



A Word from the President:

It is with a great pleasure that we present these profiles of the women who have stepped forward to serve on our incoming Board and in so doing to serve the millions of women and girls with disabilities from across Canada.

Respectfully,

Carmela Hutchison
President

Un mot de la présidente:

C'est avec grand plaisir que nous vous présentons ces profils de femmes qui se mettent en avant pour servir auprès de notre conseil d'administration, et de cette manière servir les millions de filles et de femmes handicapées à travers le Canada.

Respectueusement,

Carmela Hutchison
Présidente



Judi Johnny – YUKON

Why I am applying for a position on the Board of Directors?

My name is Judi Johnny and I am a two spirited woman from Whitehorse, Yukon. I am of the Wolf Clan and my traditional names are KwaMolas Atje. I was on the Board of DAWN Canada in 1989 and started a sister organization called Women on Wings, for aboriginal women with disabilities.

I am very active and do a lot of volunteer work in my community and sit on several Boards, including the Yukon Status of Women Council, the Yukon International Story Telling Festival; I am President of the Whitehorse Heritage Festival, Chairperson of the Second Opinion Society (an alternative in mental health) and Secretary of the Yukon Council On DisAbility. I also volunteer regularly for the Whitehorse Food Bank (servicing the entire Yukon Territory). BCPA and the CNIB call upon me from time to time to help out with projects in the Yukon Territory. I am also involved with the Yukon Housing Task Force, the Yukon Association for Community Living Dances they have once a month and I am a member of the NDP National Party Disability Caucus.

I have decided to come back to the Board and I would like to stand as the DAWN-RAFH Canada representative for the Yukon Territory because I do not feel that enough attention is given to Northern Communities, particularly, First Nations women. I want to make sure that new funding and new programs for women in the North are inclusive of Aboriginal and Senior disabled women (I just turned 60!). I think that leadership and mentoring are very important. I have really enjoyed working with women with intellectual disabilities for the last fifteen years but have done so by staying on this for a long time and developing their trust and honoring that trust.

J'ai décidé de me présenter au conseil d'administration de DAWN-RAFH Canada car, d'après moi, il existe un manque d'attention porté aux Communautés du Nord, en particulier auprès des femmes autochtones. Je veux m'assurer que les nouveaux fonds et les nouveaux programmes développés pour les femmes du Nord n'excluent ni les aborigènes ni les personnes âgées (je viens d'ailleurs d'avoir 60 ans!). Je trouve le leadership et le mentorat très importants dans ce domaine. Durant les quinze dernières années, j'ai énormément apprécié travailler avec des femmes ayant des déficiences intellectuelles. Ma réussite tient au fait que je suis restée suffisamment pour développer un lien de confiance avec ces femmes que j'ai pu honorer au fil des ans.

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Pauline Duffy – NEWFOUNDLAND

Biography

I graduated from Memorial University in 1993 (Majors in French and Linguistics). I also have a Business Administration Diploma from the College of the North Atlantic (2006). However, I have acquired much more education and knowledge through my life experiences and through volunteering as a woman with a disability.

I discovered a bias when I became a mother. My doctor recommended home support. I did not qualify because I was married. A government employee informed me privately that if I had not been married, I could have qualified for a drug card and for home care assistance. Since their father was there, I did not. I heard other stories of women whose marriages ended or whose husbands had to desert them before they could get help. In my province, being married can be quite a disadvantage.

I sold my house in Clarenville, NL and moved to my hometown of Stephenville (where I had family). I am lucky: I had people who could help me. I went to the media and soon received temporary support. I have settled in Stephenville, NL. Although I am married, my husband continues to work away for long periods of time. My children are past infancy, so there is less risk. I also have family surrounding me now, and I am eternally grateful to them.

