

# Schizophrenia Society of Saskatchewan

## Annual Report

2024-2025

### 2024-2025 Board of Directors

Dean Yadowski	President, Regina
Kristen Cozine	Vice President, Regina
Jocelyn Underwood	Financial Officer, Regina
Karyn Kawula	Saskatoon
Bruce McKee	Regina
Mike Gardiner	Regina
Jeff James	Regina
Kathy Evans	Saskatoon
Kyle Bender	Prince Albert
Joan Baylis	Regina
Matthew Schmeling	Regina

### STAFF

Sean Barschel	Executive Director
Claire Amon	Executive Assistant
Austin Holonics	Regina Partnership Program
Curtis Harman	Saskatoon Partnership Program
David Field	Rural Partnership Program
Heidi Fischer	Saskatoon Office and Program Coordinator
Shaun Schiller	Data Entry Specialist
Maria Alvarez	Peer Support Worker
Emily “Ice” Marshall	Peer Support Worker
Dustin Tumak	Cleaner
Dan Sherven	Fundraiser

#### **Our Mission Is:**

**To improve the quality of life for those affected by schizophrenia, psychosis and related mental illness through education and support programs, and through pursuit of supportive public policy and research.**

#### **Schizophrenia Society of Saskatchewan Award Winners:**

**2024 – 2025**

#### **Rays of Hope Award**

##### **Recipients:**

Mallory Schmitz

Deborah Elash

#### **Dr. Lionel and Mrs. Mary Hastings Awards**

##### **Recipient:**

Dr. Tamara Hinz

#### **Community Spirit Award**

##### **Recipient:**

Star Egg

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ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING SCHIZOPHRENIA SOCIETY OF SASKATCHEWAN, INC.

TUESDAY, JUNE 10, 2025 MEETING 10:30AM

PROPOSED AGENDA

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1. Welcome and call to order
2. Adaption of Agenda
  - **Motion to: Adopt Agenda**
3. June 11, 2024. AGM Minutes
  - **Motion to: Accept minutes of June 11, 2024. AGM as circulated**
4. Business arising out of old minutes
5. Call for other business to be added to the agenda
6. Reports
  - 6.1 Provincial President's Report
  - 6.2 Executive Director's Report
    - **Motion to accept reports 6.1 - 6.2**
  - 6.3 Financial Officer's Report
    - **Motion to accept report 6.3**
  - 6.4 Auditor's Report
    - **Motion to accept report 6.4**
  - 6.5 2024-2025 Auditor Appointment
    - **Motion to: Appoint Virtus Group auditor for 2025 – 2026 fiscal year**
  - 6.6 National Representative's Report
  - 6.7 Partnership Program Report
  - 6.8 Saskatoon Office Report
  - 6.9 Saskatoon Recreation Group Report
  - 6.10 Family Recovery Journey Report
  - 6.11 Family Support Group Report
  - 6.12 Your Recovery Journey with WRAP Report
  - 6.13 Peer Support Report

6.14 Nominations Committee Report

**Motion 1: Dean Yadowski be extended for an additional two years beyond of the existing three continuous two-year term.**

**Motion 2: Bruce McKee be extended for an additional two years beyond of the existing three continuous two-year term.**

**Motion 3: Mike Gardiner be extended for an additional two years beyond of the existing three continuous two-year term.**

**Motion 4: Jeff James be extended for an additional two years beyond of the existing three continuous two-year term.**

**Motion 5: Nominate Samantha Taylor for the first year of her first term.**

Motion to accept reports 6.6 – 6.14

7. Other Business

8. Adjournment

**ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING**  
**SCHIZOPHRENIA SOCIETY OF SASKATCHEWAN, INC.**  
**TUESDAY, JUNE 11, 2024**  
**MEETING 10:30 AM**

