



# OASIS

## focus

A PUBLICATION OF ONTARIO AGENCIES SUPPORTING INDIVIDUALS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS · WINTER 2013

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### GREETINGS & HAPPY NEW YEAR OASIS MEMBERS



We hit the ground running in 2013 with much activity underway for our members. Between Christmas and the New Year, I had the opportunity to speak with the investigators from the Ombudsman's office looking into Provincial Services for Adults with Autism and Developmental Disabilities. I shared with the investigators a number of our concerns and pressures, citing the recent Operating Cost Pressures

Survey Results extensively. The primary focus of the investigation is two-fold: how does MCSS respond to crises that families and individuals face and, secondly, how is it that people access developmental services. They asked to speak with me again later, if necessary, as the investigation proceeds and the Ombudsman becomes more familiar with the challenges. To learn more, visit their website at <http://www.ombudsman.on.ca/Newsroom/Press-Release/2012/Ontario-Ombudsman-to-investigate-provinces-servic.aspx>.

Two significant projects underway for OASIS are the launch of our new website and our strategic planning process. The new OASIS website launched on January 22nd and will be formally introduced with a demonstration at the Visioning Day on January 31st. Our project team included a number of member agency representatives. Key amongst them was Gord Anton of E3. I would like to personally thank Gord and the team at E3, including Tim McLeod, E3's IT person, for their work in the development and administration of the

website as well as the listserves that we have been using for the past several years. As a founding member, Gord has demonstrated his commitment to the work of OASIS in many ways over the years, and in this case, providing much-needed behind the scenes support. E3 has been the conduit between OASIS administration and the web developer/host. Built on a WordPress platform, the new website allows OASIS administration to be much more self-sufficient and to work directly with the webmaster for both the site and the listserves, which are now managed primarily by member agencies. The discussion boards on the new website will be host to discussion throughout February in follow-up to the OASIS Visioning Day on January 31st.

We are pleased that close to 100 people will set aside their busy schedules on January 31st to help us articulate the future we are striving for within developmental services in Ontario. The Operating Cost Pressures survey and subsequent Efficiencies discussion paper help provide present context for us. The Visioning Day will help us to consider where it is important for us to focus our efforts as we seek to influence the future of developmental services not only for those people that our members support currently but also for the thousands of people waiting for services. The discussions prompted by the Efficiencies paper as well as the Visioning Day and survey have helped us to shape these with thorough input from our members. We sincerely appreciate the engagement of all our members as we build for the future through our strategic plan.

Jane Joris, *OASIS President*

## UPCOMING MEETINGS

### Board of Directors

February 20-21, 2013  
Kitchener/Waterloo

April 10-11, 2013  
Windsor

May 7 & 10, 2013  
Ottawa (Conference)

IDEAS & ARTICLES ARE WELCOMED

Please contact  
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## OASIS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jane Joris, President  
Judy Reid, Past-President  
David Barber,  
Vice President Volunteer  
Allan Mills, Vice President  
Executive Director  
Lu-Ann Cowell, Treasurer  
Donna Britten, Secretary  
Bonnie Dinning, Director at Large

### Directors:

Mal Coubrough  
Steven Finlay  
Michelle Marshall  
Jocelyne Paul  
Don Seymour

## OASIS

To facilitate the sharing of ideas, resources, systems and information, OASIS will liaise with government on behalf of member organizations with the goal of improving the development of cost effective quality supports for individuals with developmental disabilities.

# BOARD MEMBER PROFILE

## MAL COUBROUGH – DIRECTOR AND INTERIM TREASURER (VOLUNTEER)



I was born in Hamilton almost 66 years ago where I attended Delta Secondary School. I was very fortunate to land summer jobs five years in a row at Dofasco which enabled me to pay for my post-secondary education at Waterloo Lutheran University. While at WLU, I participated in a number of extra-curricular activities including bridge, sky-diving and co-directing a student telephone helpline for three years. I completed my 3 year BA in psychology and philosophy in 4 years. Upon graduation I gained a position at KW Hospital as an attendant in the Psychiatric ward and also, as required, drove ambulance.