I have been a Provincial board member for Epilepsy NL for years. They have saved me in many ways. I have been a public spokesperson for them, and I have tried to assist persons with disabilities in my area. The Status of Women was once a very strong organization for me in my area. I believe that DAWN could make a difference to the Status of Women in NL (and vice-versa). I am presently tutoring part-time. I will be training with a Literacy Association, and I find it very rewarding. Why wouldn't I? I enjoy seeing people succeed and gain confidence. It reminds me of how fortunate I am, how far I have come, and how much I continue to grow.

Why I am applying for a position on the Board of Directors?

Many of DAWN-RAFH's missions have been/continue to be my own: I have had to reach out to others with disabilities. I have also had to educate myself /communicate through other organizations to help myself grow. For instance, to grow as a mother with seizures, it has been important for me to communicate openly with groups like Epilepsy NL and the Status of Women.



There is something that other groups need - particularly the Status of Women in NL. They lack perception of how women with disabilities live. The feeling of being a woman with a disability is not the same as being an abused woman.

They can be connected, but there 'is' a difference. I am aware of this. I have seen much of the discrimination faced by women with disabilities. The isolation goes beyond one of an abused person. There is a feeling of helplessness that remains. Some of the self-image problems are self-induced.

I also see that some women with disabilities fall through the cracks of systems offered by Human Resources, Labour and Employment (HRLE). One example: I know that I often benefit more by not working (through no fault of my own). HRLE either does not understand this or are unequipped to deal with it.

DAWN-RAFH has enough knowledge of such situations to educate/influence strong groups in NL like the Status of Women and the Independent Living Resource Centre. Together, we can help enable HRLE to acknowledge that women continue to fall through the cracks of their system.

With a lot of work, DAWN-RAFH's presence in my province can help educate existing groups. As more groups gain knowledge, HRLE would have to assess their system. Although I would welcome the opportunity to be on the DAWN-RAFH Canada Board of Directors (NL representative), I would be equally content to have just a provincial representative who I could contact for information.

Je partage les mêmes valeurs que DAWN-RAFH Canada, à savoir notamment tendre la main vers d'autres personnes handicapées. J'ai dû travailler sur moi-même, m'éduquer et apprendre à communiquer au sein d'organisations qui m'ont fait grandir. Par exemple, pour devenir mère, il a été important pour moi de communiquer de façon ouverte et libre, et les organismes tels que Epilepsy NL et Condition féminine Canada m'ont beaucoup aidé.

DAWN-RAFH possède suffisamment de connaissances pour apprendre et influencer de groupes forts comme Condition féminine Canada et l' Independent Living Resource Centre. Ensemble, nous pouvons faire reconnaître au Human Resources Labour and Employment (HRLE) que les femmes continuent de tomber dans les failles de leur système.



Avec beaucoup de travail, la présence de DAWN-RAFH Canada dans ma province peut faire évoluer les groupes déjà existants. Si les groupes gagnaient en connaissance et en crédibilité, HRLE, serait obligé de travailler avec eux.

Bien que je serais vraiment ravie d'avoir cette opportunité de représenter ma province au sein du conseil d'administration de DAWN-RAFH Canada, il me ferait tout autant plaisir de savoir qu'il existe une représentante de ma province, qu'il me fera plaisir de contacter pour des informations.

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Robab Haghpanh – NOVA SCOTIA

Why I am applying for a position on the Board of Directors?

My name is Robab Haghpanh and I am the mother of a special needs child. I myself also have physical limitations. I have a Bachelor of Arts degree from Dalhousie University and I have been a social advocate since 2002. I became an advocate because Nova Scotia did not offer behavioral therapy for autistic children at the time. For two years I advocated for autistic children in Nova Scotia to receive behavior therapy; my efforts were successful and in 2004 the provincial government announced that they would provide behavioral therapy for autistic children under six years of age.

In 2007, I successfully advocated stopping the closure of 3 elementary schools in South End Halifax. I also gathered a petition asking the federal government to sign the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities; for this I gathered over 800 signatures in person and handed them in to Alexa Macdough. Canada, signed the United Nations Convention on March 30, 2007.