**1. Welcome and call to order- 10:33 AM**

**2. Adoption of Agenda**

**Motion to: Adopt Agenda**

**M/S: J. James/ K. Cozine - Motion carried**

**3. June 14, 2023. AGM Minutes**

**Motion to: Accept minutes of June 14, 2023. AGM as circulated.**

**M/S: B.McKee/ J. Baylis - Motion carried**

**4. Business arising out of old minutes**

None

**5. Call for other business to be added to the agenda**

None

**6. Reports**

**6.1 Provincial President's Report-** Read by D.Yadlowski

**6.2 Executive Director's Report-** Read by S. Barschel

**Motion to accept reports 6.1 - 6.2**

**M/S: J. Underwood/ J. James - Motion**

**carried 6.3 Financial Officer's Report-** Read by J. Underwood

**Motion to accept report 6.3**

**M/S: D. Yadlowski/ J. James - Motion**

**carried 6.4 Auditor's Report-** Read by J. Underwood

**Motion to accept report 6.4**

**M/S: B. McKee/J. Baylis - Motion carried**

**6.5 2024-2025 Auditor Appointment**

**Motion to: Appoint Virtus Group auditor for 2024 – 2025 fiscal year**

**M/S: J. Underwood/ J. James - Motion**

**carried 6.6 National Representative's Report-** Read by J. James

**6.7 Partnership Program Report-** Read by C. Harman

**6.8 Saskatoon Office Report-** Read by H. Fischer

**6.9 Saskatoon Recreation Group Report-** Read by H. Fischer

**6.10 Family Recovery Journey Report-** Read by H. Fischer

**6.11 Family Support Group Report-** Read by M. Alvarez

**6.12 Your Recovery Journey with WRAP Report-** Read by M. Alvarez

**6.13 Peer Support Report-** Read by M. Alvarez

**6.14 Nominations Committee Report-** Read by K. Cozine

**SSS ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP REPORT 2022- 2023**

**Motion 1: Kathy Evans be extended for an additional two years beyond the existing three continuous two-year term.**

**M/S: J. James/ B. McKee - Motion carried**

**Motion to accept reports 6.6 – 6.14**

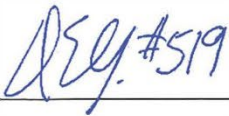
**M/S: J. Baylis/ J. Underwood - Motion carried**

**7. Other Business**

**8. Adjournment- 11:21**

**Motion: to Adjourn**

**M/S: J. James/ B.McKee - Motion carried**



Dean Yadlowski, President



Sean Barschel, Executive Director

## PROVINCIAL PRESIDENT'S REPORT

This past year has marked continuing success of the Schizophrenia Society of Saskatchewan in our mission of supporting individuals and families affected by schizophrenia, psychosis, and related mental illnesses.

Our Executive Director, Sean Barschel, is now in his sophomore year as the heart and soul of the Society. Sean has been instrumental in modernizing some of our accounting and payroll functions, and continues to support and inspire our dedicated staff. The Board of Directors is very pleased with Sean's performance, and looks forward to another year of growth and momentum.

Our programming, delivered by our dedicated staff and volunteers, continues to make a difference in people's lives. Family Recovery Journey, Your Recovery Journey, the Partnership Program, peer support groups, and recreation and support activities have all had tremendous success over the past year. The Rural and Northern Partnership Program has made inroads with communities ranging from Avonlea to Pinehouse Lake. In addition, new initiatives such as Youth Recovery Journey and ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training) have been introduced, reflecting the Society's strategic goal of expanding capacity in programming and services.

Social media continues to be a valuable tool in expanding the Society's outreach and online presence. We will continue to leverage social media to connect with people in non-traditional ways.

Our former Executive Director and now fundraising facilitator, Dan Sherven, has quarterbacked successful fundraising events including the Singing With The Stars fundraiser in October, the Champions For Mental Health fundraiser in March, and the May Steak Night in Regina and Star Wars fundraiser in Saskatoon. Each of these fundraising events exceeded the high bar set last year. Many thanks to Dan for his tireless work.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I want to extend our sincere thanks to all staff, volunteers, donors, and government and community partners in ensuring the continuing success of the Society. Together, let's keep building a future where mental health is not only acknowledged but prioritized in every community across Saskatchewan.

With deep appreciation and optimism,

Dean Yadowski

President, Schizophrenia Society of Saskatchewan Board of Directors

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

I would like to begin by thanking all my staff for their hard work and dedication over the past year. We have accomplished a great deal this year and I look forward to what is ahead. This past year, our Society has made significant strides in raising awareness about schizophrenia, psychosis, and related mental illnesses. We remain committed to reducing stigma and assisting individuals in accessing timely and effective treatment and resources.

