) 2019

Practice/Work Experience:

- Frontline social work practice, program coordination
- Developing and facilitating social issues and learning workshops
- Community events planning
- Teaching, mentoring, and supervising students
- Leadership and management
- Policy and procedures development and monitoring
- Evaluations
- Writing funding proposals and reports
- Collaboratively leading anti-racist organizational change
- Strategic planning

Which role do you feel most suited for and why?

I am interested in continuing with governance-related work but also open to other roles.

Diana Adamo

Why do you want to become a board member?

As a recent Master of Social Work (MSW) graduate and a social worker practicing in a non-tradition environment, I am excited by the opportunity to join the Social Work Alberta Association board and contribute to the future of the profession.

During my time as an MSW student at the University of Calgary, I found passion in supporting fellow students and emerging social workers. Pursuing activities such as teaching assistantship, developing a peer mentorship at the University and developing the first student-led Community of Practice at Alberta Health Services (AHS), provided me with insight into current desires, triumphs and challenges of social work students.

Moving into my career as a mezzo practicing social worker, my passion for the profession has grown and refined. I hope to join the board in order to continue participation in the advancement of the profession, advocate for system change and support for social workers, and contribute to the diverse group of individuals within the board.

Lastly, as I am a mezzo practicing social worker practicing in a corporate environment, I am eager to contribute my experiences in program development, evaluation, strategic planning and project management to the board, and opportunities available to SWAA members across the province

What skills and experience would you bring to the board?

After completing my Bachelors of Health Science and Addictions Counselling at the University of Lethbridge, I began my career in Calgary's homeless serving sector. I held a variety of roles ranging from front-line outreach and housing-first, to leadership within an Assertive Community Treatment team. During this time, I found passion for housing policy, system planning and structural theories.

With a desire to further contribute to the housing system, I pursued my Master of Social Work specializing in Leadership in the Human Services. During this time, I contributed to many activities supporting the social work profession, including teaching assistantship, research assistantship, serving on several MSW committees including recruitment, developing a peer mentorship program at the University and developing the first student-led Community of Practice at AHS during my final practicum.

Following my practicum, I continued on with AHS, coordinating a provincial domestic violence prevention project and continuing to contribute to AHS social workers through working groups dedicated to bringing the 'Allied Health Workforce Strategic Plan' to life. Through these working groups I successfully contributed to the allied health student orientation and the development of an allied health mentorship program.

In my current role as a project manager of policy, my responsibilities include data analysis, cross-organizational collaboration and research to provide strategic recommendations to the affordable housing organizations executive leadership team. My team is comprised of individuals possessing business and city planning backgrounds, requiring me to strongly articulate the critical role of social work within our division.

Through my experiences and skills associated with program development, evaluation, strategic planning, project management and recruitment, I believe I can positively contribute to the boards activities and support in the expansion of SWAA across the province.

Which role do you feel most suited for and why?

Through my work experience, I am equipped to support in the governance committee and as a board member, contributing to policy development and strategic planning. Additionally, I am competent to support in relationship building with external stakeholders inclusive of government, educational institutions and other organizations. Lastly, I am eager to explore what other committees may be of value to the development and expansion of SWAA, such as a recruitment committee, advocacy, and professional development opportunities.

Debra Armstrong

Why do you want to become a board member?

Throughout my professional career I have tried to be involved in my community where I live, for the causes I care for, and where I can be of greatest support. This has involved sitting as President of our Community Association where my children were active and community members cared for their neighbourhood. I then moved into another role as President of the Calgary Youth Justice Society, Advisory Committee for Agape Hospice, sat on the Public board for the Alberta Senior Advisory Council, and President of the Board for Families Canada. Today I remain involved in boards as the Treasurer of Insight Counselling and Therapy Centre.

This opportunity would allow me to finally give back to a profession that has been so very good to me. Working with other Social Workers who feel as passionate about our profession as I do would be the highlight of my Board/Governance work. Working on the newly established Social Workers of Alberta Association would allow me to make a real difference in our profession and see the impact we may have on all Alberta Social Workers.

What skills and experience would you bring to the board?

As a young social worker, I began working for Alberta Child and Family Services as a new grad and worked in this area for approximately 3 years. Following that I moved to the City of Calgary as a Community Social Worker for the next 5 years followed by moving to leadership roles in the non-profit sector as Executive Director for the next 10 years. This allowed me to plan and develop intergenerational programs throughout Alberta. I also served as Executive Director for the South West Communities Resource Centre providing programs and services to low income families. As I have wanted to slow down in my career, I took a different turn and trained in Behavioral Sciences to support doctors in Primary Care and offer evidence based interventions for those dealing with depression, stress, anxiety, etc.

My volunteer work outside of my profession was nicely aligned with my values and offered me further opportunities to develop my leadership skills. I have had the privilege of working along side ministers, doctors, corporate executive and observed how they tackle problems, how they carry out certain tasks, how they weigh up potential risks, even how they interact with other people when hard decisions have to be made.

Social Work runs in our family. My sister is a social worker at Trellis, and my niece has her MSW and is doing Humanitarian Work in Vancouver. Needless to say our holiday gatherings make for having the answers to solving the world's problems. I am fortunate to be surrounded by the loving support of my husband Steve, 2 adult boys and their wives, and now my two granddaughters age 3 and 1.

Which role do you feel most suited for and why?

I hope that I have demonstrated my experiences on various boards' and roles. I have seen that determining the best fit and experience will help lead the SWAA to healthy growth and sustainable development.

