

Board of Directors

As of August 25, 2021



Chair - Shawna Adams

Shawna (*she/her*) is dedicated to the goal of health equity. As a parent of two young adults with autism, and herself a person with an invisible disability, she is experienced in our health system. Both children have now graduated to Persons With Disability and are in healthy and supportive Home Share situations. The journey as a low-income family has included many challenges and experiences that Shawna has employed to support others and to advocate for improvements to our systems and supports for all.

A career focused on healthcare and social services, her role with PCFSA enables her to be engaged with her goals within the community she lives and serves. In recent years, her work with medical practitioners, clinicians, and leaders within Island Health has been an excellent training ground for navigating priorities in our health system. Education in Applied Chemistry and Biotechnology and a certification in Parent Education from the Adler School of Psychology provide an appreciation for both the analytical and the personal perspectives in addition to her Master of Business Administration degree from Royal Roads University.

As her children have transitioned from her home, Shawna has had the opportunity to further engage with the community with a passion to providing support to fundraising events and adding skills in systems, operations, and leadership wherever she can provide value.

Attending and performing live local theatre is one of Shawna's creative outlets in an effort to maintain balance with her advocating, volunteering, and business activities.



Vice-Chair - Andrew Pharo

Andrew 'Andy' (*he/him*) and his family moved to Victoria in 1992 by way of Edmonton, AB, and Thetford Mines, PQ. He completed a B.Sc., at Concordia University, Montreal, in 1976 and after a stint as a Labourer/Teacher with Frontier College in Granisle, BC, he worked in a peer counselling organization at the University of Alberta, followed by work on a suicide prevention phone line with the City of Edmonton. Eventually Andy joined the insurance and investment business with Sun Life where he completed a Chartered Life Underwriter designation. Semi-retired after 40 years in the finance/insurance world he is currently midway through a 5 year stay in Waterloo, Ontario, as House Spouse in support of his wife Norah McRae who holds a position as Associate Provost, University of Waterloo. Norah and Andy have two children, Adrienne and spouse Cameron, Emergency Room RNs in Nelson, BC, and son, Connor, currently studying Geomatics at University of Victoria.

Currently limited to joining PCFSA meetings via Zoom, Andy looks forward to rejoining everyone in person as soon as time and circumstances permit.



Secretary - Ashley Bertsch

Ashley (*she/her*) joined the PCFSA Board in 2017 and is currently serving as the Board Secretary. A true island girl at heart, Ashley has spent most of her life on the Island and is always drawn back when she moves away; it's something about the ocean and mountains!

The insurance industry has benefited from Ashley's skills since 2005, currently with a specialization in Commercial Insurance; specifically, with strata/apartment building/commercial unit or mixed-use properties. Having completed both CAIB & CIP designations, Ashley is currently also working on one in Risk Management.

Ashley joined BFL CANADA Insurance Services at the end of 2020 and is looking to build the name and business across the Island. Having the opportunity to help clients with creating peace of mind with appropriate coverage is very important to her. Ashley also brings with her an education in

Event Management completed at The Art Institute of Vancouver.

Ashley loves helping people and truly wants to see them succeed. When she is not working or volunteering, you can find her hiking, enjoying nature with her dogs, or reading a really good book.



Treasurer - Adam French

Adam (he/him) has achieved formal and informal training on three continents and shares a special passion for business/economic development and the sustainable economic independence and social well-being of Indigenous groups. Armed with insatiable curiosity, his passion for business comes from a competitive spirit that evolved from an early age. The tangible and intangible wins in business and teams fuels his fire. A mixture of creativity, systems/process creation and synthetic imaginative resourcefulness is how results happen.

The eternal balance between the old school hustle of practical application and understanding people, paired with a formal education consisting of a major in Managerial Economics (Hons), a master's in Global Management, a master's in Business Administration, a designation in Project Management and an Indigenous Studies certification, has enabled Adam to apply these many tools with real world experience.

His thesis and NGO focus in PTSD- "Establishing the feasibility of utilizing an NGO as a delivery model for mental health in a developing nation" has been a personal passion, stemmed largely from his past work as volunteer firefighter in Washington state, and volunteer work at the DropIn Centre Shelter in Calgary, Alberta

Trust and collaboration with others is everything, and trust in Adam's eyes involves four key ingredients; integrity, intentions, capabilities, and results. A daily challenge to him is to consistently seek to give more value than offered in return, and create a listening and learning model to every experience.