Our programs and services continue to expand across the province, reaching more individuals who need them most. The Partnership Program achieved several major milestones this year. Additionally, the Family Recovery Journey program and Family Support Group have extended their reach, providing essential information, insight, and mutual support to families throughout Saskatchewan.

Our Your Recovery Journey with WRAP and Peer Support Group programs have supported a record number of participants virtually. We're proud to have expanded our peer support services to include a Youth Recovery and Wellness Course and to offer the ASIST suicide intervention program, further strengthening our mental health support network. We are also excited to announce that on September 25th, 2025 we will be hosting a full-day mental health conference in Saskatoon.

Thanks to the tireless efforts of Dan Sherven, our fundraising efforts have reached an all time high. The Champions for Mental Health Dinner, held on March 15, 2025, was one of our most successful and well-attended events to date. Similarly, Singing with the Stars in Saskatoon was also a resounding success, and we look forward to another dazzling event later this year. Our smaller fundraisers, A Show of Hope in Saskatoon and the Regina Steak Night, were also well attended. These events not only raised funds but also fostered community engagement and awareness.

A heartfelt thank you to all our sponsors for their generous and continued support. Your contributions are vital in helping us provide services and programs for our clients and their families.

I would also like to extend my deep gratitude to our entire staff. Your support, insight, and compassion make everything we do possible. I feel incredibly fortunate to work alongside such kind, generous, and passionate individuals. The same heartfelt thanks go to our volunteer presenters, whose dedication and time are truly appreciated and we could not do this without you.

A big thank you to our board members who volunteer their time to support our mission. I have greatly enjoyed learning and working with all of you over the past year. Together, we are shaping an exciting new chapter for the Schizophrenia Society of Saskatchewan, and I believe it will be one of our best yet.

Thank you,

Sean Barschel

Executive Director

Schizophrenia Society of Saskatchewan.



## FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT

I am pleased to report to the members that the Schizophrenia Society of Saskatchewan (the Society) has concluded the 2024–2025 fiscal year in a strong financial position, with operating revenues exceeding expenses and budget. This positive outcome reflects the continued strength of our fundraising efforts and the careful stewardship of our financial resources.

This year, our signature fundraising events—the Singing with the Stars gala in Saskatoon and the Champions for Mental Health dinner in Regina—were once again highly successful. Thanks to the support of our communities, we continue to grow and diversify our revenue sources, ensuring sustainability for the Society's vital programming and services.

Grant revenue, primarily from Saskatchewan Health, remains stable and forms the foundation of our operations. Meanwhile, ongoing inflationary pressures have led to increased operating expenses. Nonetheless, our careful financial planning and strong fundraising have allowed us not only to meet these challenges but also to further strengthen our financial foundation.

Our net assets have now surpassed \$1 million—a significant milestone that positions the Society for continued resilience and growth. Our reserve fund remains held in lower-risk, liquid investments, and has seen continued growth due to prudent, active management and favorable market conditions. These funds are earmarked for key initiatives and priority areas across the province.

The Society continues to perform essential services that government agencies are not equipped to provide, all while maintaining a modest budget. This is a testament to our dedicated staff, volunteers, and leadership. I would like to express my sincere thanks to our Executive Director, Sean Barschel, for his unwavering leadership and to our entire team for their commitment to the Society's mission.

It is an honour to serve as the Society's Financial Officer. I remain deeply inspired by the work we do and look forward to another year of supporting individuals and families affected by schizophrenia and related mental illnesses throughout Saskatchewan.

Sincerely,

Jocelyn Underwood, CPA, CA

Financial Officer

Schizophrenia Society of Saskatchewan

## AUDITOR'S REPORT

Please see Appendix A.

## NATIONAL BOARD REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT

Our CEO, Chris Summerville, Schizophrenia Society of Canada (SSC), continues to be a strong and passionate leader for the National Society.

The National Board has had some turnover over the past year – two longtime board members, Florence Budden from Newfoundland, and Chris Watkins from B.C. stepped down. SSC remains in a very healthy financial situation. We are actively looking for additional board members for SSC, with an emphasis on family members and persons with living/lived experience. If you are interested, please let me or Sean Barschel know.

This year ahead, the society and the board will be working on adopting new bylaws and policy development. We also intend to meet in person, which should be a productive meeting.

A 5th edition of the Rays of Hope book continues to be printed. The book is a popular resource –it can be accessed via the Schizophrenia Society of Canada's website, but printed versions do exist and there are some available at the SSS office and our website.