I feel I could handle most of the role's identified however I find that I am generally drawn to the Governance side of boards. No matter where you see my experience fitting in, you have my commitment that I will respectfully work with other board members to towards achieving a shared set Goals/Objectives.

With the tremendous insight of the Steering Committee, they will ensure that the fit is right, and will find the right mix of experience and knowledge needed to set the proper tone for the development of SWAA.

Chelsea Carter

Why do you want to become a board member?

My aspiration to become a board member of the Social Workers Association of Alberta (SWAA) stems from my deep belief in the transformative power of social work. Guided by an unwavering commitment to promote social justice, diversity, inclusion, and equity, I am dedicated to creating an impact in the field that extends beyond the classroom into the real world.

My desire to enact meaningful change within our society is born from personal experiences with the opioid crisis and mental health challenges. These lived experiences have given me valuable insights into the workings of our social systems and fueled my motivation to develop effective, empathetic policies and programs that reflect the realities faced by many in our community. In my journey as a social work student, I've had the privilege of serving on a social work committee during my first year of studies. This role provided me with a deeper understanding of organizational dynamics, honed my leadership skills, and offered a platform to advocate for budding social workers like myself. This blend of practical experience and academic learning has equipped to bring fresh insights to the SWAA board and contribute to shaping our collective future.

My intention to become a board member of SWAA isn't merely about achieving personal goals. It's an opportunity to immerse myself further in the extensive reach of social work and to use this platform to advocate for change and improvement. It's a commitment to contribute positively to the field, guided by my unwavering belief that through collective effort, we can shape a better world.

What skills and experience would you bring to the board?

Currently, I am completing my undergraduate studies in Social Work at MacEwan University in Edmonton, Alberta, and I am also enrolled in the Brain Story Certification Course offered by the Alberta Family Wellness Initiative. Prior to my foray into social work, I spent over a decade in various roles in organizational management, which honed my skills in talent acquisition, personal development, and program management.

With a commendable track record of 12+ years in business and over two decades of active involvement in community building initiatives, I bring a wealth of practical experience to the SWAA board. My ability to navigate conflict and maintain a professional approach in challenging situations is supported by the Understanding and Managing Conflict Certificate and the Supervisor and Management Program Certificate I've earned.

Additionally, my commitment to social justice is backed by a series of certifications in Anti-Racism, Social Norms & Social Change, and Feminism and Social Justice from reputable institutions such as the University of Colorado Boulder, University of Pennsylvania, and University of California, Santa Cruz, respectively.

My leadership is evident from my position as co-chair of the First-Year Social Work Committee at my university. Furthermore, I am a proud recipient of academic honors, boasting a cumulative GPA of 4.0 during my academic upgrading at NorQuest.

These experiences, combined with my personal journey through mental health, addictions, poverty, and system challenges, make me uniquely equipped for the SWAA board. As a board member, I will strive to uphold and champion the principles of social justice, diversity, inclusion, equity, and decolonization, contributing to the growth and development of the social work profession in Alberta.

Which role do you feel most suited for and why?

At this stage of my career, I feel most suited for the role of general Board Member. This position will enable me to apply my knowledge, skills, and passion while continuing to grow in understanding board governance. I am particularly interested in the work of the Governance Committee, where my certifications in various aspects of social justice could contribute to a broad perspective on issues at hand. As I familiarize myself with board operations, I look forward to the possibility of assuming increased responsibilities and contributing positively to the SWAA board's work.

Joan Farkas

Why do you want to become a board member?

I am a social worker, long-time community activist and advocate. I have worked with several grassroots organizations to promote progressive social policy in Alberta. I have never shied away from speaking out on behalf of the people I serve and have actively lobbied for change with policy makers and other leaders. However, in my experience as a Community Social Worker and as a Sessional Instructor with the Faculty of Social Work, many social workers feel unable to publicly advocate for policy change as they fear backlash from their employers. I believe that SWAA has the potential to be the venue through which social workers can be part of collective advocacy efforts. As an Association, SWAA can link social workers through professional development, community building events and advocacy efforts. This will be an essential task for SWAA. Our new Association has enormous potential to be a leader in Alberta, to promote our profession but more importantly, to use the power of solidarity to fulfill the vision and values of social work.

What skills and experience would you bring to the board?

I have 35 years of social work experience with expertise in community development, critical policy analysis, advocacy, facilitation and teaching. Through my work on numerous community-based initiatives and volunteer experience with two community non-profits, I have demonstrated skills in consensus building, conflict resolution and building effective collaboratives for social change. I am part of various networks made up of activists and changemakers. I will contribute to SWAA by linking our members to these networks that will further our collective efforts for social justice. I will

act as a positive and respectful member of the SWAA Board and have the time and energy to work hard to build SWAA into a successful and recognized organization for social justice in Alberta.

Which role do you feel most suited for and why?

I am open to various positions of the Board but also feel best suited to take leadership role of President or Vice President. I would also like to be in a leadership position on an engagement committee to build our membership or to provide leadership on an advocacy committee.

Cardinal Fomradas

Why do you want to become a board member?

As a board member I will help the new association grow and develop. This association will become the voice of Social Workers in Alberta. As a board member I will guide the association in standing for Social Workers. Working together gives the best results and member involvement allows for better decision making. The opinions of members' matter. My vision for the association is for the association to reflect the priorities of members and to be the voice of Social Workers. A priority for me will be to establish an association publication. ACSW has been forced to discontinue The Advocate due to government mandated changes as to permissible college functions. As an association we need a publication to be the voice of Social Workers and to advocate and promote the Social Work profession.

