



News Digest

May 2015, Issue No. 25

Message from the President

I am pleased to report that OASIS is on the cusp of a meeting with the Ministry of Labour to re-introduce our concerns regarding Pay Equity and our proposed solutions as shared with Minister of Women's issues the Honourable Tracy MacCharles who has committed through her understanding of her mandate letter from the Premier, to supporting our initiative. We will report further as our committee moves forward on this matter.

The 18th Annual OASIS AGM/Conference was a great success with almost 500 attendees, a new record as our organization has grown to over 185+ agencies!! We used a new conference planner this year in conjunction with our regular member driven committees which included Christian Horizons, Reena, the Provincial Network on Developmental Disabilities, L'Arche Daybreak, Corbrook and Mary Centre. The Honourable Dr. Helena Jaczek, Minister of Community and Social Services, kicked off the festivities. This was followed by various speakers as well as our awards night which was very well received. The entertainment was thoughtful and representative of our culture and roots. Friday saw the end to our festivities with our AGM followed by a presentation from MCSS ADM Karen Chan assisted by Christine Kuepfer MCSS Director and Sal Marrello MCSS Director. We heard and have responded to your request - the slide deck of her presentation is made available to you on the OASIS website <http://oasisonline.ca/wp-content/uploads/Keynote-Speaker-Karen-Chan-Slide-Deck.pdf>.

OASIS has recently expressed an interest in actively participating in the new Community Hub initiative. In addition, the first meeting of the DSAG Advisory Group has taken place where we are optimistic that positive developments will take place over the next three years.

It seems to be an unwritten rule that we in the Developmental Services Sector must be faced with a steady diet of crisis with a list of challenges that never ends. Sometimes we lose sight of the real progress we have made in just the past five years; the accomplishments that we have achieved! This is not to say that we do not have fears for our future or that even in our present environment, we do not have deep concerns however, we must be grateful for the tremendous opportunities that are unfolding all around us and use these to manage change, to prepare for succession and to train our people to do the best job they can with what they are provided with. OASIS will continue to fight to strengthen agencies. That is our mission and that is our goal.

The next meeting of the OASIS Board of Directors will take place on June 10-11, 2015 in Hamilton. As always, members are welcome to attend Board meetings. We welcome you to join us or contact me prior to the meeting to share your ideas and concerns. I can be reached by email at president@oasisonline.ca or by phone at 1-800-961-9144.

Sincerely,
L. David Barber
President, OASIS

Welcome New OASIS Board Members

I would like to welcome two new members to the OASIS Board of Directors who were elected at the post Conference Board meeting in Richmond Hill on May 8, 2014. They are:

- Ann Kenney, Community Living South Muskoka (Vice President, Volunteer)
- Sherry Parsley, Community Living Hamilton (Director, Executive Director)

I would also like to acknowledge and thank two outgoing Board members for their outstanding contributions to OASIS. They are:

- Jane Joris, Lambton County Developmental Services (Past President)
- Allan Mills, Christian Horizons (Director, Executive Director)

2015 OASIS Scholarship Recipients

We were pleased to announce the recipients of the 3rd Annual OASIS Scholarship Awards at the 2015 Annual Conference in Richmond Hill. They are:

- ***Gerry Sutton Scholarship*** – Marion Graves, Simcoe Community Services
- ***George Braithwaite Scholarship*** – Judy Pryde, Community Living Burlington
- ***President's Scholarship*** – Krista Haiduk-Collier, Community Living South Muskoka

Congratulations to all three winners and we look forward to hearing about your scholarship experiences at next year's conference in Niagara Falls.

We continue to encourage Executive Directors and/or senior staff to submit their application for any one of these scholarships. Information can be found at <http://oasisonline.ca/research-resources/scholarships/>. Applications can be submitted at any time throughout the year, however, applications must be received by end of March 2016 to be considered for next year's scholarships.

Annie Oliver Award for Excellence

The Annie Oliver Award is presented each year to an individual or organization for outstanding contributions to the work of OASIS and improving the lives of people with a developmental disability. This year's winner of the Annie Oliver Award for Excellence is:

- Michelle Palmer, Community Living London

Michelle has demonstrated her commitment both to her agency, and to the developmental services sector as a whole through her provincial role. She firmly believes that everyone connected to the field of disabilities is equal, and uses an open door policy with everyone. Michelle is accessible at all times and can be counted on 24 hours a day if needed. Her quick wit and ability to find humour in difficult situations ensures others remain calm.