Relationships did not always come easy when young, and through a continuous journey of personal development and extreme gratitude he has dedicated his life to serving and connecting with others offering his gifts to help others succeed.

Back to his hometown for a few years now, Adam is looking forward to immersing himself further into the community, and looks forward to many years with the growing PCFSA family.



Director - Philip Bisset-Coveneiro

Philip (*he/him*) is incredibly proud and honoured to have been selected to join the Board of the Pacific Centre Family Services Association in 2021, especially since he has devoted 10+ years fundraising and raising awareness for the amazing work that this organization has been doing. Phiip has spent the last 15 years in the Financial Services industry, as a Certified Financial Planner, where his passion to support his clients through financial education is only paralleled by his commitment to supporting and lifting his local community. He has always made it a priority to contribute time to various charitable and community boards, organizing fundraising projects, events, and initiatives all aimed at supporting our communities' most vulnerable members. Born and raised in Portugal, to living in Macau, China, and then moving to Vancouver, Canada, Philip finally discovered Greater Victoria in 2000. Philip has brought his sense of community that was cultivated from his European and Asian roots that inspired his belief that the only measure of our worth and the overall health of our community is how we treat and support our most vulnerable.

Philip is committed to learning more about what our community needs, continuing to support those organizations making the biggest impact and having the most success and then helping them get to the next level through community awareness and fundraising. We are all in this together, and those with wealth want to help and make the biggest impact possible through their donations and contributions, PCFSA is an incredibly deserving organization to help steward any family's donation or legacy for an incredibly positive community impact. Philip is very excited to help share the impact and success that PCFSA has been doing for the past 50 years and help amplify the community support going forward.

If you are interested in making a donation or coming up with a fundraising campaign in order to help support the amazing work PCFSA's dedicated staff do each and every day for so many in our community that need their support, please contact Philip today!!



Director - Janelle Anderson

Janelle (*she/her*) has lived on Vancouver Island her whole life & absolutely loves it! Janelle also has a passion and love for living life with a Positive Mental Attitude. With always having a strong PMA she is able to always see the best in every situation. She is a solution seeker & loves living life with the glass overflowing with joy!



Director - Marisa Collins

Dr. Collins (*she/her*) started out as a rural family physician and ended up with a focused practice in sexual & reproductive health and mental health. In between, she earned a master's degree in community medicine, a certificate to teach Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT), worked in clinical research, postgraduate education and continuing professional development. She is a Clinical Assistant Professor in the Department of Family Practice at the University of British Columbia.

In 2020, after two decades with the not-for-profit Options for Sexual Health and six years as their Medical Director, Marisa was ready for change and not yet ready for retirement. In 2021 she pursued enhanced skills training in mental health, possibly becoming the oldest postgraduate trainee in the Faculty of Medicine. In the coming year she will be providing mental health services at Pearson College IWC, and will continue to facilitate MBCT groups through mindfulnesswest.ca. Professional experience with other not-for-profit health care organizations and commitment to mental health services makes joining the PCFSA Board a natural fit.

Marisa moved to Vancouver Island in 2017 from the Pemberton valley with her husband and two old dogs, swapping mountains and farm for ocean and a small apartment in a Cohousing community. At the start of the pandemic she took up open water swimming, and now prioritizes getting into cold water in all weather and four seasons.



Director - Dalyce Dixon

Dalyce (*she/her*) has chosen the non-profit sector focusing on children, youth, and families in fulfilling her career aspirations as a registered Social Worker. She started her career in the child and youth care field in Edmonton Alberta, migrating to Victoria to complete her undergraduate degree in social work. Dalyce and her partner worked and raised their family in the Western Communities and remains passionate in supporting community based resources as she believes these are foundational in the pursuit of health and wellness for all. Since completing a Master's degree in Leadership from Royal Roads University she has been the Executive Director of BGC South Vancouver Island. PCFSA is in a remarkable place as we transition during the Covid 19 experience. Having the privilege to continue to serve the children, youth, and families of the Western Communities and Sooke as a member of the governance table is exciting.



Director - Larry Stevenson

Larry (*he/him*) first came to Vancouver Island in 2010 after a lengthy career in the rail industry, and as a private entrepreneur, that took him and his family on a journey that included multiple moves within Canada, the United States, and Central America. Larry was appointed as the Chief Executive Officer of the Island Corridor Foundation in 2018 where he is currently working to restore rail service to Vancouver Island.