At the same time, I gathered a petition to stop the closure of the Status of Women offices across the nation; which I also handed in to Alexa Macdough. In 2008, I founded Dalhousie Culture of Autism Awareness Society, with the aim of bringing awareness to our communities to create a more positive environment for children with autism.

Currently, I am board member at CKDU radio. I am also working on a book about my experiences in helping my child to overcome some of the symptoms of autism; I hope that this book will help other parents with autistic children.

I would like to be considered for the position at DAWN-RAFH Canada Board of Directors because I believe that I can make a difference, contribute to improving the quality of life for people with disabilities. I have the drive, passion and my experience as a social advocate is strong assets to the organization.



Robab a été très active concernant les droits des personnes handicapées, notamment dans le rassemblement de signatures pour différentes pétitions et dans l'institution de structures pour les jeunes enfants autistes. Robab est très fière d'avoir fait avancer la signature de la Convention relative aux droits des personnes handicapées.

J'aimerais être considérée pour le poste de représentante de Nouvelle-Écosse au sein du conseil d'administration de DAWN-RAFH Canada, parce que je sais que je peux faire une différence et contribuer à améliorer la vie des personnes handicapées. J'ai de l'expérience, une grande passion et ayant été ayant été active dans la défense des droits sociaux, cela peut constituer un bon atout pour l'organisation.

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Ysabelle Vautour – NEW BRUNSWICK

Biography

Ysabelle Vautour is in the business of creatively solving problems. For the last few years she has worked in the field of mental health she is passionate about inclusion, innovation and personal growth. Her hope is to help others see the world in a different light and bring inspiration to foster positive change. Ysabelle holds a BA in Psychology and Religious Studies from St Thomas University as well as a Certificate in Leadership from UNB's Renaissance College. Her 10 year involvement with theatrical improvisation has influenced her to study and bring humor wherever she goes. Currently she is undertaking her certificate in Adult Education at the University of New Brunswick in Fredericton where she hosts a Radio Show on personal development and writes for the Brunswickan Newspaper.

Ysabelle is the Disability Rep for the NB Media Coop advisory board. She is a member of the Human Resources Student Association, and National Educational Association of Disabled Students, the Nurturing Ourselves Conference Committee. Recently Ysabelle has been chosen to be 1 of 20 people from across Canada for the ELLE Project a National Leadership Retreat hosted by Girl's Action Foundation. She has also had the chance to be a facilitator at Young Leaders Forum for the Canadian Center for Diversity.

In 1999 she participated in a cultural exchange program Nantes, France for blind and visually impaired students, where she stayed and learned about residential schools for the blind.

Further Ysabelle has worked for Social Development & Correctional Services Canada as a Human Resources Assistant and with the University of New Brunswick College of Extended Learning as a Marketing Assistant.

Why I am applying for a position on the Board of Directors?

This position interests me as I would like to eventually do masters in disability studies. I recently attended the National Educational Association of Disabled Students (NEADS) national conference and job search forum in Fredericton and I was inspired to take action and help other people with disabilities. I want to get involved with this association as I think it is quite innovated and share its values. Also I would like a better understanding of what is being done in other provinces and see what I can bring back to help New Brunswick. I am passionate about empowering persons with disabilities and sharing resources.



I would like to create a program to help inspire people to take action and use their skills to help their community. People need to feel like they are valued and they can contribute. I love the opportunity to brainstorm ideas and help come up with creative solutions.

