

Chairperson's Report: 2015-2016

It has truly been an honour to be the Chair of the Board for the past 2 years. As per previous year's the Chairperson's report will provide an update on the Board's endeavors since June of 2015.

As you have seen from our interactive strategic plan roll out- it has been an incredibly busy twelve months! There is a level of energy and vigour throughout the organization that is undeniable! That brings me to the staff team. Janet has brought innovation and insight that is leading us positively into the future. The team is dynamic and deeply dedicated to our mission and values. It is important that we acknowledge the extraordinary efforts of Janet Klees and the entire staff team.

The Ministry has been pleased with DAFRS commitment to individuals and families who are looking to truly do something that is outside of traditional services. This has been evident in various investments to projects that were put forward for proposal; one of which was so highly regarded that it landed The Honourable Helena Jaczek Minister of MCSS, right here in this office to announce funding for housing project proposals across Ontario. This leaves us hopeful that the Ministry will continue to be progressive in supporting people with disabilities to live the ordinary life- the good life.

Our Nominations Committee has been very busy recruiting talented and skilled people to add to the board. We have a diverse group and each member including those up for membership this evening- bring unique gifts, skills and perspectives. We all continue to grow our knowledge and understanding of Social Role Valorization as it is integral to all that we do.

The finance committee has been diligent in their oversight. They continue to develop policies to ensure sound practices by the board and future planning for the organization. As you'll hear from our Treasurer Sarah Netley, DAFRS financial position is solid. Again, excellent work goes out to our ED, Director of Finance Sue Talmey and to the Board.

We have been committed to ensuring good governance. The board members have completed initial governance training and we are undergoing a board initiated policy audit. This work will prove beneficial for several years to come.

The investment in strategic planning has proved to be favourable thus far. We participated throughout the planning process and are committed to stated priorities. The Board will be monitoring outcomes over the next three to five years.

DAFRS has actively endorsed the Vulnerable Persons Standard. “**The Vulnerable Persons Standard is a series of evidence-based safeguards intended to protect the lives of Canadians.** These safeguards will help to ensure that Canadians requesting assistance from physicians to end their life can do so without jeopardizing the lives of vulnerable persons who may be subject to coercion and abuse.” <http://www.vps-npv.ca/>

Support for the standard is crucial for people with disabilities and other vulnerable persons! Individuals can also give their endorsement; we urge you to consider. Information can be found at <http://www.vps-npv.ca/>

There is always a lot going on at DAFRS. The board encourages members, families and individuals to read the monthly newsletter and come out to some of the various offerings. Learning events, open houses, and family groups are always fruitful. We’ve received very positive feedback that people are pleased with the variety and quality of DAFRS’ supports. As such, we must recognize Senior Manager Teresa Dale who has been outstanding managing a growing team along with several new initiatives!

DAFRS has a dedicated group of board members. They eagerly participate in organizational events and are excellent ambassadors throughout the community. The Directors ought to be commended for their hard work, loyalty and commitment to guide organizational direction from our core values.

The excitement of the previous year, will carry on over the next twelve months, as we continue to focus on strategic priorities. Next up, DAFRS will be undergoing a name change to better describe all we do for the community we serve. This process will of course involve membership, so stay tuned!

As I come to the end of my term as Chair; I would like to extend heartfelt gratitude to my fellow directors, Janet, Teresa and Sue. You have all been gracious, kind and helpful; truly embodying the spirit of Durham Association for Family Respite Services. Thank-you.

This concludes the yearly overview. It has been a good year!

Selena Blake