SSC is working on revamping the 'Your Recovery Journey' course content with an experienced mental health clinician from Manitoba as the project lead. It will likely be ready for launch sometime in 2025 and promises to be more engaging and fresh content -stay tuned here.

Advocacy efforts continue from the national Society. Over the last few years, the main ask has been for the Federal Government to use a Health Care Parity Act that would bring mental health funding to a certain level across the health system in each Canadian province. Another advocacy topic has been for a mental health transfer fund. In budget 2024, the Federal Government announced a \$500M transfer fund for youth mental health (and this continues to roll out across the country after the election in April), which is part of what the Society has advocated for. The Canadian Society continues to work closely with Impact Public Affairs for this work and many other social media campaigns.

The national Society has also been advocating to all levels of government and the Canadian Drug Agency regarding coverage for the new mental health drugs – there has been some successes here over the past year.

The Board, Chris Summerville and staff continue to work, "To improve the quality of life for those affected by schizophrenia and psychosis through education, support programs, public policy and research."

It has been rewarding to continue to hear the varied voices from across Canada. Each province has their own unique challenges, but the shared commitment to enriching the lives of people living with serious mental health challenges remains very clear.

My intention is to step down from the national board sometime in 2025-26, so I encourage anyone who is interested in volunteering for this board to reach out!

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff James

## PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM REPORT

The Partnership Program team has completed its 27th year in Regina, 26th year in Saskatoon and 8th year with the official Rural Team. In the 2024/2025 fiscal year, the team gave 441 presentations to 10,863 people all across the province making it a very successful year. Since the inception of the Partnership Program on January 1st, 1998, to March 31st, 2025, the grand total has reached 7,062 presentations to 179,966 people. A total of 93 individuals from lived experience speakers to family members to mental health advocates and professionals have presented with the Partnership Program across Saskatchewan.

Students continue to be one of our primary audiences as mental illness often develops around the ages of 15-25. During the last fiscal year there was 186 presentations delivered to approximately 5,157 students at high schools and elementary schools. Due to the introduction of Bill 137 in 2023 school boards were restricting third party presenters leading to a reduction in elementary and high school presentations. These numbers display the hard work the team has put in to reassure school boards that our presentations are extremely important and relevant to the age groups we engage with. The teams also continue to present to universities, colleges, trade schools, and adult education organizations, attempting to reach individuals of all backgrounds.

We continue to strengthen our connection to the province by working to increase the number of presentations we provide to rural communities each year. This year a total of 37 presentations were given to a variety of locations including St Pascal Community School – Green Lake, Battleford District Care Centre, Greenall High School – Balgonie, Ospwakun Sepe School – Brabant Lake, Moose Jaw Family Services, Avonlea School, NNADAP and Community Counselling, Prince Arthur Community School, Cornerstone Christian School, Central Collegiate – Moose Jaw, Kelliher School, Eaton School – Eatonia, Ponteix School, and Kiskahikan School – Weyakwin.

The Partnership Program is always looking to expand and reach new groups and has been successful at this over the past fiscal year. Some highlights from Regina include: Sask College of Paramedics AGM, UofR Seniors University Group, Sask Brain Injury Association, Wascana Rehab, Rainbow Youth Centre, Regina Work Prep Centre, SaskPower, and more. Some highlights from Saskatoon include: Dumont Technical Institute (several departments), Great Plains College, CMHA, Saskatoon Housing Coalition, College of Medicine, Women's reintegration unit, Saskatoon Police – victim services, McLure Place, and more.

David Field is on his third year as the Rural Coordinator connecting the Partnership Program to the more remote areas of the province. Austin Holonics is on his second year as the Regina Coordinator and is working to grow the program in Regina. And Curtis Harman is in his 27th year with the Society and 26th as a member of the partnership team. All three Coordinators continue to work diligently on providing stigma busting presentations as well as expanding the program and building relationships with community and team members in their respective communities.

Data and audience feedback is collected through a brief survey that participants fill out at the end of each presentation to get an understanding of how effective the program is. In the past year 95% of people agreed or strongly agreed that the presentation increased their understanding of schizophrenia and/or other mental illnesses. 88% of audience members agreed or strongly agreed that they would be more empathetic and understanding towards someone with a mental illness. 93% of people agreed or strongly agreed that because of this presentation they know of additional supports and services. A special thanks to Shaun Schiller, our data specialist for summarizing the thousands of surveys that are collected by the program.

