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CASA chronicles

Fall 2019



In Conversation with:

Dr. Denise Milne, CEO of CASA and CASA Foundation

To help keep staff, donors, community partners, clients and volunteers up to speed on the latest news, *CASA Chronicles* features regular updates from Dr. Denise Milne, CEO of CASA and CASA Foundation. We sat down with her recently to catch up. Here's an edited version of our conversation:

Q *I understand you met recently with Alberta's Minister of Indigenous Relations, Rick Wilson. What can you tell us about that?*

That was quite exciting. Carrie Avveduti, CASA's First Nations Program Manager, also participated as well as Faye Parker, our outgoing Chair, and Dr. David McNeil, the new Chair of the CASA Board. This was an opportunity for Minister Wilson and his Chief of Staff to learn about children's mental health, CASA's programs, and the work we're doing in the First Nations communities of Paul, Alexander and Alexis. He also toured CASA Centre and thought the building was very beautiful and purposeful.



From left: Dr. David McNeil, Vice-Chair, CASA Board; Carrie Avveduti, First Nations Program Manager; Minister of Indigenous Relations, Rick Wilson; Dr. Denise Milne, CEO of CASA and CASA Foundation; Faye Parker, Chair, CASA Board.

Q *Did anything substantive come from the meeting?*

Indigenous Relations is a connector ministry. It doesn't disburse any funds directly, but Minister Wilson provides important connections for us in other areas of government. This initial meeting was simply meant to provide him with an overview and a welcome to CASA, but he was certainly very engaged and excited about the work we're doing at CASA.

Q *How is CASA's new partnership with FamilySmart® going?*

As you know, CASA Foundation provided funding to hire two new FamilySmart® Parents-in-Residence (PiRs) to provide support and mentorship to parents or family members struggling to help kids with mental health and substance use challenges. We've now hired our second PiR, Krista Nystrom, and they recently held their first 'intheknow' session.

Q *What is 'intheknow' about?*

It's an information sharing session that's open to all families, covering specific topics in children's mental health. The first one took place Sept. 24th at CASA Centre, and it featured a presentation by Chris Wejr, an elementary school principal in Langley, B.C., about the importance of focusing on children's strengths.

Q *Anything else you want to highlight about the FamilySmart® initiative?*

Yes, FamilySmart® CEO Kelli Anderson and her colleague, Christie Durnin, will be attending CASA's Senior Leadership Council once a month. The other exciting news is that FamilySmart® and CASA have partnered with Dr. David Nicholas, an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Social Work at the University of Calgary, to conduct an evaluation project on this work.

Q *When is he expected to deliver his report?*

Over the next year. It's really an important piece of research since it is linked to research on parents' lived experiences working alongside clinicians. It's a really good news story.

Q *As we report elsewhere in this issue of CASA Chronicles, CASA's FASTRACS (Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Treatment, Resources, and Community Supports) Program has been revamped. What is the thinking behind that?*

Robbie Seale is the parent who will co-facilitate the FASTRACS group. She participated in a panel discussion on FASD (Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder) as part of the Dr. Roger Bland Lecture Series, and has four adopted children with FASD. She is a powerful advocate and will bring a very strong grounding to the FASTRACS Program because of her parental experience with FASD.

Q *There have also been some changes to the Trauma Clinic staff. What's going on there?*

Yes, we are losing Gayla Grinda, who has been a huge asset to our Trauma Clinic. But we have also just welcomed a new clinical lead, Sharon Ling. She will also serve as clinical lead for Family Therapy, so she'll have a combined role at CASA. In September Dr. Drew Bremness gave a presentation on Surviving Trauma as part of the Dr. Roger Bland Lecture Series, and we had a packed house with about 230 in attendance. But Dr. Bremness will be gradually retiring, and Dr. Andrea Yu will be taking on more responsibilities, so we're starting a new journey with our Trauma Clinic.

Q *What else is on the agenda for the Dr. Roger Bland Lecture Series?*

Dr. Jean Clinton, a Clinical Professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioural Neurosciences at McMaster University, will be giving a presentation on Infant & Preschool Mental Health on Oct. 16th. Then on Nov. 19th, the CASA Youth Council will present Youth Perspectives on Mental Health. The CYC will host and moderate the entire event, which will include two keynote speakers and a panel. They've done an amazing job of organizing this.

