



IRENE THOMPSON
CHAIR

Irene Thompson has worked in post-secondary education sector for over 37 years and recently retired from the University of Guelph, where her last role was Vice-Provost, Student Affairs (Interim). Irene enjoys working with young adults and supporting their personal, academic, and social development. She oversaw a residence community of 4700 undergraduate students, two family housing complexes and 300 staff. Irene has served on many University related committees including those examining issues around substance use, mental health, and wellness.

Irene has held many leadership positions on campus, in the community and professionally. She is currently a member of the University of Guelph Board of Governors. She is active with the United Way of Guelph Wellington Dufferin Campaign Cabinet and has recently retired as a member of the Board of Directors. Irene is a Facilitator of the Mental Health First Aid course and regularly trains staff, faculty, and students from the University.

Irene is Chair of the Board Governance Committee and sits on the Executive Committee.



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ANTHONY DICAITA
VICE-CHAIR

Anthony DiCaia is a proven leader with extensive senior level experience in the public, private and not for profit healthcare sector. More recently, Anthony was CEO and President of Villa Charities and prior to that held executive positions as Executive Vice President, CFO & CPO for Humber River Hospital, and Vice President and Chief Financial Officer at Chatham-Kent Health Alliance. He also served as Project Director for Comprehensive Care International, in Cairo, Egypt.

He is an accomplished, passionate leader who brings an innovative, customer-focused, results-oriented approach for setting vision and strategy. With a unique combination of experiences, Anthony excels at building and directing cross-functional teams, to deliver exceptional service and outcomes. He holds a CPA designation, as well as an MBA, MPA and BBA from York University.

Anthony is Chair of the Board Resources Committee and sits on the Executive Committee.



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KATHY MARKOWIAK
TREASURER

Kathy Markowiak is a senior Human Resources executive with 20 years of experience in all aspects of HR and more than 25 years in leadership positions. Kathy has expertise in strategic planning, facilitation, leadership development, coaching, performance management, succession planning, career management and employee engagement as well as managing change, building and shaping culture and communications. She has worked in both private and public sector organizations.

After a long career with Sun Life Financial, Kathy took on a role as interim head of Human Resources at Agricornp, a government agency supporting farmers and now holds the position of Vice President, Human Resources at ATS Automation.

She has volunteered with several organizations including the Kidney Foundation and most recently with Dancing with disAbility, Canada's first dance program tailored to meet both the physical and cognitive challenges of those living with MS, cerebral palsy, Parkinson's, stroke, and other movement disorders. Kathy holds a Mental Health First Aid Certificate, is a Fellow, Life Management Institute, and has a Business Administration diploma from Seneca College.

Kathy sits on the Board Resources Committee and the Executive Committee.



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DANA HARDY
BOARD MEMBER AT
LARGE

Dana Hardy currently serves as the VP Strategic Initiatives and Integration with Responsive Group Inc. She is a proven senior leader in the long term care and retirement living sector who is passionate about excellence in care and services, improving the quality experience for those in need and facilitating leadership effectiveness. With over 25 years of health care management experience, Dana has developed skills in clinical and business operations, professional development, and system improvement.

Dana is a Registered Nurse graduate from Conestoga College and holds a Masters of Arts Leadership from the University of Guelph. She is a member of the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario (RNAO) and has held positions with the College of Nurses Quality Committee, ORCA Operations Committee, and currently participates on the Board of Directors with the Ontario Retirement Communities Association.

Dana is Chair of the Board Performance, Quality, Risk & Ethics Committee and sits on the Executive Committee.



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BROOKE BILLINGS
BOARD MEMBER

Brooke is a Chartered Professional Accountant (CPA), with over a decade of experience, who works mainly with charities, not-for-profits and municipal governments. Through this role, she has gained expertise in not only accounting and financial reporting, but other areas of concern to clients such as annual funder reporting, compliance issues, governance, and leadership.

Brooke is currently a Senior Manager at RLB LLP in Guelph. She is also a practice inspector for CPA Ontario, inspecting other firms for their compliance with audit, accounting and other relevant standards. This role not only helps her stay top of emerging trends and issues within the industry, but it also is a personal passion to continually pursue professional growth, learning opportunities and excellence in her field.

Brooke has experience on local boards, such as the Donkey Sanctuary of Canada and Yorklands Green Hub, serving as a Treasurer, director and member of the Finance Committee. She is a trusted advisor to many organizations in Guelph and the surrounding community, and is privileged to be able to both assist them professionally, as well as support these organizations at fundraising and other events. She is passionate about the local community and is honoured to work with so many of the organizations making positive changes.

