

Board of Directors

Michael Capus, Chair

Since 2017, Michael has been a Partner with KPMG LLP. He began as a consultant with the firm in 2006, and he was promoted to Senior Manager by 2012. He has extensive experience in strategy development, financial and cost modelling, business process improvement, and performance measurement and management. He has a Bachelor of Commerce from the University of Alberta. His past community involvement includes work with 630 CHED's Santas Anonymous, Whitemud Equine Learning Centre Association, and the United Way.

David Benjestorf, Vice Chair

David has been practising corporate law in the Edmonton area since 2000 and presently serves as Legal Counsel and General Manager for the Alldritt Group's Alberta operations. He is also an entrepreneur, owning several Edmonton based companies. David has been acknowledged for numerous outstanding achievements including Edmonton Junior Chamber Member of the Year (2003), Alberta Venture Magazine's "Leader of Tomorrow" (2005), and being Knighted under the International Order of the Noble Companions of the Swan (2008).

Jill Thygesen, Treasurer

Currently the Director of Finance at Concordia University of Edmonton, Jill Thygesen has a Chartered Accountant designation (CA, CPA), complemented by a bachelor's degree from the U of A with a double major in Economics and French Language and Literature. She has a strong background in the fields of finance, accounting, and risk management, all honed during her time as an auditor at Ernst & Young LLP. During her career, Jill has become well-versed in the financial needs of NPOs. Her community involvement includes volunteering with InMotion Network and YWCA Edmonton.

Roberta Moro, Secretary

Roberta is currently a teacher with Edmonton Public Schools at Hospital School Campuses including the Royal Alex and Glenrose Hospitals. Because of her work in these hospital settings, she is very aware of the complex issues that children and families experience. Her education includes a Bachelor of Education from Concordia University and a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Alberta. Her community involvement includes work with the Nina Haggerty Centre for the Arts and the Mennonite Centre for Newcomers-Homework Club.

Sandra Neis, Former Chair

Sandra retired from the Government of Alberta in the fall of 2016 from the role of Director of Executive Development and Succession with the Public Service Commission. Sandra holds a degree in Human Resources and Labour Relations as well as a Certificate in Adult Education. In retirement, she enjoys travel, yoga, spending time at the cabin with family, and working on the occasional contract through her consulting business. Sandra has volunteered with the Alberta Government's Board Development program, worked with the Sherwood Park Christmas Bureau, and was on the board of the Edmonton Food Bank prior to her retirement.

Pam Averill, Director

Currently, Pam is the Manager of Job Design and Evaluation for the University of Alberta. Previously, Pam was the Manager of Human Resources for the Government of Alberta (Office of the Auditor General). Pam has a certificate in Human Resource Management and a BA (Political Science & Sociology). Pam currently serves on the Governance Committee of Edmonton's Food Bank. She is passionate about strategic initiatives, program planning, and leadership development.

Daniel Cardinal, Director

Dan Cardinal has been proudly serving the Métis Nation within Alberta for over six years. He started in 2014 as the MNA Region One Vice President and was then successful in his campaign for MNA Provincial Vice President in the 2018 election. Daniel is passionate about preserving Indigenous languages including both Cree and Michif, the language of his people. He has taught Cree with the Edmonton Catholic School Board, owned his own business, and served as a practical nurse. Daniel sits on many boards all relating to language, tradition, and culture preservation. He currently sits on the board of Métis Crossing Advisory Committee. Daniel's main priority is advancing the Métis Nation through promoting education and Métis culture for future generations.

Ray Dallaire, Director

Ray joined the Investors Group Financial Services in 1982. After serving a number of positions for the Investors Group, Ray was appointed Regional Director for the Edmonton Capital Region office in 2005; he retired from this position in 2017. A firm believer in giving back to the community, some of his charitable services include Junior Achievement, Better Business Bureau of Central & Northern Alberta, Lakeland College, and the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce. Ray has been a long-time passionate supporter of the work of Edmonton's Food Bank.