Q *The CASA Board is also going through some big changes. Would you like to comment on that?*

Yes, we're extremely excited to announce that Dr. David McNeil is the new Chair of the CASA Board. He succeeds Faye Parker, who has done a fabulous job as Chair over the past three years and we thank her for her many contributions. Dr. McNeil served as Clerk of the Alberta Legislature for 29 years and he has a PhD in Management Science, so he brings a wealth of experience, knowledge and connections. He also has a great sense of humour and is very personable, so we're thrilled to have him as Chair. We're also very pleased to announce that Janet Hancock, Bob McColl and Manraj Deol have joined the CASA Board.

Q *Anything new at CASA House?*

Yes, we're busy planning the CASA House backyard project, which is super exciting. Rick Taylor – who along with his wife Stephanie organizes CASA's annual Emily's Memorial Ride for Mental Health Awareness and the new Emily's Memorial Fun Horse Show – is Chairing the project for us. We'll have a lot more to say about it in the next issue of *CASA Chronicles*.



Farewell to Ernie Stevens, CASA Foundation Honourary Patron

We recently bid farewell to one of our most dedicated CASA Champions and Honourary Patrons, Ernie Stevens.

Ernie and his wife Peggie Stevens became Honourary Patrons of CASA Foundation in 2011/2012, and have a longstanding relationship with the Foundation. Indeed, Peggie was a founding member and inaugural Chair when the Foundation was established in 1998.

Throughout the years, Ernie and Peggie continued to tirelessly advocate and fundraise for CASA Foundation.

We wish to thank everyone who made generous and heartfelt donations in Ernie's memory. Your gifts ensure that Ernie's legacy will live on in the smiles of the children we help at CASA Child, Adolescent and Family Mental Health, and will help CASA to continue its important work.

Our memories of Ernie will be with us for many years to come, and he will be greatly missed. We extend our sincere condolences to Peggie, her family and the many friends touched by Ernie throughout his life.



CASA Set to Launch Revamped FASTRACS Program in October

It is an often-invisible condition that affects about 4% of the population.

That makes Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) two and one-half times more common than Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

FASD covers a wide range of physical, mental, behavioural and/or learning disabilities that can occur in children exposed to alcohol during pregnancy.

"There's a lot of awareness, research and support around Autism. But even though FASD is more prevalent, it lacks the same community support, so it's very challenging," says Robbie Seale, an adoptive parent of four children with FASD.

Seale, who has spent hundreds of hours educating parents, teachers, caregivers and others about FASD, is part of a four-member team that is poised to launch CASA's revamped Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Treatment, Resources, and Community Supports (FASTRACS) Program in October.

The revised FASTRACS Program reflects CASA's commitment to family-centred care, including the adoption of best clinical practices and always putting children and families first.

Designed around weekly group sessions held over a six-week period, FASTRACS aims to offer education and peer support to parents and caregivers of children aged three to 12 who have a confirmed or suspected diagnosis of FASD, as well as co-occurring mental health issues.

"We'll run two FASTRACS groups at a time, so there will be a morning group and an evening group. We'll start with the first session in October, which will run for six weeks, and then we'll start a second one after the Christmas holidays," says Occupational Therapy Assistant Leia Bullick, who will screen referrals to the program.

"It's a model of care where we really want to support caregivers to support their children, who have some complex challenges but also lots of strengths. We want to build on the caregivers' strengths and increase their confidence and competence in meeting their own children's needs," says FASTRACS Program Manager and Registered Psychologist Karl Merritt.

The sessions, involving groups of roughly eight parents or caregivers, will focus on FASD education as well as specific issues such as daily routines, structure, praise and differential attention, effective communication, and sensitive discipline. Topics will be tailored to suit each group's priorities.

"We're equipping parents with skills that are evidence-informed, and the evidence is based on FASD research but also behavioural science, so we'll be melding the two and seeing what works best," says Occupational Therapist Rachel Quong, another member of the FASTRACS team.