Brooke sits on the Board Resources Committee.



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Photo coming soon!

JULIA BORGES
BOARD MEMBER

Julia earned an Honours Bachelor of Science from the University of Waterloo, including a Minor in Gerontology, and a Masters of Health Ethics degree from the Memorial University of Newfoundland. Julia then received her Juris Doctor from Dalhousie University in 2022, including Certificates in Health Law and Policy, and in Aboriginal and Indigenous Law.

Julia has held various positions in both public and private organizations including work that intersects health, law and policy, in the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Long-Term Care. Julia currently practices as a lawyer in the Ministry of the Solicitor General, advising on class actions involving correctional institutions.

Julia has volunteered with many organizations, including as a crisis line worker with the Newfoundland Sexual Assault Crisis and Prevention Centre and a Hospital Elder Life Program at the Palmerston and District Hospital. Julia has completed Assisted Suicide Intervention Training (ASIST) and completed a Fellowship with the Canadian Frailty Network.

Growing up in rural Wellington (Drayton), Julia is passionate about contributing to organizations that are impactful in local communities, and that are responsive to both rural and urban needs.



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MARIAH BLAKE
NEW PROFESSIONAL
ON BOARD

Mariah is a Political Science and Community Engagement Graduate from Wilfrid Laurier University, currently working as a dedicated public servant. She has worked with various non-government organizations, such as House of Friendship, The Working Centre, YWCA as well as with various levels of the government.

Mariah is a strong advocate with demonstrated commitment to anti-racism, mental health, addiction and housing services in the community. With experience in casework, public policy, government relations and mental health/addictions services, Mariah is passionate about community building and bridging gaps in services in our region.

Mariah continues to pursue community led, holistic approaches to mental health and well-being, and hopes to bring attention to structural and systemic barriers to mental health care.

Mariah sits on The Grove Governance Committee.



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SEAN BRADLEY
BOARD MEMBER

Sean grew up in Scarborough. He has a diploma in police foundations from Seneca College, a bachelor's degree in criminology from Carleton University, and a Juris Doctor from the University of Toronto. Sean was called to the bar in 2012 and has worked as an Assistant Crown Attorney in Halton and Brantford ever since. He routinely prosecutes cases in the Ontario Court of Justice and Superior Court ranging from minor thefts to multiple homicides. Sean played a major role in Halton's mental health court working closely with CMHA court support staff.

He and his wife Emily have resided in the Kitchener/Waterloo Region for the past 10 years.

Sean sits on the Board Performance, Quality, Risk & Ethics Committee.



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NEIL DUNSMORE
BOARD MEMBER

Neil Dunsmore is an award-winning speaker and a former Corrections Officer and Hostage/Crisis Negotiator with the Ministry of Correctional Services. He has been a business owner, salesman and a former Township of Centre Wellington Councillor.

Since his days in corrections Neil has been a mental health advocate and is the author of the book Reflections in the Ripple which chronicles his journey of 531 kilometers – a journey to start a conversation around mental health and suicide and to erase the stigma that prevents so many people from reaching out and accessing the help they so desperately need.

Neil sits on the Board Resources Committee.



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JULIA GOYAL
BOARD MEMBER

Julia Goyal is an Affiliate at the Global Labour Research Center and Member of the Waterloo Institute for Complexity and Innovation. She has a strong interest in mental health advocacy and being an agent of change for workplace mental health. In particular, she is very passionate about change management and interventions to facilitate safe disclosure of mental health illness and/or challenges in Canadian workplaces. She is currently pursuing a Joint PhD degree between the School of Public Health Sciences and the Department of Mechanical and Mechatronics Engineering. Her research focuses on using mixed methods to understand and model health and well-being of front-line health care providers.

Julia serves on the Canadian Association for Research on Work and Health Board of Directors. In terms of past community leadership and board memberships, she has served as Co-President of the School of Public Health Sciences Graduate Student Association, Chair of University of Waterloo Graduate Studies Endowment Fund, Senator on the University of Waterloo Senate and Governor on the University of Waterloo Board of Governors. Julia holds an Honours Bachelor of Science in Biology from McMaster University and a Master of Science in Public Health and Health Systems from the University of Waterloo.

Julia sits on the Governance Committee.