In 1973, I joined the Ontario Public Sector as the first Volunteer Co-ordinator at the Oxford Regional Centre in Woodstock. The best part of 1973 - I got married.

From volunteer services, I moved to Human Resources with the Ministry of Community and Social Services where I was employed for 25 years. During my tenure with MCSS, I received my Certified Human Resource Practitioner status and an Advanced Alternate Dispute Resolution Certificate from the University of Windsor.

Life changed in early 1977, when our first daughter was born. In August of that year she was diagnosed with “failure to thrive”. It was a devastating blow! We cared for her at home, seeking support from family and Woodstock and District Developmental Services (WDDS). Two more daughters followed in the next four years and we did well as a family. Our first born was very severely handicapped and could not speak or sit. She was our finest teacher. When she passed away in 1989, our lives that had been enriched in so many ways, changed.

In the late 1970’s I was appointed to the Board of Directors of WDDS and remained a member of the Board for several years until I was forced to resign citing conflict of interest (employer was MCSS). In 2001, I rejoined the Board after my employment with MCSS had ended and have served there as Director, Vice-President and President. I am extremely proud of the Board’s achievements over the years including:

- Support and expansion of the social enterprise concept at WDDS
- 4th agency to receive accreditation from Focus
- Partnership with the local Rotary Club and a fundraising event
- Initiation of an Employer’s Breakfast Recognition for community businesses who employ people supported by WDDS
- Building of two greenhouses and partnership with the Ministry of Natural Resources
- And many, many more program improvements and initiatives

In 2011, I was elected to the OASIS Board of Directors; this is an ongoing wonderful experience. I continue to be amazed at the knowledge and dedication of OASIS Board members. OASIS started with 6 members and in sixteen years has grown to 164 agencies. The self-help philosophy we find in the OASIS mission statement is alive. OASIS willingness to work with government has enabled us to accomplish much over the years and I look forward to my continued participation with the Board.

## LOCAL MPP’S JOIN IN INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES CELEBRATIONS

Last December, Community Living Toronto’s Scarborough Region Council held their annual wine and cheese event. This year’s celebration was extra special as it fell on December 3rd, which is the International Day of Persons with Disabilities.

Community Living Toronto also marked the day by joining disability organizations from across Toronto in celebrating United Nation’s International Day of Persons with Disabilities

at City Hall, where individuals had the opportunity to share their stories and experiences, or tell of their organization's contributions and achievements in the disabilities sector.

At Scarborough Region's wine and cheese, three young ladies, Jenny, Shawna and Jen shared their stories as roommates, and how they are living their dream of having a home of their own. This was a powerful and impressive story, which was well received by all.

We also had the pleasure of two very special guests who joined us for the evening: the Honorable Margaret Best, MPP for Scarborough – Guildwood and Tracy MacCharles our MPP for Pickering – Scarborough East. They brought greetings to our membership and presented scrolls acknowledging International Day of Persons with Disabilities.



TOP LEFT PHOTO: Kathy and Tim

TOP RIGHT PHOTO: Brenda and the Honorable Margaret Best

BOTTOM LEFT PHOTO: Jen, Sue, Tracy MacCharles, Alex, Judith, Jenny and Shawna

BOTTOM RIGHT: Karla and Alex

## CHRISTINE ELLIOTT'S PRIVATE MEMBER'S BILL FOR A STANDING COMMITTEE ON DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES

The Board of Directors was pleased to have Christine Elliott, MPP for Whitby-Oshawa attend the January 16-17, 2013 Board meeting. Prior to the proroguing of Parliament, Ms. Elliott introduced a Private Member's Bill in the legislature for the creation of a select committee to address the "urgent need" for a comprehensive developmental services strategy to address the needs of Ontarians with intellectual disabilities and those dually diagnosed with intellectual disabilities plus mental illnesses. The Board shared the results of last summer's Operating Pressures Survey and the financial pressures agencies are facing that are

affecting service quality. The Pay Equity campaign was discussed. Ideas for cost saving opportunities as outlined in the recent Efficiencies position paper were shared. Ms. Elliott acknowledged that the developmental services sector needs help and that it is a priority for her, and that the sector has traditionally been under-resourced. She will continue to make a case for the sector and hopes to move forward with the select committee when parliament resumes, citing strong support from each party. She encouraged the sector to continue to bring the issues forward to MPP's.