Larry came to the board out of sense of responsibility to give back to our island community and a strong desire to put his skills and experience to work aiding organizations committed to improving the quality of life of for families and youth through the type of supportive programs offered by Pacific Centre Family Services.

Larry holds a Master of Business Administration degree from Queens University in Kingston, ON



Director - Melissa Barnhard

Hello, my name is Melissa, my traditional name is Naw-Hea'Mowha and I am part of the Songhees first nation. I am a person with lived and living experience of homelessness, addiction, and mental health disorders. Most recently I have started a new journey in recovery. At first, I was embarrassed of my life experiences, but I now realize that they shaped me into who I am, taught me valuable lessons, and helped me get the jobs I work in today. I have been involved with PCFSA since I was 4 years old. I went into art therapy in the older building by the lagoon when I was a child. As an adult I have participated in Women Seeking Safety groups and a lot of one-on-one support with great counsellors. PCFSA has helped me explore new possibilities in my life. Over the years I have worked with a few counsellors and have been able to rediscover who I am. I had support to apply to treatment twice and I have had support applying to get my status card and reclaim my identity. That is why I am so very grateful that PCFSA has been such a big part of my life and I want to give back to the organization any way that I can.

For a few years now I have been a Client Representative, and I have been a voice of lived experience that the programs provided by PCFSA are effective and can change lives as it has for me. I am currently a Peer Support Worker and Researcher for the Greater Victoria Coalition to end homelessness as well as on the Community Wellness Task Force Committee for the City of Victoria. I work as a co-facilitator and storyteller for the Face to Face with Stigma project, and I occasionally work as a Standardized Patient for the Royal Jubilee Hospital where we practice culturally safe interactions with the students, doctors, and patients.

I have lived here on the island almost my entire life and love being on our homelands near our family. I love the work that I do with the people in our communities.

Hych'ka Siem



Director - Asma-na-hi Antoine

Asma-na-hi Antoine is from Toquaht Nation of the Nuuchah-nulth lands (west coast of Vancouver Island, Canada). She resides in Lekwungen (Songhees) and Xwsepsum (Esquimalt) traditional lands (Victoria, B.C.). Asma-na-hi is the Director for Indigenous Engagement at Royal Roads University (RRU). Previously, she was the manager of Indigenous Education and Student Services for RRU. She has a Master of Education in Psychology and Leadership Studies specializing in Indigenous Community Counseling and a Bachelor of Arts in Child and Youth Care with a Minor in Indigenous Studies, both from the University of Victoria. Asma-na-hi is a Ph.D. Candidate in the Doctor of Philosophy Educational Theory and Practice program at Simon Fraser University.

Asma-na-hi has utilized various skills in different academic institutions and other non-profit Indigenous organizations as an Indigenous counsellor, family counsellor, educational and career advisor. Asma-na-hi believes her life and work are connected to a strong foundation of indigenous ways of knowing and being used in the way she communicates, trains, and facilitates teachings about reconciliation, decolonization, and the history of Indigenous people. She continues to walk between two worlds: Indigenous and non-Indigenous and is recognized for her need to build and sustain a culturally safe place for all.

Asma-na-hi will share stories and life experiences along her academic journey into career opportunities. She has had the privilege of learning from Indigenous scholars, mentors who have become friends, and engage with National and International Indigenous communities. Of course, along her journey, she has stated it did not come without trial and error using different innovative modalities tied to family values, culture, traditions, and ceremonies.

Asma-na-hi continues to share her knowledge and is willing to continue her learning journey with local and national committees and board of directors:

- a. President Advisory Committee
- b. Anti-Racism Task Force
- c. Climate Change Task Force
- d. I-Lead
- e. Ashoka Canada, Indigenous Advisory Committee
- f. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- g. Research Ethics Board
- h. Indigenous Research Ethics Board
- i. Turtle Island Institute Steering Committee
- j. BC Health Communities Board of Directors
- k. Pacific Centre for Family Services Association, Board

Past Reports

You can read our 2021 annual report [here](#)

You can read our 2020 annual report [here](#)

You can read our 2016 annual report [here](#)

You can read our 2015 annual report [here](#)

You can read our 2014 annual report [here](#).

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