What skills and experience would you bring to the board?

I have a diverse background of knowledge and skills. My first undergraduate degree was a BEd from the University of Calgary. After teaching for a few years, I switched gears to Social Work. I completed a BSW from Dalhousie University and an MSW from the University of Windsor.

I am a Registered Clinical Social Worker (RCSW) and an Approved Clinical Supervisor with ACSW. I have 15 years of experience as a Social Worker with Alberta Health Services (AHS). I have front line positions in both inpatient and outpatient programs. I have worked throughout the province in both urban and rural areas including the: Calgary Zone, Central Zone, North Zone and South Zone. I have also held several leadership roles. I have been a Clinical Team Leader and a Clinical Supervisor in both inpatient and outpatient programs in AHS. I have also completed three contracts as an Item Writer Consultant for the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB), an international organization composed of all Social Work regulatory authorities in North America.

I have a wealth of governance experience. I have served on the AHS Calgary Zone Social Work Professional Practice Council. I am currently serving on the AHS Provincial Social Work Professional Practice Council. I was also the Co-Chair of the Editorial Board of The Advocate-the official publication of ACSW until it was forced to discontinue. My experience publishing The Advocate will serve well in establishing a publication for our new association.

Which role do you feel most suited for and why?

I feel the role I am most suited for is as a board member. As I have noted in my bio I have served in a number of similar positions on various councils and boards relevant to Social Work practice. I

will bring my governance experience and my Social Work practice knowledge to the association board of directors. My experience in publishing The Advocate will also be an asset as I will advocate for the association to establish its own publication and give Social Workers in Alberta a voice.

Marissa Rachelle Gladue

Why do you want to become a board member?

I am a student entering my 3rd year of Indigenous Social Work (in September) and am passionate about my work in social activism and advocating for the cultural rights and inclusion of Indigenous peoples. I feel it would be an amazing opportunity to work alongside, and learn from, other passionate Social Workers in Alberta who are striving to help strengthen the role and capacity of social service sectors to improve the health and safety of all people. I strongly believe in creating a safer and inclusive society and community for folks who are marginalized and experiencing systemic and social oppression and racial inequities. I believe in building on the traditional cultural knowledge, understanding and awareness of Indigenous cultures and implementing culturally appropriate approaches to healing, and ensuring Indigenous awareness is regulated amongst public and social service providers, and integrating services for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. I believe in promoting evidence-based drug policy reform and campaigning for substance related harms to be recognized and treated as a health issue, not a criminal issue. I believe in providing pathways to healing and recovery for people who have experienced harm due to incarceration and the correctional system. I also believe there are numerous disadvantages with retributive and punitive systems and strongly advocate for restorative justice/practices and Aboriginal justice/healing; that said, I believe in providing pathways to healing and recovery for people who have experienced harm due to incarceration and the correctional system. I have a strong understanding of the central characteristics of social work practice, which is founded upon Indigenous ways of knowing, and have acquired stronger knowledge from an Indigenous historical worldview and a Eurocentric historical perspective and use this knowledge to inform practice. Finally, I am passionate about anti-oppressive frameworks and harm reduction models of practice.

What skills and experience would you bring to the board?

I am Cree First Nations and a proud band member of Mikisew Cree First Nations. I have an educational background in Correctional Services where I studied the Canadian Justice and Legal Systems. In this education, I learnt about the retributive system we adhere to in Canadian society, though we also learnt about Restorative Justice. I have recently completed my second year of my Indigenous Social Work diploma. The Indigenous Social Work Diploma provided a culturally informed program that focuses on Indigenous Knowledge as a form of de-colonization, and integrates social work pedagogy with cultural knowledge to prepare students for social work practices founded on Indigenous knowledge and ways, along with examination of Western concepts and approaches. The program allows for us to be immersed in Indigenous ways whilst also learning of the main pillars of the social work sector. In the fall, I will begin my 3rd year of the Indigenous Bachelor of Social Work at YTC where we will continue to build on Indigenous knowledge and social work pedagogies. As someone who grew up severely culturally disconnected, I am committed to the ongoing learning of Indigenous culture and traditional ways and reclaiming my roots. Reclaiming culture has been an act of resistance to the colonial social