Je suis très intéressée par ce poste dans la mesure où j'envisage de réaliser ma maîtrise en étude sur la condition des personnes handicapées. De plus, j'ai eu l'occasion d'assister à la conférence nationale de l'Association nationale des étudiant(e)s handicapé(e)s au niveau postsecondaire et de participer au forum de recherche d'emploi à Fredericton. Cela m'a grandement inspiré à me rendre utile pour d'autres personnes handicapées. Partageant les valeurs de DAWN-RAFH Canada, je veux m'impliquer dans cette organisation que je considère innovante. Ce serait l'occasion pour moi de mieux comprendre ce qui est mis en place dans les autres provinces afin de m'inspirer pour le Nouveau-Brunswick. Je suis passionnée par le fait d'aider les personnes handicapées, de leur donner du pouvoir en mettant en commun nos ressources. J'aimerais créer un programme qui apporterait un souffle d'inspiration aux personnes souhaitant utiliser leurs qualifications pour aider leur communauté. Il faut que les gens se sentent valorisés et qu'ils sentent qu'ils peuvent contribuer à améliorer la société. J'aime le fait d'avoir l'opportunité de mélanger les idées afin de proposer des solutions créatives.

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Linda Perreault – QUÉBEC

Biographie

Vivre avec une limitation m'a permis de connaître plusieurs défis et de développer une capacité d'acceptation et de pardon. Le désir de miser sur des valeurs personnelles solides fut un des plus importants développements pour moi. Lâcher prise des jugements d'autrui et m'accepter moi-même telle que je suis. Voilà la clé du bonheur que je suis fière d'avoir transmise à mon fils.

J'ai occupé des postes de secrétaire, trésorière, vice-présidente et conseillère au sein d'un conseil d'administration d'une coopérative d'habitation pendant treize ans.

J'ai participé à la Marche Mondiale des Femmes en l'an 2000, en livrant un discours au cabinet de l'Honorable Pauline Marois devant de centaines de personnes sur la situation sociale et la pauvreté chez les femmes.

Bilingue parlé et écrit (français et anglais)

Expérience de travail : Le service à la clientèle, intervieweuse pour Statistiques Canada et Léger Marketing, entrepreneure, secrétaire/réceptionniste, graphiste, couturière, tutrice de français, conceptrice de sites internet.

Intérêts : Les gens, l'écriture, la méditation, la couture, l'artisanat, la peinture, le chant, la lecture...

Mes valeurs : Le respect, l'amour, l'égalité, la liberté, l'acceptation, l'espoir, la justice.

Mon rêve : Que les femmes vivant avec un handicap aient plus d'opportunités d'emploi, d'accès au logement abordable, de visibilité et d'intégration sociale, d'autonomie financière et d'un sens d'accomplissement et de pouvoir personnel accrus.

Living with a disability has brought many challenges into my life from which I have developed acceptance and forgiveness. One of the most important things I have learned is to embrace solid personal values. But the one thing that I have been able to achieve is letting go of the judgement of others and to accept myself as I am. This is the key to well-being that I proudly transmitted to my son.



I sat on the board of directors of a housing cooperative building for thirteen years where I held the positions of secretary, treasurer, vice-president and counselor.

I participated in the World March of Women 2000 and addressed the cabinet of the Honourable Pauline Marois before hundreds of people on the social issues and poverty of women.

I speak and write in both French and English

Work related experience: Customer service, interviewer for Statistics Canada and Léger Marketing, entrepreneur, secretary, receptionist, graphic artist, seamstress, French tutor, website designer.

Interests: People, writing, meditation, sewing, crafting, painting, reading, singing...

My values: Respect, love, equality, freedom, acceptance, hope, justice.

My dream: That women living with a disability have more opportunities in the areas of employment, affordable housing, social visibility and integration, financial autonomy and the development of accomplishment and empowerment.

Pourquoi je postule pour un poste au sein du conseil d'administration?

Je désire poser ma candidature au poste de représentante provinciale du Québec.

