

# Slate of Nominations for the 2017-2018 Provincial Board of Directors

## BOARD PROFILES

Profile of the nominees for the 2017-2018 Provincial Board of Directors

### PRESIDENT

#### Noreen McChesney RECE

Noreen has been involved with children and families for over 21 years and has been on the AECEO Board of Directors for six years. After receiving her B.A. in Psychology from the University of Windsor and her Early Childhood Education Diploma from Cambrian College, she began practice directly with young children and their families as an Educator. Noreen has worked in varying capacities in the Early Learning sector, including supervisory roles in child care, special needs resourcing, parent education and support in CAPC/CPNP programs and Child Care Program Quality Coordinator for the municipality. She has served on a Child Care Board of Directors, local system planning tables, Best Start Networks and specialized services committees.

Her current position at Child & Community Resources is Best Start Manager, with oversight of seven Best Start Hubs in local schools, and co-chairing the Building Early Years Success committee of Sudbury's Best Start Network. Also, she has extensive experience as part-time faculty in the ECE program at Cambrian College, and this work in particular has solidified her commitment to understanding best and promising practice in the field of Early Learning. Noreen believes that the benefits of membership to the AECEO cannot be emphasized enough to Registered Early Childhood Educators. She would like to see membership grow in support of the AECEO direction of advocacy for Professional Pay for Professional Work and the building of leadership capacity within the Early Childhood profession.



#### Laura Coulman RECE

Laura Coulman has been a proud ECE since graduating from Ryerson's Early Childhood Education programme in the early 1990s. She completed her MSC in Child Studies at the University of Guelph and is now a PhD candidate in the Applied Psychology and Human Development programme at OISE/University of Toronto. Laura's day job is the child care planning and policy analyst for the County of Wellington. Always having been a strong proponent of early childhood education and child care, it has shaken her resolve of late that our Ontario potential for extending the values of a public education system into early childhood is being challenged. The AECEO is a well-suited organization to knock child care out of its legacy of provisional and poorly organized services for some, to a totally new and completely remodeled early childhood education system for all. For Laura, the system re-design should be made by early childhood educators. She hopes that the AECEO might unlock the potential of early childhood education as a truly integrated entity of education – and help to get Charles Pascal's clearly articulated and practical framework for early childhood education realized in Ontario in her lifetime.



#### Michelle Edey RECE

Michelle Edey is a full-time faculty member in the Early Childhood Education program at Sheridan College. After completing her diploma in Early Childhood Education at Humber College, Michelle worked directly with children and families in infant-toddler care. Michelle then completed her B.A.Sc. in Early Childhood Studies at the University of Guelph-Humber, as well as her M.A. in Early Childhood Studies at Ryerson University. Michelle recently returned to the GTA after spending the past 4 years teaching at St. Lawrence College in Kingston. With the support of St. Lawrence College Michelle developed a Community of Practice for RECEs working in diverse settings and students to share knowledge, stay current and think critically about new legislation, policy and practice related to Early Learning and Care in Ontario. Michelle is passionate about leadership and advocacy in ECEC, promoting social inclusion and social justice in early learning environments, engagement and identity of diverse families in early learning environments, as well as curriculum and pedagogy for infants and toddlers. Michelle works to embed critical thinking into her classes, to empower students to view themselves as leaders and to find their voice to create awareness around their individual areas of passion within the field.



Michelle values the work of the AECEO and hopes to help bridge the child care advocacy movement into post-secondary ECE programs.

## **Ruth Houston RECE, AECEO.C**

Ruth Houston is a long standing certified member of the AECEO and an active member of the Early Learning community in York Region. Ruth recently completed the Masters of Arts in Early Childhood Studies Program at Ryerson and values ongoing learning. Issues of public advocacy pertaining to universal, accessible, not-for-profit and inclusive childcare, professionalization and compensation for RECEs are topics of great interest. Ruth has served on many committees within York Region including the Early Years Steering Committee, Enhanced Funding Standing Committee, School Age and Quality Assurance Subcommittees of the Child & Family Collaborative. She was the chair of the York Branch of the AECEO for many years and remains committed to the work of the AECEO. Ruth has a solid understanding of the changes occurring in the early learning and care sector and staying current on issues relevant to her profession.



## **Donna Kotsopoulos**

Donna Kotsopoulos is a professor in the Faculty of Education, cross appointed to the Department of Mathematics in the Faculty of Science at Wilfrid Laurier University. She is the director of the Mathematical Brains Laboratory and an Ontario Certified Teacher (OCT). Her research and teaching focuses on early mathematical cognition and learning (prior to formal schooling). A significant component of her outreach is with parents, young children, and early childhood educators. Donna is the co-founder of the LittleCounters® program, offered through many Early Years Centres across Ontario. For her work in early childhood mathematics education, she recently received the 2016 Partners in Research Mathematics Ambassador Award for outstanding research and outreach activities. Donna's early childhood education and policy concerns include: fair wages for early childhood educators (including fair access to labour regulation protection); and the need for a national early childhood education and care strategy for Canada.



