

Slate of Nominations for the 2018-2019 AECEO Provincial Board of Directors

Board Profiles

Profiles of the Nominees for the 2018-2019 Provincial Board of Directors

PRESIDENT

Brooke Richardson M.A., Ph.D., RECE

Brooke Richardson is a part-time faculty member in the Early Childhood Studies program at Ryerson University. She completed her B.A. and M.A. in Early Childhood Studies and a Ph.D. in Policy Studies at Ryerson. Her research has focused 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. 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 4 young children. Brooke is motivated by her belief that high quality, affordable childcare, delivered by a well compensated professional workforce, is necessary to actualize women and children's basic rights.

TREASURER

Shannon Sveda MA, RECE

Shannon Sveda has a diploma in early childhood education from Sheridan College. She also completed Bachelor and Master of Arts degrees 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 Master's 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, early intervention, and post-secondary education. Most recently Shannon has shifted her professional focus to engaging children and their families outdoors, through Nature Play experiences (suitedandbooted.ca). She is also involved in the ECE community as the alumni relations chair of the Ryerson Early Childhood Studies MA Alumni Association, and through social media as @CanadianECE.

SECRETARY

Alana Powell RECE, HBA, MA-ECS Candidate

Alana Powell is an RECE and holds an HBA in Political Science from the University of Toronto. She is currently completing the MA in Early Childhood Studies program at Ryerson University. Alana's commitment to advocating for ECEs and childcare in Ontario was reinforced by her experiences working in the field at a non-profit community-based childcare centre. 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 continuing to work with the ECE community across the province and supporting the important work of the AECEO.

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

Laura Coulman RECE, MSC, Ph.D. Candidate

Laura Coulman has been a proud ECE since graduating from Ryerson's Early Childhood Education program in the early 1990s. She completed her MSc in Child Studies at the University of Guelph and is a PhD candidate examining disability and early childhood education legislation. She knows that the AECEO can play an important role in unlocking the potential of early childhood education as a truly integrated entity of education; an entity in which RECEs are highly valued practitioners who design, lead, and deliver the system that serves young children in Ontario. Laura believes that moving early childhood education programs beyond their current format of being overly-privatized and often inadequately planned; tenuously funded; and inequitably delivered, to a totally new and completely remodeled system for all is not utopian thinking. For Laura, the system re-design that is still needed should be made by early childhood educators – and, for her, it just makes sense that the AECEO, as the professional association of RECEs in Ontario, continues to lead the way in carving out this path.

Nicole Cummings RECE, B.A.Sc.

Nicole Cummings is a RECE who graduated from Seneca College of Applied Arts & Technology. After years of working in a variety of child care positions, her love for learning lead her to Guelph-Humber for a B.A.Sc. in Child Studies where she recently graduated. As she embarks on a new journey of learning in the OISE's Masters of Child Studies program, she is confident that all of this learning will be beneficial to her role as an AECEO board member. As a workshop facilitator, she has been able to share information with parents on the importance of their role as their child's first advocate, and she encourages their responsibility to join our fight for Universal Child Care in Ontario. As a board member she is also dedicated to reaching as many ECE's with the many reasons why, 'ECE'S ARE EXCELLENT!' and why standing together to achieve professional pay will be the best way to get it!

Ruth Houston RECE, AECEO.C, BCD, MA

Ruth Houston is a long standing certified member of the AECEO and an active member of the Early Learning community in York Region. 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 provides professional development and consulting services to early learning programs and has a solid understanding of the changes occurring in the early learning and care sector.

Amy O'Neil, B.A., RECE

Amy has been involved with children and families for over 25 years in both Montreal and Toronto and is a passionate advocate for children and those who care for them. Through lived experience, Amy's commitment to social and economic justice is both personal and political. A mother of four and a vocal advocate for childcare, Amy is often deputing on behalf of low income working parents on child care issues. She believes passionately in social justice and quality in early childhood settings and strongly supports decent work for RECE's.

After receiving her B.A. in Educational Studies with Honors specializing in Child Studies from Concordia University she began practice directly with young children and their families as an Early Childhood Educator in Montreal. She understands the dynamic of the early childhood environment and has extensive experience in community development and capacity building. Amy aspires to work with the AECEO in strategic planning and collaborative leadership. As a Manager of Child Care with St. Stephen's Community House she is at the forefront of leading the agency in its mission to inspire, inform and advocate for a quality, affordable and accessible child care system that supports all families in Ontario. She is a Board member of the Toronto Coalition for Better Child Care, has served as a Director on a child care Board of Directors, and works in varying capacities in the early learning sector in Toronto including sitting on committees with Toronto Children's Services and the TDSB. She is excited to share her commitment to child and family advocacy and her experience of successful, non-profit, front-line and management experience in child care with the AECEO.

Jenn Wallage, B.A.A., RECE, RC

Jenn Wallage has been an Early Childhood Educator since graduating from the ECE Diploma program at Conestoga College over 20 years ago. From Conestoga she went to Ryerson Polytechnic University, graduating with her Bachelor of Applied Arts in Early Childhood Education. While at Ryerson she earned her designation in Special Needs, as well as a minor in Public Administration. Throughout the various roles in the early childhood sector that Jenn has held, she has been a strong advocate for the profession of Early Childhood Education. She has worked in various capacities, including classroom educator, Ontario Early Years programs, Resource Consultant and is currently employed with a school board as a Designated Early Childhood Educator. Although, Jenn is currently holding a position outside of the Kindergarten classroom – as a Union Local President representing over 650 DECEs. Jenn is very involved at the Local and Provincial levels with her Union. This involvement is what led her to become involved with the AECEO, collaborating and advocating for the profession of Early Childhood Education. Jenn unconditionally feels that we, as RECEs, are all part of the same entity, regardless of what setting our career places us in. She would love to see the work of the AECEO continue to advocate for the profession, recognizing the unique concerns and issues in the various settings RECEs work. Jenn wholeheartedly believes that growing support from all areas would benefit the Early Childhood Education profession as we are all on the same side, no matter the setting our career as an RECE places us in.