Here are just a few of the thousands of positive audience comments from the past year:

“The presenters were great and easy to understand. It takes courage for these people to come to our school. My class asked some great questions, and the presenters were really open and honest with their answers. I will be having the Partnership Program present to my students every semester” – Saskatoon School Teacher

“One of the best mental health sessions I have been able to include in all of my paramedic training. Very personable and brought down to a real world level and easily understandable.” – Regina

“Lots of good information that I can use in my life and in my line of work. WELL DONE!” – Rural

Curtis Harman appeared on 98 Cool Radio, CJWW Radio, 92.9 The Bull to promote Singing with the Stars and the Program, he also appeared on CTV for Bell Let's Talk Day. Finally, the Stigma Busters series, promoting the Partnership Program, has received hundreds of views on YouTube over the past year. Austin Holonics appeared in CTV Morning Show and CBC Radio, both to promote our Champions for Mental Health event and the programs and services provided by the Society.

We want to recognize former Partnership Program family presenters from Saskatoon Irma Schmidt and Mick Ellis who passed away in 2024. They will be remembered for all the work they did to reduce stigma in our community.

Finally, a big thank you to each and every one of our presenters with lived experience, the family members, and our mental health professionals and advocates; you have truly made a difference in the fight against stigma. Without all of your hard work and dedication this program would not be possible or as successful as it has been. We would also like to thank our funders and our hosts for inviting us to present and allowing us to share the message of a Reason to Hope and the Means to Cope.

Respectfully submitted,

Austin Holonics

Curtis Harman

David Field

## SASKATOON OFFICE REPORT

We respond to phone and email inquiries from individuals with mental illness, their families, and community organizations, providing information, support, and referrals to other mental health programs as needed. Our office also assists people in rural and remote areas outside of Saskatoon.

This year we have taken the opportunity to attend a variety of community events including the Step Up for Mental Health Marathon, CMHA In the Spotlight: Families Championing Change, the UofS Volunteer Fair, and the Mental Health Week Walk and BBQ. Heidi has continued to offer the course ASIST course in conjunction with Sean, and assists with Partnership Program presentations, on occasion.

The Saskatoon office continues the task of updating our social media and website. In addition to this we also create the newsletter and posters for events.

Additionally, we supported the Singing with the Stars fundraiser at TCU place and the Regina Champions for Mental Health fundraiser. On May 1st, we organized our third annual Show of Hope at the Broadway theatre with a showing of Star Wars: Return of the Jedi. This was a great opportunity to increase community awareness and support, which included multiple media interviews.

We are grateful for grants and donations from Cameco Step Up for Mental Health and Wendy Morris, which allows us the opportunity to provide services to the Saskatoon and area communities.

Sincerely, Heidi Fischer

Saskatoon Office and Program Coordinator Schizophrenia Society of Saskatchewan

## SASKATOON RECREATION GROUP REPORT

The Saskatoon Recreation Group is available to adults 18 and older with lived experience of mental illness to encourage social interaction and create strong support networks. We offer a variety of recreational activities free of charge.

Our main activities are coffee on Thursdays, which is our most attended group, and bowling on select Tuesdays. In addition to our typical groups, we also attend special events and bonus activities. Examples include the Western Development Museum's Festival of Trees, the Cat Café, Mini golf, movies, the Mental Health week walk and BBQ, and more. A highlight this year was our Christmas Pizza Party and coffee group BINGO.

We thank Gloria Goodman, our previous coordinator for her volunteer assistance with our groups! We graciously thank our funders: The Community Initiatives Fund and The Royal University Hospital Foundation Endowment Fund. Your generous assistance helps to make this important resource possible.

Sincerely, Heidi Fischer

Saskatoon Office Coordinator Schizophrenia Society of Saskatchewan

## **FAMILY RECOVERY JOURNEY REPORT**

The Family Recovery Journey course, created by the SSCA, is a free online program consisting of 5 sessions. It aims to educate families and caregivers about psychosis and related mental illnesses. Topics include concurrent disorders, self-care, and crisis planning.