Katherine Huising, Director

Katherine is the Associate Vice President, Ancillary Services at the University of Alberta. Prior to her time with the University of Alberta, Katherine had a career with the Government of Alberta, most recently as the Chief of Protocol. Her previous government positions included: Director of the Northern and Southern Alberta Jubilee Auditoria and Manager of the Northern Alberta Jubilee Auditorium. In addition, Katherine has served on various Edmonton boards and committees including the Glenrose Rehabilitation Hospital Foundation, the Edmonton Downtown Farmers' Market Association, and the Canadian Country Music Awards Organizing Committee (2013 and 2014).

Khadija Jiwani, Director

Since 2015, Khadija has been the Strategic Director at Aliya's Food Limited, an Edmonton based frozen food manufacturing company. She has in-depth experience of food safety and the food supply chain in North America. Prior to her current role, Khadija worked in international development improving access to water and sanitation in urban areas of Zambia. Khadija's education includes a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from the University of Alberta and a Master of Business Administration with a focus on entrepreneurship and social responsibility.

Michele Kirchner, Director

Michele has over 30 years of experience working for the Government of Alberta, including her current position as Designated Officer for the Public Interest Disclosure Office. She has also served as Assistant Deputy Minister with Alberta Human Services. Michele has over 15 years of experience on national, provincial, and local boards. She currently serves on the Board of the Jerry Forbes Centre Foundation.

Alim Nizar Somji, Director

Alim is the Executive Vice-President of the Jaffer Group of Companies. Alim has a Bachelor of Arts (with distinction) in Honors Business Administration from the Richard Ivey School of Business at the University of Western Ontario, and a Post Graduate Certificate in Real Property Valuation from the Sauder School of Business at the University of British Columbia. He has served as a Board Member for Elves Special Needs Society and as the Chairperson of the Economic Planning Board of His Highness Prince Aga Khan Shia Ismaili Council for Edmonton.

Clodia Kanna, Director

Clodia has been calling Edmonton home since she immigrated from Syria in 2008. Clodia is a professional civil engineer with 22 years of experience in project management and a master's in business administration. She is also a certified Interior Designer with a creative eye and attention to detail. Clodia is a business owner for an initiative she and her hubby started in 2019.

Clodia grew up in the Middle East, and she immigrated to Canada to give her two kids a better life. Clodia is a strong advocate for equality and diversity, and she strongly believes in giving back to the community. Throughout her journey, Clodia felt the warmth of the Canadian generosity, from welcoming her with an open heart to supporting her drive to continue her education and achieve her professional designation as a Professional Engineer P. Eng in Canada.

Clodia currently works at Alberta Innovates as Senior Manager for the Project Management Office, and she has been with that organization for over five years. She previously worked for an engineering firm where she got the required experience and supervision to get her P.Eng designation.

Clodia has always been an active volunteer with different organizations, from Habitat for Humanity, where she built houses for low-income families, to Windmill Microlending, where she mentors professional immigrants like herself to integrate into the Canadian workforce.

In addition to strategic planning and problem-solving, Clodia enjoys reading, jogging, swimming, kayaking, and glamping.

Pam Lafferty, Director

Pamela Lafferty is currently the Director of Tax & Payroll at AutoCanada. She has over 20 years of accounting and tax experience, working with not-for-profit organizations, private companies, and public corporations.

Pamela earned a Bachelor of Commerce degree from the University of Alberta. She articulated at PwC, where she obtained her Chartered Accountant designation and advanced to the role of Senior Manager in the Tax group. In 2014, she moved to leading the Liquids Pipelines tax group at Enbridge and then started at AutoCanada in 2020. Pamela is the past President of the YWCA Edmonton Board of Directors and has volunteered for several charitable organizations.

Pamela was born and raised in Edmonton and feels privileged to now sit on Edmonton's Food Bank Board of Directors and contribute to an organization that has such an important impact on our community.