Je suis une femme mature qui, ayant une limitation physique, a su enfin apprécier le côté positif de cet aspect de moi. J'ai dû lutter pour enfin accepter et même embrasser ce cadeau caché que la vie m'a léguée. Malgré que mon chemin fût ardu, j'ai réussi à obtenir un diplôme de l'Université de Montréal. Puisque je suis de nature « touche à tout » j'ai poursuivi des études dans les domaines de l'entrepreneuriat, la conception de sites internet ainsi que le design de mode. De plus, j'offre mes services occasionnels de traduction et de correction de textes, à deux organismes misant sur la paix mondiale.

Ayant occupée des postes de secrétaire, trésorière, vice-présidente et conseillère au sein d'un conseil d'administration d'une coopérative d'habitation et ce pendant treize ans, cela m'a permis de comprendre le roulement démocratique d'un C.A, l'importance de la communication respectueuse et la prise de décision selon de vraies valeurs humaines concernant de vraies personnes dans le besoin.

Mes expériences de travail ont été majoritairement en lien avec le public. Soit, le service à la clientèle, intervieweuse pour Statistiques Canada et Léger Marketing, entrepreneure, secrétaire/réceptionniste.



Je possède aussi un fort côté créatif et artistique que j'exprime par l'écriture, la couture, l'artisanat, la peinture et le chant.

J'ai eu l'honneur de participer à la Marche Mondiale des Femmes 2000 et de livrer un discours au cabinet de l'Honorable Pauline Marois devant une foule de personnes au sujet de la situation sociale et de la pauvreté chez les femmes.

Je me considère "culturellement" bilingue parlé et écrit, puisque j'ai eu la chance de vivre mon enfance et mon adolescence dans une banlieue de Montréal où les concitoyens étaient de part égale français et anglais. Ceci est un atout précieux, surtout dans notre province.

Étant une personne qui se donne beaucoup, la vie m'a enseignée l'importance de l'équilibre. Je suis capable d'empathie et à la fois d'établir mes limites. Je pratique la méditation et je sais que parfois les défis de la vie peuvent nous sembler insurmontables, mais qu'il ne faut jamais perdre espoir. Il existe toujours des solutions malgré qu'elles ne soient pas immédiatement apparentes.

Je désire siéger au poste de représentante provinciale du Québec afin d'unir ma passion à celle de DAWN/RAFH Canada et de participer à faire valoir nos droits, exprimer nos besoins, reconnaître nos forces et nos capacités, promouvoir l'inclusion sociale et ce dans la solidarité, car c'est dans la solidarité que se retrouve la force.

I am a mature woman living with a physical disability who has finally come to terms with the positive aspect of her limitations. I fought with and finally accepted and even embraced this hidden gift that life has offered me. Though the road was challenging, I managed to earn a diploma from the University of Montreal. Being of a multi faceted nature, I also studied in the areas of developing entrepreneurial skills as well as website and fashion design. I also offer my editing and translation services to two organisations striving for world peace.

Having held the positions of secretary, treasurer, vice-president and counselor on the board of directors of a cooperative housing building for thirteen years, has taught me to understand the importance of democracy, respectful communication and decision making according to real values concerning people with real needs.



My work related experience has been mainly with the public. Customer service, interviewer for Statistics Canada and Léger Marketing, entrepreneur, secretary and receptionist. My strong artistic side is expressed through writing, sewing, crafting, painting and singing.

I had the honor of participating in the World March of Women 2000 and to address the Cabinet of the Honourable Pauline Marois before hundreds of people on the social issues and the poverty of women. I consider myself “culturally” bilingual written and spoken, as I grew up in a suburb of Montreal where half the population was French speaking and the other half English. This is a precious asset especially within our province.

Being a person who gives of herself, life has taught me the importance of balance. I am capable of empathy and of setting my limits. I practice meditation and am aware that life’s challenges can at times seem insurmountable, but we must never lose hope. There are always solutions that at times are not readily obvious.

I seek election to the Board of Directors as Quebec representative to unite my passion to that of DAWN-RAFH Canada and to participate in the recognition of our rights, the expression of our needs, the recognition of our strengths and abilities, and social inclusion. Together we are strong!

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