

AGENDA

5:30 PM

Doors Open & Mixer

6:00 PM

Welcoming Remarks

Ian Sutherland, *Board Chair*

6:15 PM

Certificates of Appreciation

Allison Garber & Dr. Robert Strang,
Board Members

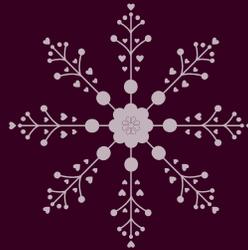
6:40 PM

Sheelagh Nolan Nominees & Award
for Excellence in Teaching

7:15 PM

Closing Remarks

Ian Sutherland, *Board Chair*

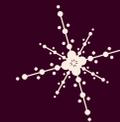
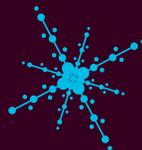
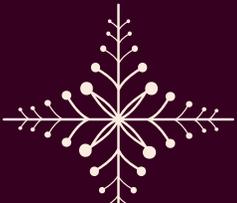


HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE

Thursday * 5:30 – 7:30 PM

DECEMBER 12TH, 2019

Maritime Museum of the Atlantic



Certificate of Appreciation Recipients

Sobeys Nova Scotia

Sobeys has been a phenomenal partner of both Autism Nova Scotia and the Ready, Willing and Able (RWA) inclusive employment initiative this year. In collaboration with Autism Nova Scotia, Sobeys created sensory friendly shopping experiences that welcome shoppers on the spectrum and those with sensory processing differences across our province to their stores, sparking a nation-wide movement in Sobeys locations from coast to coast.

Sobeys also engaged with RWA and formed a working group of dedicated store managers to build a diverse and inclusive workforce. Together with RWA, Sobeys created an inclusive recruitment and onboarding process to break down employment barriers for people with autism and intellectual disabilities.

Renena Joy

Renena has been a dedicated member, leader, and mentor on the Halifax Regional Centre for Education's Autism Team (HRCE) for many years. Her collaborative nature helped form strong relationships with community organizations to further support individuals on the autism spectrum. She has helped provide hundreds of education sessions to HRCE staff and contributed greatly to her colleagues' professional development.

L.S. Chris Richards & HMCS Toronto

As a father of three kids, with two on the autism spectrum, Leading Seaman Chris Richards has been a role model and advocate for raising autism awareness and acceptance in his community. Inspiring 111 crewmembers to participate as a team for Walk the Walk for Autism, Chris and the HMCS Toronto raised critical funds for the autism community while deployed at sea in Ukraine.

Agne Kubiliute (Autism Arts Educator)

Agne is the lead art educator of the weekly Autism Arts program held at the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia. For nine years, Agne has inspired many of our program participants to create art and enjoy the artmaking process. In addition, Agne has been a mentor to many volunteers and a wonderful teacher to the youth in Autism Arts.

Alex Smithers

Over the past four years, Alex Smithers has excelled as a volunteer with Autism Nova Scotia's Autism Arts program. Using her artistic talent and her incredible empathy to adapt to the needs and interests of participants, she is a compassionate and integral member of the volunteer team at Autism Arts.

Sarah Peverill

Sarah Peverill has been a dedicated Autism Arts volunteer for the past five years. With her passion for the program and her incredible gift of knowing how to support participants, she is a valuable team member. Sarah brings kindness, dedication, and a great sense of humour to her role as a volunteer.

Sarah Van De Walker

Sarah Van de Walker has volunteered for the last several cycles with Autism Arts. In this short time, she has developed a strong rapport with participants and created a positive space for everyone she works with. Sarah is a wonderful asset and dedicated team member.

Zaynab Khan

Zaynab Khan has excelled as a volunteer with the Autism Arts team over the past two years. Often serving in multiple cohorts during each semester, Zaynab is a caring and compassionate volunteer with the ability to quickly adapt to the needs and interests of program participants.

Downey Family:

Iain Downey and parents, Heather and Neil

Since the very beginning, Iain Downey and his parents, Heather and Neil, have gone above and beyond to support and even shape Autism Nova Scotia's work in the community. Most recently, Iain shared his story in a CTV video at our Best of Local event, and his parents are powerful advocates for acceptance and inclusion for others on the spectrum.

Hasey Family:

Nick Hasey and parents, Angela and Ron

Nick Hasey, with his parents cheering him on, generously shared his story with over 1,800 members of Nova Scotia's autism community through Autism Nova Scotia's 2019 holiday mail campaign. The funds raised thanks to Nick's letter will help people on the autism spectrum make new friends, try new experiences, become job ready, and find their passion in life.

Sarah Boyne

Sarah is a proud supporter of Autism Nova Scotia and an advocate for the autism community across Nova Scotia. She is a leader in raising critical funds and engaging Halifax's corporate community to ensure Autism Nova Scotia's programs are sustainable and accessible to all families in need.

As the Event Chair of Autism Nova Scotia's annual signature fundraiser, Sarah devoted countless hours soliciting sponsorship dollars, ticket purchasers, and gifts in kind to help achieve the event's fundraising goals. Sarah's passion and leadership have made a direct impact on the lives of those families served by Autism Nova Scotia.