Our most recent course of the Family Recovery Journey was delivered in March 2025. Because it is online we have participants from all over SK. The course is offered multiple times throughout the year and has enrollment has been particularly large.

It is a pleasure to help participants learn more about mental illnesses and to provide them with hope and resources.

Sincerely,

Heidi Fischer

Maria Alvarez

Jason Scott



## **FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP REPORT**

The family support group is an online support group for family members of those with any mental illness. We hold it on the second Tuesday of the month from 7:00 to 8:00 via Zoom which allows us to reach people across the province.

It is a relaxed setting where the participants can talk about anything they would like such as challenges or successes they have had in the last month. Participants as well as the group leaders share resources and other helpful information. We also bring in speakers and special guests on occasion which is well received. It is well attended and we have multiple individuals who have been with the group long-term, some even from it's beginning.

Respectfully submitted,

Heidi Fischer

Maria Alvarez

## YOUR RECOVERY JOURNEY WITH WRAP REPORT

Your Recovery Journey with WRAP (Wellness Recovery Action Plan) is a 5 session course that teaches those with mental illness how to achieve high levels of wellness. For example we learn what our triggers and early warning signs are and make action plans for them.

The course is a combination of WRAP which was developed by Mary Ellen Copeland and Your Recovery Journey which was created by the Schizophrenia Society of Canada. From the surveys participants fill out the majority indicate positive changes after taking the course. The course is designed to be facilitated by persons who have a mental illness and are further along in their recovery. As a result Debbie and Maria are truly able to empathize with the participants.

We offer the course 4 times a year over zoom. We are presently facilitating a course this month. We started doing the courses online during COVID and continued doing them online as we found we got more participants from outside of Regina. If the person doesn't have a computer Maria will do the course with the person over the phone or in person.

Both Maria and Debbie love facilitating the Your Recovery Journey with WRAP course. They feel they are helping people remain hopeful and providing them with tools to aid in their recovery. "Skills not just pills!"

Respectfully submitted,

Maria Alvarez

Debbie Walters

## PEER SUPPORT REPORT

Ice and Maria continue to provide peer support for a variety of clients. Maria has been a peer support worker since September 2015 and facilitates two support groups once a month, as well as 3 mental health courses one of which is tailored for youth. She continues to help people that live with a variety of mental illnesses. Together the peer and Maria decide on goals the peer would like to work on. It can be one large goal or a series of smaller goals and Maria works hard to meet the peers where they are and come up with a plan to help peers achieve these goals in the most effective way for the peer.

Maria's lived experience makes empathizing with the struggles that her peers face easier and allows her to better see situations from their perspectives. By participating in the community of practice for peer support workers offered by the SHA, Maria continues to improve her skills as a peer support worker. These resources allow her the opportunity to learn new techniques and strengthen her skills to better assist her peers with whatever they are working on. As well as those with mental illness Maria helps family members as well. By sharing her own story of recovery Maria gives them hope. She also helps them figure out what steps they should take regarding their loved one. Maria is sure to tell them about the Family Recovery Journey course as well as the Family Support Group we offer. Maria loves being able to help the people she works with. It makes her happy that the struggles she went through can now be used for something positive.

Ice meets with peers out in the community. During the past year they met with an average of 6 peers a week. Meetings were recurring on a weekly basis, with some occurring twice weekly. Peers continue to be offered the opportunity to meet out in the community for a variety of activities including coffee outings, walks and community resources such as libraries and employment centres. Ice offers a variety of resources to peers including providing a safe space to emotionally regulate, resume and employment assistance, companionship and body doubling for completing daily tasks (grocery shopping, walks, etc.) and connecting them to new communities.

Ice continues with a monthly wellness group in partnership with the SHA and OD and it continues to be well received among their peers alongside the other groups they host/co-facilitate each month. Knowing that transportation is a significant barrier that prevents peers from attending, we offer transportation to individuals, and this continues to be a key factor in gaining and maintaining participation. Peers really enjoy the group and utilize it as a socialization tool as

well as an opportunity to learn new wellness tools. It has grown into something many of them look forward to every month. Ice has continued taking a group of peers to the CMHA's coffee group once a month. The group has remained strong with active participation and peers continue to enjoy the group and look forward to the outing. A few peers choose to attend the group on their own on the weeks we don't facilitate an outing. Transportation is crucial to these outings as well, especially in the colder months of the year.