(From left) Program Manager Karl Merritt, Occupational Therapist Rachel Quong, Program Co-facilitator Robbie Seale, and Occupational Therapy Assistant Leia Bullick.

Parents or caregivers can directly refer to the program by downloading and filling out the FASTRACS referral form on the CASA website and faxing it to CASA Intake at 780-435-6261. Those who have related referral questions can call CASA at 780-400-2271, and ask for FASTRACS.

"FASD is a brain and body disorder, and an affected child's behaviours are symptoms of that disorder," says Seale. "By reframing those behaviours, and by giving parents and caregivers practical tools plus some mentoring and peer support, we hope FASTRACS will be a teaching and coaching platform that relieves some of those parenting stressors, and helps them to prevent burnout."

"We're equipping parents with skills that are evidence-informed, and the evidence is based on FASD research but also behavioural science, so we'll be melding the two and seeing what works best."



Rick Rooyackers Discusses CASA's Family Therapy Program

Q *How long have you worked in CASA's Family Therapy Program?*

I've been with the Family Therapy Program for about four years. Before that I worked in CASA's Infant and Preschool Services Program.

Q *What is the focus of the Family Therapy Program?*

Our program provides family counselling to families that have a child who has been involved with the mental health system. The child doesn't necessarily have a mental health diagnosis but they usually have some involvement with mental health.

Q *Who is on the clinical team?*

I'm full-time and my colleague Claire Johnson is part-time. Claire and I both have our Master of Social Work degrees. Willard Fewer, a psychologist, also provides consultations twice a month.

Q *Who refers families to your program?*

We get internal referrals from CASA's Children's Day Program, the Adolescent Day Program and sometimes from CASA House. We also get external referrals from some of the AHS clinics in the Edmonton area.

Q *What determines whether this program is more appropriate than some other CASA program?*

The Children's Day Program, the Adolescent Day Program and CASA House are all more intensive programs where children are seen daily. Our regular cycle is usually every two to three weeks.

Q *What kinds of issues come up in these sessions?*

We deal with all kinds of family issues, couples' issues, co-parenting issues, and parenting conflicts. Some children have suicidal ideation, they've attempted suicide or engage in self-harm, so we deal with some pretty serious stuff too.

Q *What therapeutic approaches do you use?*

We do a lot of emotionally focused therapy. We also talk a lot about parenting strategies. We're trying to help family members to connect and understand each other more.

Q *What is most challenging about your work?*

Dealing with families adds complexity. You're not just dealing with one person, sometimes you're dealing with three, four or five people. When families come to see us, they already have their own family dynamic in place, so they can get stuck.



Q *What do you enjoy most about your work?*

Even the most challenging families care about each other, no matter how much they fight. So usually in families there's a lot of good stuff to work with.

Q *What is the age range of the children you treat?*

There is no minimum age, and the maximum is 18 years. But we try to be flexible. For children with developmental challenges, sometimes we'll see them a little bit longer, and if kids are 18 and they're still in school we tend to stick with them until the end of the school year.

Q *Do the pressures of modern life play a big role in family dysfunction?*

Every time period has its challenges. A lot of families today struggle with how to set limits on their kids' exposure to video games or cell phones. So that's a new issue. Divorce is also a lot more common compared to 50 or 60 years ago.

"We do a lot of emotionally focused therapy. We also talk a lot about parenting strategies. We're trying to help family members to connect and understand each other more."



CASA Board Member Jennifer Fisk a Strong Community Voice

When she isn't pumping iron at a CrossFit class, dousing public relations brush fires for clients or rushing off to a board meeting, Jennifer Fisk does what many Albertans love to do. She makes a beeline for the mountains.

Not to tourist towns like Jasper or Banff, mind you, but to a remote wilderness refuge that's accessible only by logging road, in British Columbia's sparsely populated Upper Columbia Valley. That's where she and her partner Stefan are building a part-time home.

"It's literally in the middle of nowhere, between Radium and Golden in a place called Brisco, so it's completely off grid. It's solar powered and we've buried a cistern up the mountain, so the water pressure is gravity fed," says Fisk, who first honed her skills working for the Canadian Bankers Association before launching Edmonton's Freestone Communications 14 years ago.