Karen Sheridan

Karen is a shining light in her community at Emerald Hall as a Developmental Worker and Registered Behaviour Technician. Working in the inpatient hospital unit for adults with mental health concerns and intellectual disability, she embodies selflessness and compassion through her work supporting the clients she serves, particularly those with autism.

Karen has spent countless hours in her career securing grants to support individuals on the spectrum. She is also a strong advocate for professional development within her interdisciplinary team.



Sheelah Nolan Award Nominees

The Sheelah Nolan Award for Excellence in Teaching recognizes individuals and teams that foster growth and maximizes the potential of students or learners on the autism spectrum. Every nominee is recognized for going above and beyond in their efforts to champion understanding, acceptance, and inclusion.

Nicola Disney

Nicola is a primary school teacher at Sir Charles Tupper Elementary School. In the past year, she has exuded the utmost care and compassion in working with Parker, a student on the autism spectrum.

Recognized by Parker's family, Nicola truly understands the uniqueness of each child on the spectrum and works diligently every day to ensure her students' needs are met. She is an active collaborator with her students' support staff, specialists, educators, and families to ensure each student reaches their fullest potential.

Andrew MacDonald

Andrew MacDonald is a Learning Centre Teacher at Beaverbank Kinsac Elementary School who has made a significant and positive impact in the life of his student, Carson.

Over the years of working with Carson, Andrew has worked tirelessly to develop Carson's self-esteem by helping him feel included as an autistic member of his school community.

Nominated by Carson's truly appreciative mother, Andrew is a well-loved and gifted educator who easily made a connection and built great trust that has helped Carson grow in his independence and find his voice to advocate for himself.

Angela MacKeen

Angela is an outstanding and passionate educator and her passion for her students on the autism spectrum is limitless. She always ensures her students are accepted in an inclusive environment that maximizes their potential socially, emotionally, and academically.

Angela is deeply appreciated by families and fellow staff for her organization, capability, calmness, and wealth of experience. She is always educating others and sharing her knowledge of current practices and evidence-based programming for students on the autism spectrum.

Melinda Strum

Melinda is a primary school teacher at Chester District School who has been described by her student's parent as "the perfect advocate for children on the spectrum". She goes above and beyond for children on the autism spectrum in her classroom by making sure proper supports are in place, and ensuring they receive the best possible education by engaging speech-language specialists and support workers in her classroom.

Petite Riviere Elementary Teaching Team (Kristy Boutilier, Val DeLong, Debra Rickard)

Resource Teacher Kristy Boutilier, Grade Primary & One Teacher Val DeLong, and Teaching Assistant Debra Rickard at Petite Riviere Elementary have been an exemplary team in providing the necessary supports for grade one student, Jackson Newell.

This team have been consistent educators in Jackson's life since he started school and have worked to provide the necessary supports and structures that have led to his success at school and at home.

Rowan's Room Teaching Team

Rowan's Room is a developmental centre that offers an array of programs to individuals facing barriers in a traditional school environment. Rowan's Room works with many individuals, including those on the autism spectrum.

Rowan's Room focuses on building each student's individual strengths and using them to foster social, emotional, behavioral and educational growth and experiences. The educators truly believe in a team approach and work tirelessly to ensure every student is strengthened by a better understanding of themselves.

Windsor Forks District School Teaching Team (Shelley King, Janine Sampson, Roseanna Boyd)

The team at Windsor Forks District School have been nominated for their work with James, a 6-year old with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). During a period of many new challenges and adjustments, the teaching team at Windsor Forks rose to the occasion by providing James with a solid foundation and the stability he needed.

Many positive changes were witnessed in James as he grew in the learning environment provided by Windsor Forks. The patience and support of James' teaching team has truly changed his family's life and given him many happy experiences as a student.

The outstanding teaching team includes Principal Shelley King, Learning Centre Teacher Janine Sampson, and Education Assistant Roseanna Boyd.

2019 Sheelagh Nolan Recipient: Tricia Schmiesser

Tricia Schmiesser is a passionate educator and a dedicated member of the Basinview community. She works endlessly to foster growth and maximize the potential of students with ASD, guided by principles that always prioritize the best interests of her students. Tricia's optimism is inspiring and has made a significant impact on furthering her school's inclusive practice and culture.

Tricia's success as an educator is attributed to her deep understanding of her students. She works with families to explore the interests and strengths of her students, ensuring their individual talents are an integral part of their school day and celebrated across the school community. She seeks any and all perspectives available to her when developing programming and takes all recommendations made by support professionals with the greatest consideration.

Tricia is a leader, advocate, and champion in her community. She has been instrumental in promoting autism awareness, acceptance, and inclusion at Basinview Drive Community School. From planning many fundraisers to organizing educational opportunities for the students and staff, she always recognizes the importance of placing her learners with ASD at the centre of these events to foster their self-esteem and relationships with peers.

Additionally, Tricia has secured grants to fund learning opportunities like music therapy and to purchase educational equipment for students on the autism spectrum.

To honour her dedication, compassion, and leadership as an enthusiastic educator and incredible advocate, Autism Nova Scotia is proud to present the 2019 Sheelagh Nolan Award for Excellence in Teaching to Tricia Schmiesser.