and systemic influence that has otherwise impacted my life from early on, and helps me to become a strong support and voice for other Indigenous people and communities who face social and systemic racial inequities and oppression. I have been involved with the social sector since the start of 2021 where I began working in emergency shelters and bridge to housing. As I continued on this path, I became passionate about advocating for the health and rights of people who use substances and for those experiencing houselessness and other barriers to wellbeing. I have engaged in several volunteer opportunities where I have been able to engage in social activism and am a strong advocate for social justice and systemic reform. My recent and ongoing volunteer roles in community street outreach have given me the opportunities to provide public awareness and to facilitate Naloxone administration training, providing drug education, working to destigmatize substance use while promoting evidence-based harm reduction strategies to mitigate the drug poisoning crisis. I am now a co-founder of an Indigenous-led harm reduction initiative where we provide community Naloxone training and are working on an Indigenous Awareness and Indigenous Harm Reduction workshop to offer to the public and service agencies who wish to increase their cultural knowledge and awareness of Indigenous peoples from both a historical and contemporary context. Our ultimate goal is to foster Indigenous values and ways into our mission in order to foster culturally safe spaces for folks who we support in the community, and integrate harm reduction principles to effectively meet the needs of Indigenous, and non-Indigenous peoples. This role requires ongoing commitments to networking and connecting with other professionals and local agencies who believe in our initiative and want to engage in acts of decolonization. We currently have almost 20 volunteers. We are not exclusively Indigenous representing, as I believe the path to decolonization is best found in collaborative efforts. I value diversity and inclusion, and while my organization is Indigenous-led, we promote a safe space for all who are open to learning, and un-learning, the various ways that colonialism has shaped our every day lives, and perspectives, on both personal and social levels. We have a growing group and I am excited for what opportunities lie ahead. I recently stepped down from my Street Outreach Lead and Social Media Coordinator role with 4B Harm Reduction Society (4BHRS) to embark on my journey co-founding an Indigenous Harm Reduction group. I created the content for the 4BHRS Instagram social media page where I acquired social networking and content creation skills. I have now created a new page for my outreach group where I create daily content and engage with other social networks as we build our name and continue to establish our outreach group. I look forward to growing my skills and learning ways to gain more skills to help me in my advocacy and social activism efforts!

Which role do you feel most suited for and why?

I am open to being considered to a position that would best fit my experiences and skills. I currently am employed in the housing sector, and am a continuing student pursuing my Bachelors in Indigenous Social Work. I believe I would also be well suited for a student role.

Lateef Habib

Why do you want to become a board member?

Social Work is my purpose and passion in life. I love what I do. In addition, I would welcome the opportunity to serve on the SWAA board as a Board of Director. I believe teamwork makes the dream work. Subsequently, I am constantly pursuing my own growth as a clinical supervisor, educator and therapist. I believe that helpers are energized by fresh ideas and approaches. As a

board member, I would draw upon my experience in the field as well as my professional network to help the board organize events. In addition, my teaching background as a Sessional Instructor at the Faculty of Social Work at the University of Calgary and my connections with BSW and MSW students can aid to help increase interest in joining the SWAA as well as encourage students to participate and join SWAA.

What skills and experience would you bring to the board?

Lateef provides clinical leadership and support to clinical staff. He has a demonstrated ability to lead care teams with highest standards of integrity and ethics. Lateef Habib Is the Clinical Supervisor for Community Addiction & Mental Health Clinic (CAMHC) - Northwest Campus and Women's Mental Health Clinic (WMHC). Prior to that he was the Clinical Supervisor of Psychiatric Adult Services (PAS) at Foothills Medical Centre. Prior to PAS he was the Clinical Supervisor of the Calgary Eating Disorder Program (CEDP) at AHS for several years. He is a Registered Clinical Social Worker and Approved Clinical Supervisor (RCSW) with the Alberta College of Social Workers (ACSW). Lateef obtained his Master of Science Degree in Social Work (Advanced Clinical Specialization) from Columbia University in the City of New York. In addition, Lateef Habib is a skilled psychotherapist with over 25 years of experience; he provides Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), Accelerated Resolution Therapy (ART), Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT), Mindfulness, Motivation Interviewing, Seeking Safety, Individual, Family and Group therapy. He has treated many patients with Anxiety, Addictions, Eating Disorders and Mood Disorders. Lateef is a Sessional Instructor, Faculty Field Instructor and Field Faculty External Supervisor with the University of Calgary, Faculty of Social Work. Lateef was the recipient of the 2022 Faculty of Social Work Student Supervision, Mentorship and Support Teaching Excellence Award.

Which role do you feel most suited for and why?

Lateef served as President of the Board of Directors for the Southwest Regional Mental Health Board (SWRMHB) from 2015 -2016 and prior to that he was Vice President for SWRMHB from 2014-2015 and he served as Board Member for several years prior to that. He has passion for working collaboratively with other Board Members as well as experience. Subsequently, I would be most suited for the role as Board Member based on my years of experience on a Board.

Danielle Haldemann

Why do you want to become a board member?

I am passionate about the social work career and future career of social work within the province of Alberta. I would like to be able to be a part of building the association and having a voice for social workers within the private practice setting. I would like to be a part of the SWAA development and advocate in how it can best support social workers within the province.

What skills and experience would you bring to the board?

I am a Registered Social Worker based out of Calgary, Alberta and the owner of Anchored Living Counselling. I have a Master's Degree in Social Work, specializing in Clinical Social Work Practice and have been in the clinical field for over 11 years. I am experienced in medical and mental health settings, and working with diverse populations in non-profit and health care settings. My passion for mental health has led me to a path of working with adults and older

adolescents to provide treatment specializing in trauma. I have experience working within leadership as well as front line work within the community.

Which role do you feel most suited for and why?

I would like to be considered being a board member. I am open to other opportunities as well it would just depend on the time commitment. I would like to do this to give back to my community and fellow social workers. I would like to advance my skills and learn what being a part of a board is, and how my experience and expertise can be interconnected.

Victoria Ige

Why do you want to become a board member?

My passion for social work is deeply rooted in my lived experience. Growing up, I often found myself searching for role models who look like me, who shared similar experiences, and who held positions of power and influence in society. Unfortunately, the representation of Black women in such positions was scarce. This lack of representation fueled my determination to become a visible role model for other Black girls in Canada, and my desire to be a part of the Social Workers Association of Alberta board stems from this commitment.