## **Safra Najeemudeen RECE**

Safra Najeemudeen has a degree in Early Childhood Leadership from George Brown College and a Masters in Early Childhood Studies from Ryerson University. She is currently working as a contract lecturer for George Brown College, Seneca College and Ryerson University. Throughout her career, Safra has worked in early learning and child care centres, parent and child programs, family education and support programs. Safra is dedicated to working with new immigrant families with young children and continues her career as a member of Ryerson University's Lifeline Syria supporting the sponsorship and settlement of Syrian refugee families. Her research focus is on integrated early childhood programs, specifically family support programs. Safra's master's research study examined high-quality characteristics of school-based family support program from the perspective of parents/caregivers. In the near future Safra would like to work closely with practitioners to continue to raise their awareness culturally responsive pedagogy.



## **Secretary**

### **Alana Powell RECE**

Alana Powell is an RECE and holds an HBA in Political Science from the University of Toronto. After working with children in a community non-profit centre, she has recently returned to Ryerson University to continue her education in the Early Childhood Studies program. Alana's commitment to advocating for ECEs and childcare in Ontario was reinforced by her experiences working in the field. She has collaborated with the AECEO as both an individual, and most recently as Co-Chair of the Ryerson Student Childcare Advocacy Association. Alana is pleased to be joining the AECEO on its Decent Work Project. She believes the ECE workforce's knowledge and experience is crucial in achieving informed policy change in Ontario. She is committed to building the collective voice of ECEs and looks forward to working with community leaders across the province. Alana is excited by the prospect of being more deeply involved in contributing to the work at the AECEO by joining the Board of Directors.



## Treasurer

### Brooke Richardson

Brooke Richardson is a part-time faculty member in the Early Childhood Studies program at Ryerson University as well as a Ph.D. candidate in Policy Studies (also at Ryerson). She completed both her B.A. and M.A. in Early Childhood Studies at Ryerson and is currently completing her Ph.D. under the supervision of Dr. Rachel Langford. Her research focuses on the childcare advocacy movement, the devaluation of care in neoliberal political climates as well as the representation of childcare in mainstream media. As an educator of prospective early childhood educators, Brooke is dedicated to engaging and inspiring her students to make the critical connections between the current state of childcare in Canada and public policy at all levels of government. Central to this goal is supporting prospective ECEs to advocate for the professional wages and working conditions they deserve. Most recently she and her students initiated the Ryerson Student Childcare Advocacy Association which provides a platform for prospective ECEs to voice their hopes and concerns about childcare policy changes in Toronto, Ontario and Canada. Brooke also is an early childhood music educator (certified in Suzuki, Orff, Kodaly and Dalcroze) and a mother of 3 young children. Brooke is motivated by her belief that high quality, affordable childcare, delivered by a well-compensated and professional workforce is not only necessary for the well-being of children, women and families but also a central component of a democratic society.



### Shannon Sveda RECE

Shannon Sveda has a diploma in early childhood education from Sheridan College. She also completed her BA and MA in early childhood studies at Ryerson University.

Shannon is passionate about supporting Early Childhood Educators in their pursuit of professional learning, with a special interest in their pursuit of a reflective and intentional practice. As such, her Masters research focused on blogging in a virtual learning community as a form of continuous professional learning.

Over the past decade Shannon has had the opportunity to work in a variety of early childhood education and care settings, including licensed child care and early intervention. Shannon is currently a professor of early childhood education at Mohawk College and is actively involved on social media as CanadianECE.



### Anne Wright RECE, AECEO.C, B.A., BEd, MEd.

Anne began her career as an Early Childhood Educator with child and family learning centres in York Region. From there, she joined the Simcoe County District School Board as an Educational Assistant and then as a classroom teacher. Anne's roles within SCDSB have included co-teaching full-day kindergarten, Grades 1 – 8, and currently as a Special Education Itinerant Resource Teacher in the Aboriginal Education Department. Throughout many different teaching assignments, her commitment to early learning and supporting our youngest learners has been a priority. Since first joining AECEO in 2003, Anne has continued for the past 13 years to advocate and support the work of Early Childhood Educators as we share our knowledge of best practices, child development, and curriculum in the early years.



## AECEO Annual Meeting 2017

**The AECEO Annual Members' Meeting will be held June 15 at 7:00 p.m., online. Log in information and identification of the nominees standing for the positions of Treasurer and Secretary will be sent to all AECEO members nearer to the meeting date.**