"We've done most of the work ourselves, and it has been worth it. It's so beautiful there. There's just something about valley life and 'valley time' that we love."

Fisk may sound like the rugged individualists who first settled the west a century or two ago, but the CASA board member is also fiercely devoted to a wide variety of community and social causes.

Over the years she has spent thousands of volunteer hours serving on the boards of such organizations as Northlands, Live Local, the 4-H Foundation, the John Humphrey Centre for Peace and Human Rights, the Edmonton Food Council, the Edmonton Humane Society, Valour Place, Credit Counselling Services of Alberta, and the Edmonton Downtown Farmers' Market Association.

In recognition of her many contributions, the University of Alberta Political Science graduate was named by Avenue Magazine as one of Edmonton's Top 40 Under 40 recipients in 2011.

So how did Fisk first get involved with CASA?

"Certainly, the area of focus at CASA was important to me and close to my heart, and one of CASA's departing directors, Dr. Janet Wright, and I had done some work together at the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta. So Janet contacted me, I went through CASA's board interview process, and joined the board in September of 2018."

avenue **EDMONTON**
magazine



Jennifer Fisk
Top 40 Under 40 2011

Fisk hopes her broad background in communications, advising such diverse clients as Canadian Western Bank Group, Williams Engineering, Habitat for Humanity Edmonton, the Coalition on Prescription Drug Misuse, Hockey Alberta and the Potato Growers of Alberta, will be an asset to the CASA board.



JENNIFER FISK STATISTICS

2011	Named as one of Edmonton's Top 40 Under 40
2018	Joined CASA Board

"With other boards I've tried to bring some different lenses to the table. There's the communications or storytelling side of it, the issues management or crisis communications perspective, and the governance perspective. I'm obviously not part of management, but the board can sometimes provide solid direction on a volunteer basis," she says.

"Good boards ask good questions, and I like to think I can bring that to CASA's board, based not only on my business and communications experience, but also on the wide variety of organizations that I've worked with over the years."

"With other boards I've tried to bring some different lenses to the table."



7th Annual Peace in the Park Event Raises \$5,000 for CASA

More than 50 people gathered in Victoria Park under beautiful blue skies July 28th to soak up some rays, execute their best downward facing dog, and raise funds for CASA.

The 7th Annual Peace in the Park event, facilitated by Navina Yoga founder Meg Stevenson, raised \$5,000 for CASA's child and youth mental health programs.

The event was inspired by Stevenson's initiative to raise money for the Africa Yoga Project. Since Peace in the Park was launched in 2012, the annual event has raised more than \$33,000 to support CASA's programs. Namaste, Meg!



Dr. Denise Milne Honours Outgoing CASA Board Chair Faye Parker

Faye Parker has brought a wealth of experience, perspective and smarts to CASA since she joined the CASA Board in 2011, and was appointed Chair in 2016.

Her steadfast support, compassion, wisdom and leadership was instrumental in the successful launch of CASA Centre in 2016. It was one of CASA's proudest moments – one in which Faye played a pivotal role.

After a long and distinguished career with the Edmonton Public School Board, followed by more than a decade serving on the Boards of The Family Centre and CASA, Faye is finally taking a well-deserved rest.

Effective Nov. 13, Dr. David McNeil is expected to become the new CASA Board Chair. I am pleased to announce that Faye has agreed to stay on as Past Chair.

"I love this organization and I'm very committed to what we do. I've met some really, really fine people through this work and I've made some wonderful friends," Faye told *CASA Chronicles* a few months ago.

"Whatever happens, I see myself continuing to be a supporter of CASA and the excellent, very important work that the organization does."

We have no doubt about that, Faye. Just as you should know that your immense contributions to CASA will never be forgotten.

FAYE PARKER STATISTICS

2011	Joined CASA Board
2016	Became CASA Chair





CASA's Trauma Clinic is Focused on Changing the Trajectory of Severely Troubled Young Lives

Dr. Lindsay Riopka Manrique speaks in a soft, gentle voice. But the topic she is addressing is anything but benign.