By becoming a board member, I aim to shatter the glass ceiling and challenge the systemic barriers that have hindered the progress of marginalized communities. My firsthand understanding of the challenges faced by Black communities in Canada equips me with the empathy and insight needed to address their specific needs effectively.

What skills and experience would you bring to the board?

I am passionate driven individual with a deep commitment to social justice and equality. As a Black woman raised in Canada, I bring a unique perspective to the Social Workers Association of Alberta board. My lived experiences have shaped my understanding of the challenges faced by marginalized communities, particularly Black girls and women.

My academic journey has equipped me with a comprehensive understanding of the systemic issues that perpetuate social inequality. I have honed my skills in critical analysis, research, and advocacy, allowing me to effectively identify and address the root causes of social disparities.

Beyond my academic achievements, I have actively engaged in community work and initiatives that focus on empowering marginalized individuals. Through Canadian and international volunteer and work experiences, I have had the opportunity to directly impact the lives of those in need, providing support and advocating human rights. These experiences have enhanced my ability to work collaboratively with diverse stakeholders and navigate complex social issues.

Which role do you feel most suited for and why?

The role that I feel I am best suited for at this time is as a Governance committee member due to my extensive experience and skills in organizational management and policy development. My background and expertise uniquely position me to contribute to the committee's responsibilities effectively.

I bring a strong understanding of governance principles and practices. My academic background in social work, supplemented by professional development in nonprofit management, has equipped me with a solid foundation in organizational governance. My professional experience in leadership roles within the nonprofit sector has provided me with hands on experience and strategic planning. I have actively participated in the formulation and implementation of program policies and procedures, ensuring alignment with best practices. My ability to analyze complex issues, think critically, and make informed decisions would greatly benefit the governance committee's role in overseeing the association's strategic direction.

In addition, my strong communication and collaboration skills make me an effective team member. I have a proven track record of working with diverse stakeholders, facilitating constructive dialogue, and building consensus. I am adept at fostering a culture of accountability, inclusivity, and transparency within organizations, which are essential aspects of effective governance.

Lastly, my commitment to social justice and equity aligns with the governance committee's responsibility to ensure fair representation and decision making. I am dedicated to promoting it diversity and inclusion at all levels of the association, striving for equitable outcomes and opportunities for all members.

Rahul James

Why do you want to become a board member?

My enthusiasm for taking on a board member role stems from my intense zeal for the domain of social work and my belief in my ability to contribute substantially towards fulfilling the Association's purpose and goals. I am assured that by leveraging my comprehensive experience in social work, familiarity with legislative structures, and dedication to social justice, I can infuse an innovative perspective into the board.

It has always been part of my credo to participate actively within my profession above and beyond routine duties. Being able to affect policy changes, advocate for our line of duty, and guide strategic direction for the Association would be privileges that come with being a board member. Furthermore, it excites me to think about refining my leadership qualities even more while broadening connections within the realm of social work.

In addition to this, as a representative on the board I look forward to advocating for fellow workers' benefits in this sector. Contributing input which ties directly into decisions that impact them along with those communities they serve is something deeply meaningful for me. My aspiration is centered upon solidifying Association's standing such that all necessary support systems are made available allowing professionals in social work deliver excellently.

Lastly but importantly too - The fundamental principles governing Association echo vividly with mine over concerns related to social justice as well as diversity inclusion aspects. It's crucial therefore from societal inclusivity standpoint that viewpoints representing overlooked groups based on their race or gender identity including disability barriers faced alongside sexual & gender orientations need greater advocacy platform presence which I intend moving forward

across board decision-making procedures! Board membership provides exactly such larger opportunity pushing reforms beneficial both professionally plus society wide-level thereby driving real change that embed lasting positive shifts.

My fascination with becoming a board member also draws heavily on my unconventional journey as an Asian immigrant and practicing social worker who relocated to Canada four years prior. The unique angle I provide, informed by my experiences in Canada and India, could enhance the Association's comprehension of its varied membership base and contribute towards more effective service. My professional life has exposed me to the instrumental role that diversity and inclusivity play in bolstering results and efficaciously advocating for underrepresented communities. Serving as a board member would allow me to channel these experiences into ensuring the perspectives of BIPOC social workers, along with those of their constituents, are acknowledged and represented at paramount levels. I firmly uphold that fragmenting the homogeneity in leadership roles within our field by increasing veracity of BIPOC voices is crucial. Becoming part of the board could potentially act as an impetus for other like-minded social workers from diverse origins to seek out such influential roles thereby creating a profession that genuinely mirrors the populations we cater to.

What skills and experience would you bring to the board?

I am a committed social worker who boasts both fervor and remarkable experience in the field. I graduated with a Bachelor's degree from the University of Calgary and a Master's degree in Social Work University of Waterloo. Furthermore, I have fortified my avid communication capabilities - written and spoken alike - by obtaining Bachelor's and Master's degrees in English Literature.

My scholarly endeavors have rewarded me with an all-encompassing grasp over prominent social work theories such as Anti-oppressive, social justice theory and principles/approaches like Harm Reduction, Patient-Centered Care, Trauma Informed Care. Additionally, I have completed introductory levels in various modalities like CBT, DBT, MI, and ACT and hold specialized accreditation in Forensic Social Work, ASIST, START Standard First Aid and Naloxone Administration.

Over half a decade spent working as a social worker across Canada and India has enriched me with broad experiences within mixed communities; thereby bolstering my understanding of societal matters derived from diverse cultural foundations. In my present role at Alberta Health Services as a Social Worker, I incorporate Anti-oppressive methods alongside Social Justice-based approaches to deliver necessary solutions.

