

Summary of the Candidates for the Board of Directors- November 14, 2023

Agnes Samler

Agnes Samler was Ontario's first independent Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth, holding that appointment in order to transfer the office from a Ministry base to a fully independent office reporting to the Legislature. Prior to this appointment Agnes was the executive director for Community Living Toronto for 12 years. She is a founding member and current President of Defence for Children International-Canada. Agnes has a long history in youth justice, beginning as a front line worker in a secure detention home, a probation officer, the Director in charge of training schools (secure custody institutions) in the north and east of the province, responsible for closing several of those institutions and replacing them with small community based group homes, and Administrator of Thistleton Regional Centre, a treatment centre for youth including those involved in the justice system. Agnes is deeply committed to ensuring that the voices of children and youth are heard and she is a strong supporter of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Agnes has a BA in Psychology and a Master's Degree in Sociology and Criminology, both from the University of Toronto.

Jane Stewart – B.Sc. (Hons.), J.D. – Litigation Lawyer

Jane is a staff litigation lawyer at Justice for Children and Youth, a legal clinic dedicated to advancing access to justice for children and young people in Ontario. Jane practices in all areas of the clinic's work, including youth criminal justice, education, and child protection and has appeared before all levels of court in Ontario as well as the Supreme Court of Canada, where she represented Justice for Children and Youth as an intervener on matters concerning the rights of children. This year, Jane is the Chair of the Ontario Bar Association's Child and Youth Law Section. Jane is currently on leave from JFCY to pursue an LLM focused on children and the law.

Jason Maher

Jason has been a dedicated supporter for DCI Canada, contributing as a volunteer videographer and web designer for various DCI events, including the Annual Grant Lowery Lecture. Currently, he is taking a leading role in developing a new website for DCI-Canada.

Previously, Jason played a key role in advancing web technologies for Community Living Toronto. Notably, he was involved in the development of ConnectABILITY, an initiative aimed at connecting and supporting individuals with intellectual disabilities, their families, staff, donors, and the broader sector. Jason remains an integral part of the ongoing expansion of ConnectABILITY.

Eric Plato.

Eric is a professional Accountant with a Bachelor of Commerce from McMaster University, a Chartered Professional Accountant, a Certified Management Accountant with Certificate in Social Accounting for Non-Profits and has Completed Social Return on Investment Training.

He is Past Director of Finance Frontier College October 2001 – June 2013 , Past Controller YMCA of Greater Toronto 1990 – 2001, Currently Trainer/Consultant -Plato Training and Consulting July 2013- Present: Supporting not for profit and charitable organizations in financial management; Setting up systems for small newly created not for profits; Training for individuals and groups on financial management; Supporting organizations who are attempting to measure the impact of their programs in the communities they work in Including the Ontario Council for International Cooperation. Eric has served on other NGO boards including the Ontario Council for International Cooperation and the North York Community Centre. He is also Part Time Professor -Not for Profit Corporate Accounting, Post Graduate International Studies Program at Centennial College

William Sparks

Bill Sparks has been an important part of DCI-Canada since 2007. He has held the positions of President, Past President and Vice-President. Prior to his work with DCI-Canada Bill was the Executive Director of the John Howard Society of Ontario. Bill provides leadership to our Strategic Planning Initiatives standing firmly on our commitment to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child but able to expand our work to include other UN initiatives. After our Annual Meeting this evening he will provide an update on our latest Strategic Plan. Bill is often the person on our Board who stands back to let others put forward their opinions but when he speaks others listen as he has the ability to pull together dissenting positions and put forward a position that all can support.

Bill taught at Humber and Centennial Colleges and provided training and support as a Compassion Fatigue Educator. In his work with DCI-Canada he brought skills from each of these positions to expand and enrich this organization. DCI-Canada has been fortunate to have him as a Board member for so many years.

Christina Kim

This is also an opportunity to introduce the newest member of DCI-Canada. Christina has taken on the role of Administrative Assistant. She is currently a student at U of T in Social Sciences and is fluent in English, French and Korean.