Last year we introduced a new communication method on top of calls and emails, implementing texting and it continues to be a success. Many peers choose to use text over calling or emails as it is quick and easy. Ice can connect with peers more efficiently, especially on days where they are out in the community and has little to no time in the office. Peers found texting to be more effective because it was easier to remember and it alleviated anxiety surrounding phone calls. It has also proved to be a valuable tool for peers who struggle with memory as they have the ability to review conversations and easily ask for communication. It has become a primary means of communication for several peers and several new peers have chosen it over emailing entirely.

This past year has been full of learning opportunities including numerous councils of peers' meetings and presentations from various organizations. Ice had the opportunity to connect with fellow peer supporters and learn new skills and resources to increase the effectiveness of their services. Ice also had the opportunity to receive additional training and recently completed their Peer Support Canada Certification. Peer retention remains strong. Ice has had 7 peers take a step back from the program this past year and have expressed that they are doing well and not needing to meet. One peer has shown incredible progress and has recently started speaking with the partnership program. All other pre-existing peers continue to be enrolled in the peer support program and continue meeting regularly with Ice to work towards their goals and aspirations.

Both Maria and Ice have been keeping themselves busy working with peers and providing support for many individuals within the community. They continue to work hard with one on one and group peer support as we head into the summer.

Respectfully submitted,

Ice Marshall

Maria Alvarez

## NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

### **Nominations and Election of the Board of Directors**

The Board of Directors shall consist of a minimum of six (6) members and a maximum of thirteen (13) members, each of whom at the time of his/her election or within ten (10) days thereafter and throughout his/her term of office shall be a member of the Society.

### **Slate of the Board of Directors for the Schizophrenia Society of Saskatchewan for 2024- 2025:**

1. Joan Baylis
2. Kyle Bender
3. Kristen Cozine
4. Kathy Evans
5. Mike Gardiner
6. Jeff James
7. Karyn Kawula
8. Bruce McKee
9. Matthew Schmeling
10. Jocelyn Underwood
11. Dean Yadowski

### **Current Board members seeking re-election for a 2-year term:**

- Kyle Bender (will be serving the first year of his third term)
- Jocelyn Underwood (will be serving the first year of her third term)
- Matthew Schmeling (will be serving the first year of his third term)

### **Current Board members whose terms are continuing:**

- Kristen Cozine (will be serving the second year of her third term)
- Joan Baylis (will be serving the second year of her third term)

**Current Board members seeking Re-election for an additional term:**

- Dean Yadlowski (motion to serve fourth term)
- Bruce McKee (motion to serve sixth term)
- Mike Gardiner (motion to serve sixth term)
- Jeff James (motion to serve fifth term)

**There are 0 board members not continuing terms or seeking re-election**

(The maximum board membership shall be for three continuous two-year terms unless at an annual general meeting, a resolution approved by the membership allows the term of office or the maximum number of terms of a director or directors beyond these limits).

**Nominees to the Board of Directors:**

- Samantha Taylor

**Slate of the Board of Directors for the Schizophrenia Society of Saskatchewan for 2025-2026**

1. Joan Baylis
2. Kyle Bender
3. Kristen Cozine
4. Kathy Evans
5. Mike Gardiner
6. Jeff James
7. Karyn Kawula
8. Bruce McKee
9. Matthew Schmeling
10. Samantha Taylor
11. Jocelyn Underwood
12. Dean Yadlowski

## SAMANTHA TAYLOR

With over 30 years of experience in education, Samantha Taylor has spent the last 15 years teaching Psychology to Grade 11 and 12 students. Her deep commitment to mental health education stems from a firm belief that understanding fosters empathy—and that empathy can change lives.

Samantha's passion for mental health advocacy became personal five years ago when her teenage daughter began experiencing significant struggles. Confronted with an underfunded and resource-strapped healthcare system in Saskatchewan, Samantha navigated a challenging path that ultimately led to her daughter's diagnosis of bipolar disorder. More recently, her teenage son has been battling severe depression and anxiety, leading to ongoing challenges with school attendance.

Through both her professional and personal experiences, Samantha has become a vocal advocate for mental health parity—believing that mental health should be funded and supported on the same level as physical health. She is dedicated to breaking the stigma surrounding mental illness and continues to use her platform as an educator to inspire compassion, awareness, and systemic change.