Imbued through practical exposures are discernible comprehension of legal framework including Immigration Acts along with laws governing Mental Health and Adult Guardianship & Trusteeship Act that have honed problem-solving attributes while enabling enhanced navigation results amid intricate scenarios espousing advocacy for marginalized sections effectively.

Identifying myself as an Asian immigrant makes way for distinct perspectives being brought forward especially regarding difficulties confronted by BIPOC social workers who journey along similar paths thus adding value to diversity-oriented initiatives underpinning the board motives

alongside nurturing inclusivity culture enhancing elements within Alberta's wider body of frontline community builders named 'Social Workers'.

Moreover, being a member of prestigious organizations such as the ACSW, SWAA, IFSW, NOFSW, NIFSW, CSSSW, and IASWG has kept me up-to-date with evolving best practices in the field of social work. I am confident that my skills, qualifications, and passion for social justice make me a strong candidate for the board.

Which role do you feel most suited for and why?

In putting forward my candidacy for a board position at the Alberta Social Workers Association, it's the Committee Chair in the Governance Committee that piques my curiosity. Steered by my professional trajectory in social work and an indefatigable drive towards ongoing education within this sector—alongside my academic accomplishments—I am confident of bringing a distinct understanding of policy development, regulatory frameworks, and industry standards that shape our professional sphere.

Serving as a Social Worker with Alberta Health Services strengthened by my educational background in Social Work has honed my knack to adeptly maneuver intricate systems and legislative environments. This cognitive grasp becomes paramount considering its application for governance responsibilities encompasses not just adherence to existing regulations but also anticipating future shifts within the industry which might demand alterations to our governing platforms.

Boasting half-a-decade-long social work exposure both domestically (Canada) and internationally (India), I can provide extensive insights into compelling societal issues while integrating these eclectic experiences on-board, thus aligning seamlessly with the overall mission of your Governance Committee—a steadfast commitment to ensure impartiality, equality, respectfulness when formulating policies or processes reflecting multifaceted member-views.

Additionally from past roles assuming leadership mantles coupled with active engagement across multiple professional bodies, I have grasped lesson vital—collaboration drives success alongside clear communication channels augmenting participative decision making. Rest assured contemporary responsibilities accompanying this role will be effortlessly shouldered owing to such past learnings thereby enabling me aptly partake in Governance Committee functions effectively.

Lastly but certainly importantly—as an immigrant BIPOC identity-holder now practicing as a licensed social worker—I profoundly resonate with fellow BIPOC members realizing their priorities require much-needed representation on decision-making forums no less important than our very own governance structures. Ensuring such diverse realities find manifestation within association guidelines along with our consequential actions will rank highly among prerogatives if chosen for this role.

Thank you for considering my application, and I look forward to the possibility of contributing to the board in this capacity.

Levis Kabahizi

Why do you want to become a board member?

I am a Black queer social worker who recently graduated with a diploma in social work and currently enrolled at the University of Calgary in the BSW virtual learning circle program. I want to be part of SWAA Board because I believe that my Blackness and Queerness deserves to be represented in this board and that my experiences both personal and professional would make me a great candidate. My commitments as social worker are governed by a desire to address anti-Blackness at all level of society. I believe that being part of SWAA would help impliment change at policy level.

What skills and experience would you bring to the board?

I am a Black Queer immigrant from East Africa, Burundi, I have been in Canada for the past 7 years. I work as a frontline social worker for a harm reduction organization, that support a wide range of vulnerable individuals. I support, advocate, provide referrals to clients who are homeless and substance users. I have never been part of a board before but I am confident that my abilities to work in a collaborative team settings, conflict resolution skills, listening skills, passion of racial justice, working with vulnerable population, my lived experience as a Black Queer immigrant are great asset I would bring to the board.

Which role do you feel most suited for and why?

As a novice in Board membership, I think being a committee member is a role that I can confidently occupy and fulfill.

Young In Kim

Why do you want to become a board member?

I would like to become a board member of SWAA as I have always had a great admiration for people who devote their time, efforts, and energy to keeping a larger group secure. Our field, Social Work, can be a place where a lot of professionals can be overwhelmed physically, emotionally, psychologically, and so on (name anything you can think of!). We need on-hand guidelines, good practices, and a reliable and sturdy structure to keep our fellow members and our clients safe. I want to be part of this. One of many objectives I would like to accomplish as a Board Member is to have cultural competency and cultural sensitivity become normalized and commonplace in our profession in Alberta for everyone with diverse backgrounds - ethnicity, gender, age, race, for example. I founded a non-profit 2 years ago that works in this direction for specific ethnocultural communities, and I would like to share my expertise so that ALL ethnocultural communities in Alberta can benefit from inclusion and understanding from our profession; recognizing and celebrating who we are!

What skills and experience would you bring to the board?