In her community, Michelle has contributed to many different groups, and ensures that others do not forget the importance of including people with disabilities in their decision-making. She encourages all members of her team to participate in community events and committees, and ensures the community knows the many faces of her agency, not just her own. She shares in the successes, and also assumes responsibility if there are areas of concern.

This past year Michelle was nominated by Fanshawe College for the Premier's Award from Colleges Ontario. Fanshawe College has previously presented her with a Distinguished Alumni Award for her contributions to her community. Last year she was Chair of the OASIS Conference Planning Committee, and orchestrated one of our most successful conferences to date. Other members of the committee will tell you, no matter how stressed things became, Michelle had a way of calming people respectfully, while recognizing their attributes and ability to contribute.

She is a highly valued leader within her own organization, and far beyond. Congratulations Michelle!

Board Meeting Highlights – May 5, 2015 – Richmond Hill, ON

2014-15 Audited Financial Statements and OASIS 2015-16 Budget Approval

OASIS Treasurer, Sally Ginter, presented the 2014-15 Audited Financial Statements and OASIS 2015-16 Budget, which were reviewed, discussed and approved by the Board of Directors.

Housing Task Force

In response to the Expression of Interest from the Developmental Services Housing Task Force, more than 80 applications for Innovative Housing Solutions for people with developmental disabilities were received. A sub-Committee has been established to review all submissions and make recommendations.

Pay Equity

OASIS Board representatives met with Minister Tracy MacCharles, Ministry of Children and Youth Services and Women's Directorate to discuss Pay Equity in our sector. The Minister was supportive of OASIS' position and our proposed solutions and recommended meeting with current Minister of Labour, Kevin Flynn, to update him on our concerns. Planning for a meeting with Minister Flynn is in progress.

Communications & Public Relations

In the coming days look for the newly formatted OASIS Bi-monthly Newsletter e-blast! The newsletter will be separate from the Digest and will target OASIS' partner organizations, key public servants, and political staff and influencers. In addition to OASIS member organizations, key media contacts will also be included in the distribution list.

Joint Funding Reform Forum

OASIS recently began participating in the Ontario Joint Funding Reform Forum, through which the views of the non-profit sector can inform the planning and implementation of the Government's transfer payment modernization initiatives. Look for further information in upcoming issues of the OASIS News Digest.

Developmental Services Advisory Group

Membership for the Reference Group and the Sub-Committee that will participate in the Developmental Services Advisory Group was recently established. There are a number of OASIS Board representatives on both Committees that will actively participate and keep the OASIS membership apprised of progress. Members are:

- **DSAG Reference Group:** Brad Horne, Cathy Parker, David Barber, David Katzman, Jane Joris, Joanne Lair, John Policicchio, Marion Graves, Steven Finlay, Sue Lynch, Trevor McGregor, Marie Zegarac.
- **DSAG Direct Discussion Group:** David Ferguson (Co-Chair), Eugene Versteeg (Co-Chair), Brianne Dunne, Carolyn Grgurich, Nancy Wallace-Gero, Paul McGowan

Approximately one-third of the Direct Discussion Group are from non-unionized agencies, which is similar to the ratio in the sector.

Introducing OASIS Board Member, Ann Kenney

Ann Kenney was elected to the OASIS Board at this year's Annual Conference and holds the position of Vice President Volunteer. Ann resides in Bracebridge and recently retired as the Chief Executive Officer of Community Living South Muskoka. Ann is a CPA CMA and was employed by CLSM for almost 25 years. Ann has been very active in the developmental services sector locally, regionally and provincially. Ann is married and has 2 children, a son with developmental disabilities and a daughter who works in the field, and brings a perspective of service both as a provider and family member.

Ann previously served on the OASIS Board of Directors from 2004 to 2012 and held the positions of Secretary for 4 years and Vice President Executive Director for 4 years. Ann was also a member of the OASIS Business Resource Committee, Sensory Partners, Pay Equity Committee, and the Communications and Public Relations Strategies Committee.

The Developmental Services Sector is at an important and critical juncture. Ann believes that agencies must listen to the voice of individuals and their families and offer services based on what they want and need. It is the time for innovation, flexibility and creativity. We must work with the Ministry to move forward the transformation agenda while maintaining viable, sustainable, and accountable agencies.

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