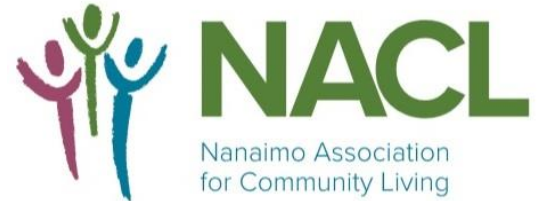


board nominees

2023-2024

(in alphabetical order)



Neil Cutler

Neil Cutler grew up with Left-Hemi Cerebral Palsy, which fueled his passion for improving the quality of life and connection for those with diversabilities. He was a Community Support Worker for 17 years, and has been leading Nanaimo Community Dances since 2006. The dances, originally for the local community, expanded virtually during COVID-19, drawing attendees from across North America. They now operate both in-person and online. Apart from this, Neil is a certified yoga therapy teacher and has enjoyed his role as a crisis worker, sharing wellness practices with clients who have diversabilities. His dedication was recognized in 2022 when he received the Hero Award of Excellence from the Community Social Services Employers Association. Additionally, Neil is now the Community Awareness Coordinator at the Vancouver Island Crisis Society. A strong believer in inclusion, he values the principles of NACL – and joined its Board as a Director in September 2020.

Margaret (Marg) Fraser

Marg Fraser is the mother of Leanne, a woman who currently receives services at NACL and lives at our Uplands Housing Project. Marg, along with her husband Dave and her daughter Leanne, have been longstanding members of NACL – and have supported our housing project since Day One. In the last five years of her career, Marg was the manager of Nanaimo Mental Health and Addictions, and previously had an extensive career in mental health and addictions services both in Nanaimo and Victoria. In her retirement, Marg enjoys being both a member and the Treasurer of the Zonta Club of Nanaimo, which is a worldwide organization working to improve the lives of women locally and internationally through service and advocacy. Her spare time is filled with looking after her two “little” granddaughters – keeping her as busy as she was while working, but absolutely loving it! As stated in her application, Marg fully appreciates NACL’s work, and is extremely grateful for the support her daughter has received. She welcomes the opportunity to give back by joining the NACL Board of Directors. Marg was officially added to our Board as of December 16, 2019.

Jacqueline (Jacquie) Howardson

As a longtime community volunteer and director on several local boards, Jacquie Howardson brings a rich, diverse, and varied background to the NACL Board of Directors. A BA in Anthropology and MA in Environmental Education have fueled her enthusiasm to absorb and share knowledge acquired through both the formal institutions of learning and informal hands-on experiential learning. Having experienced educational opportunities from First Nations Elders in Alert Bay and during field trips to Peru and Kenya, Jacquie learned that the common thread running through all of these very diverse communities of people is that they have rich and valuable cultural and life knowledge to share, plus they want homes, stability, happiness, and the opportunity to blossom as individuals while realizing their full potential...which deeply parallels for people with diversabilities. Through extensive local volunteering, from chairing a Neighbourhood Association to being a past director of the John Howard Society (now Connective), and by sitting on various City and other committees regarding homelessness, addiction, and mental health issues, Jacquie has gained extensive community hands-on knowledge on many complex social issues here in Nanaimo. She looks forward to contributing to NACL in its mission to support their diverse and vibrant community with dignity that is grounded in inclusivity and respect. Jacquie joined our Board of Directors as of April 9, 2022.

board nominees 2022-2023

(in alphabetical order)



John Jessup

John Jessup retired in 2000 from the City of Vancouver Housing Centre, where he was the Lead Housing Development Project Manager. He then came to Nanaimo to become a private housing development consultant, promoting and developing non-profit housing projects north of the Malahat, accessing Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) and BC Housing funding programs. For the past 15 years, he worked with persons served, families, and senior staff at NACL to pursue development of a townhouse project for young adults, which ultimately came to fruition as the Uplands Drive Housing Project – and had its first tenants move into their new homes as of October 2020. John has advanced degrees in Economics, Community Planning, and Performance Accounting for Police Services from UBC, Western Ontario, and Simon Fraser Universities. While at the City of Vancouver for over 25 years, he was a Senior Social Planner in the Social Planning Department, being responsible for community services and affordable housing initiatives. Given his background and long-term involvement with NACL, John looks forward to further enhancing and extending housing, support, and care services to persons with diversabilities and their families in Nanaimo. John officially joined NACL's Board of Directors on July 28, 2021.

Daniel (Dan) Johnston

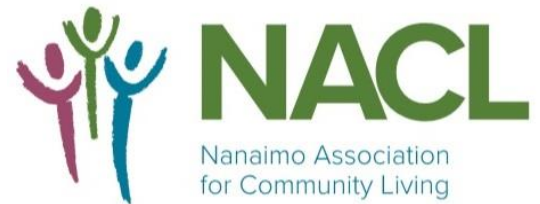
Daniel (Dan) Johnston was elected to the NACL Board of Directors at their meeting held on April 27, 2015. Dan's daughter attended Actions Day Program from 2009 to 2019. Dan is very involved with the COCO Cafe, a social enterprise they co-created with three other families in Cedar with the objective of providing employment and social integration opportunities for persons with diversabilities within their community. Dan is a lawyer with over 35 years of experience. While Dan's initial practice focused on corporate/commercial matters, it has evolved over the years. Dan now practices primarily as a mediator, dealing with a wide range of aboriginal, environmental, corporate/commercial, public policy, and labour issues across Canada, with a specialty in large, multi-party conflicts. With Dan's extensive legal background and social enterprise experience, we have been extremely fortunate to have him on our Board.

Kirsten J. Madsen

Kirsten J. Madsen is the mother of a lovable but challenging son who has multiple diagnoses and special needs. She has been a full-time practicing trial lawyer for over 30 years. She is also a trained family mediator. She and her husband and their son relocated from Vancouver to Nanaimo in 2011 for a different life. While in Vancouver, Kirsten served on the Board of the Developmental Disabilities Foundation, and is still a long-term, active volunteer with the Fragile X Research Foundation of Canada. Kirsten is also a past Board member of the Trial Lawyers Association of British Columbia, and has held various elected positions through the Canadian Bar Association. For many years, Kirsten was also volunteer legal counsel for a program run by the MS Society of BC. Kirsten has presented on legal topics related to disability as a lawyer, as well as from a personal perspective of having severely disabled special needs child. When not doing other things, you can find Kirsten with her son searching for animals like Canada geese, seagulls, and deer around Departure Bay. Kirsten was elected to NACL's Board of Directors at our Annual General Meeting on September 23, 2019.

board nominees 2022-2023

(in alphabetical order)



Tracie St. Luke

Tracie St. Luke has been employed with Coastal Community Credit Union for almost 30 years, serving the past decade of her career as the dedicated Relationship Centre Manager across Vancouver Island – a contact center that employs 25 people in our island communities to assist members over the phone or other digital means to conduct their banking. In 2014, while working in downtown Nanaimo, she became aware of the need for better banking support for individuals with diversabilities, and where she first learned about NACL and the work we do. Her son graduated in 2021 and joined NACL's Actions Day Program. Here he's actively applying new skills at the FoodShare program, shopping for the cooking program, and making steps towards entering the workforce and being a part of our community. Tracie has resided in Nanaimo for over 30 years with her husband Riley and two children, Carson and Taylor. She is excited to contribute to NACL as its newest Board member since December 6, 2022, and looks forward to again serving in 2023/2024.