I hold a Psychology degree and a Master's Degree in Social Work. The various roles and positions I have held since include Settlement Counsellor at CCIS, Canada Connects Program facilitator, Temporary Foreign Worker Program Facilitator, mental health counselor at Mind Lab (a

private practice I co-founded, offering Korean and English), and President of Korean Social Services Centre (KSSC), a social services non-profit I founded. The accomplishments I am the most proud of have come from KSSC, where we have obtained funding and subsidies to run many social programs, including a free-cost program aimed at keeping seniors mentally and physically active by providing free weekly classes, an annual anti-racism symposium and multiculturalism celebration, a free tax clinic during tax season for low-income families, a Kids' Summer Camp, a settlement program (aiming to remove language and cultural barriers to access entitlements and benefits for seniors), and translation & interpretation services (providing real-time interpretation and document translation services for immigrants in Calgary to facilitate their integration into Canadian society). I facilitate the monthly general meetings, participate as a speaker to different conferences, recruit new volunteers and new members, and guide program development and funding. From all the work I am involved in, I have been working for years with a variety of residents in Calgary and Alberta, no matter where they are from, what their status is in Canada, and what language they speak. Besides the non-profit that I founded, I have volunteered at many other charities, including the Calgary Korean Lions Club, Habitat for Humanity, Drop-in Centre, and Community Clean-up (City of Calgary).

Which role do you feel most suited for and why?

I can best serve as a committee member dedicated to advancing our profession. There are so many things we can do for our members, from enhancing personal and professional safety, improving the general awareness of liability and ethics, developing skill sets, to maintaining the currency of knowledge. I have always been fond of working with people in general to enhance and advance the system to support them in a better way.

Krista Osborne

Why do you want to become a board member?

It is an exciting opportunity to be involved in the Association when it is so new and just beginning to do the work. I feel like I have lots to offer the board and that the experience of being on the board also has lots to offer me in terms of learning and professional growth. I would like to see our professional association become more active in our province in addressing the social issues that continue to target some of our most vulnerable communities. I believe that our profession has a responsibility to advocate for vulnerable communities and amplify the discourse around issues of social justice.

What skills and experience would you bring to the board?

I am a faculty member at the University of Calgary, Faculty of Social Work with the Central and Northern Alberta Region. I have been teaching at a post-secondary level for 12 years teaching at diploma, BSW and MSW levels. I currently serve as the Team Lead for the Trauma Informed Practice Specialization of the MSW program, and I am a Field Coordinator at the University of Calgary.

I have a background working in a variety of settings including crisis intervention, mental health, community, and health. I worked for 10 years in Alberta Health Services as a social worker and 6 years in the non-profit sector in crisis intervention. I am a Registered Clinical Social Worker. I

currently have a small private practice where I work as a mental health therapist working with youth, families and as a clinical supervisor to emerging practitioners.

I have served on a couple different boards in my life. I served on the board of Giant Steps Preschool for 2 years (one year as the chair) and served on the Board of the SAIF Society for 3 years.

I am a strong advocate and strive to be a strong leader. I am well connected in the community, and I think I can help support the work of the board through those connections. I also like to work hard but also build community while having some fun.

Which role do you feel most suited for and why?

I think currently I am best suited to a general director position that could potentially help on some subcommittees as the need arises. While I would like to take on more advanced roles eventually, currently, I would like to get my legs under me while helping the association grow.

Angela Ross

Why do you want to become a board member?

I have always wanted to see a social work association in Alberta. As a RSW for the past 24 years, the majority of my career has been spent in Alberta, and I had many opportunities to see where a dedicated association could be an asset to myself, peers, students and the profession at large. With the SWAA, I see so many opportunities and would love to lend my skills, knowledge and experience to create a robust association that can fulfill all I have hoped for over my career. As a current Executive Director of a not for profit service delivery organization, I know how important governance is to the success of any organization. I have a keen understanding on the role of governance and how to work with operations to achieve strategic goals and objectives.

What skills and experience would you bring to the board?

I have worked as a social worker both locally and internationally and at all levels, front line, middle management and executive leadership. I have policy and program development experience and have implemented provincial policy and practice enhancements during my time with the Government of Alberta. I have both served on and reported to Boards, and have both governance and operational leadership experience to draw upon. In the last five years I have been working at an executive level and enjoy the nimble agility of the non profit sector. I enjoy finding innovative solutions through connection and collaboration. As I am committed to bringing on new social workers and supporting their journey, I am an active Field Placement Supervisor for the Faculty of Social Work. I learn so much from BSW students, in turn, I provide support and mentorship. As a settler, I have worked with many equity deserving populations as well as those more privileged and am grateful for all that I have been able to experience and learn in community and ceremony with clients and peers alike. I am a mental health advocate and believe strongly in social justice, accessibility and inclusivity. I am also a self-professed social work nerd, as I love the profession and how it fits with my personal values.

Which role do you feel most suited for and why?

I am quite open to any and all positions with the exception of Finance as that is not my area of interest or expertise. I am open to executive leadership roles or committee roles.

Amber Skoczek

Why do you want to become a board member?

I know that being a board member comes with a lot of dedication and responsibility, but it also allows for participation in a space that has the ability to shape, advocate and support social workers in Alberta. I would love the opportunity to be part of the board where I hope that I can help provide more recognition and respect for the profession of social work. I also hope to be able to support members of the association around the issues and concerns that they feel are having the most impact in our profession today and in the future.

What skills and experience would you bring to the board?

I am currently a board member with the Child and Youth Care Association of Alberta, for nearly a year now, and am also chair of the events committee, which I have participated in for the last two years. I believe the experience of being on a board is invaluable in gaining the knowledge, awareness and dedication that it takes to be a part of a board.

Professionally I work as a private practitioner providing trauma-based interventions to individuals. As someone who works in private practice, I recognize specific areas within this realm of social work that could use more advocacy and support and have a strong desire to participate in this role. With private practice being a newer concept in my professional experience, I also recognize other areas of Social Work that could benefit from more advocacy and support. Being able to network to develop better community awareness, advocating and soliciting for professional recognition, and developing spaces for peer support and networking are just a few ways I believe I will be able to bring contribution to the board.