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LISA HOOD
BOARD MEMBER

Lisa is a fundraising and engagement professional whose passion lies in creating access to educational opportunities, and building community. She works as the Vice-President, Philanthropy at Three Rivers YMCA.

Education has opened lots of doors for Lisa, with a BSch in Biology and Psychology, and an MA in Leadership. Her research experience runs the gamut from chickadee mating habits to employee retention, leadership development, and affective organizational commitment.

Lisa is an enthusiastic volunteer in her industry, as a speaker, volunteer and board member for the Canadian Council for the Advancement of Education and the Council for Advancement and Support of Education for more than 15 years. Locally she's involved with her neighbourhood association, and her children's schools. In 2014 Lisa was named among the Top 40 Under 40 in the City of Guelph, cited for her volunteerism and philanthropy.

Lisa is Chair of the Board Fund Development Committee.



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SOMKENE IGBOANUGO
BOARD MEMBER

Somkene Igboanugo is the Capacity Building Coordinator, Patient Education and Engagement at the University Health Network. Somkene holds a Medical degree from Lugansk State Medical University, Ukraine, a Master of Science in Health Studies and Gerontology, and a recently completed PhD program (2022) in Public Health and Health Systems (Work and Health) at the University of Waterloo. His research focused on psychosocial stress and its effect on the health and well-being of first responders.

Before joining the CMHA WW Board, Somkene's extensive volunteer experience included serving as a distress/crisis call volunteer at Here 24/7, a mentor at Big Brothers, Big Sisters of Waterloo Region and the University of Guelph CORE Mentorship program, and Vice-President (3 years) of the Graduate Student Association (GSA) of the School of Public Health Sciences (SPHS), University of Waterloo.

Somkene is very passionate about mental health and addiction issues, especially their effect on minority and marginalized communities. He aims to bring about mental health awareness and tackle stigmas and misconceptions within these communities. In addition, Somkene aims to lend his vast research skills and innovative ideas to benefit the CMHA WW Board.

Somkene sits on the Board Performance, Quality, Risk & Ethics Committee.



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DEANNE METZLOFF
BOARD MEMBER

Deanne resides in Alma, and currently works as Finance Manager for CarePoint Health in Mississauga. She has over 20 years experience working, volunteering and fundraising for various charitable and non-profit organizations.

In her spare time, she enjoys reading, writing, spending time with family and friends, and being active outdoors.

Deanne is Chair of The Grove Governance Committee and sits on the Board Fund Development Committee.



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Photo coming soon!

With over 25 years of dedicated professional librarian experience spanning both the public and private sectors, Pia Williams is a seasoned leader in the field. Her diverse background encompasses roles that range from law librarian, academic librarian, and public librarian to fundraising prospect researcher, highlighting her multifaceted expertise and commitment to excellence in library management.

In addition to her extensive experience as a librarian, Pia has spent 10 years in the realm of fundraising as a prospect researcher. In this capacity, she has honed her skills in identifying and analyzing potential donors, contributing significantly to the success of fundraising initiatives and organizational growth.

Pia is very passionate about mental health and addiction issues. Currently, Pia serves as the Executive Director of the Waterloo Region Law Association (WRLA), where she established the Mental Health Committee for the WRLA. This initiative aims to assist legal practitioners in the community by bringing awareness about mental health, tackling the stigmas and misconceptions within the legal community, and providing access to essential mental health resources.

Her commitment to the library profession extends beyond her professional roles. Pia has actively contributed to the community through her volunteer work and board memberships. She has served as chair on the boards of the Ontario Association of Courthouse Libraries, and Heritage Green Child Care, among other boards, and currently sits on the Appeal Tribunal for the City of Waterloo.

Pia currently resides in Waterloo with her husband, two children, and two dogs. In her spare time, she enjoys reading, running, traveling, and spending time with family and friends.

PIA WILLIAMS
BOARD MEMBER



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SYDNEY AUSTIN
COMMUNITY COMMITTEE MEMBER

Sydney Austin is a fourth year undergraduate student in the Honours BA Psychology program at Wilfrid Laurier University. Sydney is actively engaged in the psychological research community at Laurier, currently holding the role of lab manager in IMPETuS social psychology lab, and honours thesis student in Cognisant cognitive neuroscience lab. Her undergraduate thesis aims to investigate motor outcomes for individuals with anxiety, autism, and ADHD in a variety of everyday environments.