## OASIS VISIONING DAY

Almost 100 people have registered for the OASIS Visioning Day on Thursday, January 31, 2013 at the **Hilton Garden Inn in Ajax**.

### GOAL

Create a set of actions that can be taken by OASIS members and others to fill the gaps in services for individuals with developmental disabilities

### STEPS TO ACHIEVING THE GOAL

Through a combination of plenary and small group work we will:

- Produce an OASIS vision statement for developmental services in Ontario
- Review the principles developed by MCSS' Transformation initiative, determine their utility, add more detail as needed, and identify other principles that should be included
- Identify gaps that prevent each of the principles from being realized
- Develop solutions for filling those gaps

## NEW OASIS WEBSITE LAUNCHED

The re-developed OASIS website was launched on January 22, 2013. With the launch of this new site comes greater member agency involvement.

Member agencies will be able to manage their own Agency Listing, post jobs, add and delete Listserve email addresses, and get involved in the new OASIS Discussion Board. Unique log-in information was sent out to each agency's general email address. As expected, some glitches were encountered, but most have these have been addressed. Access to the Labour Relations area of the website will be processed through our Administrative Support, Mary van Delft at [mvandelft@lods.on.ca](mailto:mvandelft@lods.on.ca) in consultation with Dave Ferguson, Chair of the OASIS Labour Relations Committee and will require the Executive Directors of participating agencies to sign a confidentiality statement.

We hope you enjoy the features of our new website at [www.oasisonline.ca](http://www.oasisonline.ca). Members attending the OASIS Visioning Day on January 31st will receive a demonstration of the new site.





# Putting Our Best Foot Forward

 OASIS | May 8-10, 2013 | The Westin Ottawa

## OASIS CONFERENCE 2013!

The National Capital Region invites you to **Put Your Best Foot Forward** at the 2013 OASIS Conference!

OASIS will be hosting its 16th Annual Conference on May 8-10, 2013 in the heart of beautiful downtown Ottawa, Ontario, at the award winning Westin Hotel.

### CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

- Welcome event at the outstanding Museum of Civilization on the banks of the Ottawa River
- Golf tournament at Club de golf Hautes Plaines
- Social options including the Nordik Spa and a Trolley Tour
- Keynote Jim Pealow who will prepare you for the journey that Puts Your Best Foot Forward for your board and staff to have successful outcomes for our organization.
- Keynote Brian Thwaits will show you how to enhance your learning, communication, creativity, and problem-solving and thinking skills.
- Closing keynote Alvin Law was born without arms and will motivate you with his belief.
- Inaugural presentation of the President, George Braithwaite and Gerry Sutton Scholarships
- Engaging and high quality educational workshops
- *And so much more!*

This year's program will not only inform you about the latest developments and timeliest topics in the field, but will also offer lots of opportunities to discuss, debate, deliberate and talk shop

The brochure outlining all the exciting details is being finalized. On-line Registration will be available in the next few weeks – watch your email!

Come and enjoy three super charged days of excitement and surprises!!! It is our hope this conference leaves you reenergized for work so YOU can Put Your Best Foot Forward in the upcoming year!

## OASIS SCHOLARSHIPS



PRESIDENT'S SCHOLARSHIP  
GEORGE BRAITHWAITE SCHOLARSHIP  
GERRY SUTTON SCHOLARSHIP

### TIME TO APPLY IS RUNNING OUT!!

Applications for the OASIS Scholarships must be submitted by **January 31, 2013**. Information on the application process can be found on the OASIS website. A separate application must be completed for each scholarship applied for. Final selections will be made at the Board meeting on February 21, 2013 and scholarship recipients will be announced at the Annual Conference in May.