Which role do you feel most suited for and why?

I believe I would be best suited as a board member potentially chairing an events committee as these are the direct experiences I have and enjoy being a part of; however I feel comfortable and happy to be in any role that seems best suited for my skills.

Selena Sliger

Why do you want to become a board member?

With the Health Professions Act of 2019 removing association type activities from ACSW, the networks available to social workers became a desert. Prior to that, previous ACSW committees, activities and training events were not easily accessible by those who work and reside in the rural Northern areas of Alberta.

It is important for me to be a voice and provide perspective from a rural context. I would like to be a part of the new SWAA to create opportunities that include those who work in a variety of areas in rural social work practice. It is important to me to aid in creating opportunities for advocacy and the sharing of research which promotes positive change for marginalized populations in Alberta and supports social workers in meaningful, empowering ways.

What skills and experience would you bring to the board?

I have over 20 years of experience sitting on non-profit boards, in a variety of leadership roles. I currently sit as a student representative on the University of Calgary's Faculty of Social Work Council as well as the University's Research and Partnership Committee. Those roles will be ending in September, as I have completed my MSW - Clinical Specialization and will pass the torch(es) to other student reps. I am looking for new opportunities while I continue my role as Vice President of the Georges P Vanier Educational Committee.

I have experience creating and co-founding local community non-profits such as: the Smoky River Playschool Society, Falher and Area Community and Leisure Activities Society, and Big Lakes Volleyball Club. I am currently in the process of creating the Georges P Vanier Sport Foundation. Additionally, I lead/coordinate a virtual group of people who have recently graduated from the U of C to be a network and a source of support for one another.

My experience in formal and informal leadership opportunities has provided exciting opportunities for me to share information, advocate and enhance the experiences of others. These are possible reasons why I received the University of Calgary's Faculty of Social Work Recognition of Excellence in Student Leadership in May 2023 and the Cullen Ramsay Recognition of Excellence in 2016.

My work experience is of a rural context within Children's Services, Income Support, Mental Health Therapy as well as working with and for First Nations in Northwest Alberta. Additionally, I have three years of experience working in a research context, experience grant writing and performing program evaluations. Community involvement is very important to me, so along with the time spent on various boards, I have coached youth volleyball for the past seven years with a few years in there also coaching youth curling.

My time spent as a frontline social worker, mental health therapist, researcher, advocate, mentor and community activist brings a well-rounded toolkit of skills necessary to be effective on the SWAA board.

Which role do you feel most suited for and why?

The bylaws indicate that committees currently relate to Finance or Governance. Given my previous experience and the fact that I do not have a financial background, I would be best suited for a role related to Governance or as a Director on the board. Based on my experience personally and professionally, it would be most appropriate for me to be involved with committees related to rural practice, advocacy, research, mental health, youth and activities for social workers.

Monique Sundlie

Why do you want to become a board member?

Except for the last year I moved to Edmonton, I have always worked in agencies or for public services in the northern region of Alberta. These organizations allowed me lots of opportunity to collaborate with other professionals. Now that I work from my home based private practice office here in Edmonton, I find myself looking for new challenges that will include professional

collaboration, problem solving and being a part of something that can make a difference in the lives of social workers and the public.

This application (and the extended deadline, thank you) challenges me with a unique opportunity to meet some of my new social and professional development goals.

I want to get valuable experience working in teams of people who have passion for their profession, and for the public's best interest. I believe that a functional board can have lasting positive effects on the perception of the profession by professionals and by the public. I hope to effect a positive influence in the development of this new association of professional social workers.

What skills and experience would you bring to the board?

I graduated with my Community Social Work Diploma in 2005 from Portage College, my BSW from U of C and ~University nuhelot'jne thaiyots'j nistameyimâkanak Blue Quills ~ in 2008, and my Clinical Specialization MSW from U of C and ~University nuhelot'jne thaiyots'j nistameyimâkanak Blue Quills ~ in 2010. I got my RCSW in 2018, and shortly after that I got my Clinical Supervisor designation. I was working on a PhD in Clinical Sexology and in March 2023 I completed ALL BUT DISSERTATION ABD status, which is complete for me.

I have been published in two books on research for applying indigenous healing theories in social work practice, including the use of medicine wheel and the understanding the ethical space in social work practice. I have taught at the diploma, degree and masters levels of social work and I am frequently training developing social workers in professional development training or in supervision and clinical skills training.

I worked at publicly funded agencies (AHS in Mental Health, Forensic Social Work) Not for Profit agencies (assessment, treatment, therapy, groups, domestic violence, sexual trauma, clinical supervision, assistant executive director/clinical supervisor) and in private practice (sex therapy, alternative relationships, Mindfulness-Based Psychedelic Therapy, trauma processing, certified EMDR, social work clinical supervision, dissociation, and more).

I love what I do as a therapist, advocate, and supervisor!

I love the profession of Social Work, and supporting developing social workers to evolve into their best self.

Which role do you feel most suited for and why?

I am interested to sit on the board as a regular board member.

I am personally and professionally interested in these areas:

professional development training,

ethics complaints,

the clinical committee,

improving access to sex-positive social work,

improving access to psychedelic psychotherapy (and variations of it) social work,

improving access to spirituality in social work,

private practice,
clinical supervision

Thank you for your consideration.