Sydney has grown up in Waterloo Region all her life, and has had the opportunity to be involved with various community settings such as Waterloo Regional Police Services, Elmira District Secondary School, Wilfrid Laurier University, upon others. She is a board member for the Woolwich Counselling Centre, an organization providing counselling services for individuals, couples and families of all ages in the Woolwich township. Sydney works as Research Coordinator and Academic Writing intern at Get A-Head powered by Keel Mind, a Toronto-based digital therapy platform that provides free mental health support to post-secondary students across Canada. Here, she is creating a publication on e-mental health platforms and their relevance to post-secondary student mental health. She is the Student Representative for the Canadian Psychological Association (CPA), and Associate Departmental Representative for the Canadian Society for Brain, Behaviour and Cognitive Science (CSBBCS) at Wilfrid Laurier University.

Sydney is incredibly passionate about mental health and advocating for accessible therapeutic support for all populations. Sydney's future goal is to pursue a Masters and PhD in the area of clinical psychology, with the eventual goal of becoming a clinical psychologist.

Sydney sits on The Grove Governance Committee.



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LISA PIERCE
COMMUNITY COMMITTEE MEMBER

Lisa has been a dedicated and compassionate Paramedic, providing citizen-centered service to the residents of the Region of Waterloo for over 15 years. She has proven herself a proactive leader in the workplace, encouraging conversations about mental health and assisting in the development of a peer support program within Paramedic Services. Lisa's commitment to enhancing her knowledge and skills in this crucial field led her to complete a post grad trauma certificate program at Wilfrid Laurier University. In addition, Lisa also completed ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training) and Assisting Individuals in Crisis training further enhancing her skills to assist those in crisis.

In her pursuit of making a difference, Lisa is currently embarking on a career transition by enrolling in an Occupational Health and Safety program at Fanshawe College. Her dedication to supporting employee's well-being reflects her continued commitment to ensuring a safe and healthy work environment for all.

Lisa sits on the Board Performance, Quality, Risk & Ethics Committee.



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DAVID DOXEY
COMMUNITY COMMITTEE
MEMBER

David Doxey is a member of the Guelph Police Service where he has been a police officer since 1999. During this time David has worked in Neighbourhood Services, Information Systems Services, Traffic and School Safety, Court Services, and Investigative Services. David currently leads the Neighbourhood Services division.

David was part of the Integrated Mobile Police and Crisis Team (IMPACT) partnership development team with CMHA where he continues in a liaison role.

David sits on the Board Performance, Quality, Risk and Ethics Committee.



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LINDSEY GLADDING
COMMUNITY COMMITTEE MEMBER

Lindsay Gladding currently serves as World Vision Canada's Director of Fragile and Humanitarian Programs. With more than a decade of experience in diverse humanitarian and emergency settings, she has deployed to emergencies around the world including Haiti, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iraq, Zimbabwe and Niger. Lindsay spent 15 months with World Vision Lebanon as the Humanitarian Director, establishing World Vision's response to the Syrian refugee crisis. She is a passionate gender equality and mental health advocate and has developed strong skills in non-profit fundraising, mental health and psychosocial support especially for children in crises.

Lindsay has served as a contract faculty member in humanitarian and development studies at Brescia University College and Humber College. She holds an MA in Human Security and Peacebuilding at Royal Roads University, a Post-Graduate Diploma in International Project Management from Humber College, a BA in Socio-Cultural Studies from Western University, and a Diploma in Community Development from Brescia University College. Lindsay sits on the Fund Development Committee.



SHERRY SLEJSKA
COMMUNITY COMMITTEE MEMBER

Sherry Slejska has worked in the commercial, public, and non-profit sectors, where she polished her talents in strategic marketing communications program design and delivery and established and led talented teams. Her success has been catalyzed by her ability to grasp business objectives and promote specific, quantifiable solutions that interrupt, alter, and amplify dialogues.

Sherry's self-discovery and healing from childhood trauma sparked an interest in mental health advocacy and treatment. She provides individual support and leads trauma group programs at The Gatehouse in Toronto and the Sexual Support Centre (SASC) of Waterloo Region, where she works as a BSW practicum student. Sherry has an Advertising Diploma, advanced studies in Digital Marketing from McMaster University, a Chartered Marketer Designation from the Canadian Marketing Association, a BA in General Studies and Social Sciences, and is currently pursuing a Bachelor of Social Work at the University of Waterloo. Sherry sits on the Fund Development Committee.



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