As one of three psychiatrists who supports children and caregivers in CASA's Trauma Clinic, she treats children so severely affected by abuse, neglect or exposure to domestic violence early in life, that their young brains have failed to form normally.

Such children often develop Attachment Disorders and/or Complex Developmental Trauma, she explains.

"Attachment Disorders occur when things go wrong early in the life of an infant, from birth to age three, so they are not able to engage in a healthy relationship with their primary caregiver. This often results in severe behaviours later in childhood or adolescence that pose real challenges for caregivers and schools to manage," she says.

Similarly, Complex Developmental Trauma results from experiencing "toxic stress" during these critical early years of life, she says.

"If an infant is neglected or stressed because the mother is depressed and isn't caring for them, or if they're witnessing domestic violence, the infant's threat circuits get upregulated. They become hard-wired to respond to toxic stress and react in a survival-based mode, whether its fight or flight, freeze or fall – what we call the four F's."

Using evidence-based, trauma-informed approaches to treat these severe Neuropsychiatric Disorders, Dr. Riopka Manrique and her colleagues – including psychiatrists Dr. Andrew Bremness and Dr. Andrea Yu – offer individual therapy for children and youth aged five to 18, along with their caregivers.

"There is a lot of urgency to treat these disorders and to intervene early to improve their outcomes. If they go untreated, the prognosis for many of these kids is not very promising."

The Trauma Clinic's goal is to help children resolve their trauma symptoms by fostering healthy attachment to their caregivers through play and other mutually bonding activities. Under the umbrella of the Trauma Clinic, participation in Trauma and Attachment Groups (TAG) may also be available as part of treatment, provided certain criteria are met.

"The TAG Programs are year-long intensive group therapy programs for caregivers and children with significant Attachment Disorders and/or trauma," she explains.

"We provide services to two cohorts annually for kids aged approximately five to 11. The TAG1 and TAG2 groups run consecutively, with one starting in September and the other in January. The Teen TAG Program treats one cohort annually, and follows the school calendar."



CASA's TAG Programs are unique in Western Canada. No similar group programs exist west of Ontario.

"We're very proud to be offering this. There are many special therapeutic factors involved in group work, such as universalism – just realizing you're not alone – and modelling behaviours for your peers. These kids often feel isolated, but here, everyone understands them," she says.

"There are typically about 10 kids in each group and we usually have a high caregiver or therapist-to-child ratio, so ideally we'd have two or three therapists for each group."

Referrals to CASA's Trauma Clinic must be made by a health professional, such as a physician or therapist, through the centralized intake number at Alberta Health Services (780-342-2701).

"There is a lot of urgency to treat these disorders and to intervene early to improve their outcomes. If they go untreated, the prognosis for many of these kids is not very promising."



GWEN HARRIS STATISTICS	
2006	Joined CASA Board
2010	Became CASA Chair Joined CASA Foundation Board
2016	CASA Centre Opens
12 years	As hearing Chair for Appeals Commission for Alberta Worker's Compensation



CASA Foundation Board Member Gwen Harris, Who Played Key Role in the Launch of CASA Centre, Prepares to Make her Exit

It was five long years ago, but Gwen Harris recalls the details as if it was yesterday.

An old friend and former colleague, Dave Hancock, had just been sworn in as the 15th Premier of Alberta in March of 2014. Fred Horne was named Minister of Health.

"I had joined the CASA Board in 2006, later becoming Chair, and a lot of the work I did in those years was to make sure every Minister of Health was well aware of the importance of knocking down St. Agnes School," says Harris, who will retire in October from the CASA Foundation Board.

"Every minister along the way thought it was a great idea to demolish it and provide a proper facility for the important work CASA does. All of them – Gary Mar, Ron Liepert, Iris Evens – were sympathetic, but we could never get the funding," she recalls.

"We've only got 80 years on the planet so we'd better get it all done. The clock is ticking for all of us."

"Finally, after Dave became Premier, Denise (Dr. Denise Milne, CEO of CASA and CASA Foundation) and I went to Calgary and met him at the McDougall Centre. And I said 'Dave, for 10 years people have been saying this is a great idea, but we need a yes or a no.'"

That conversation proved pivotal, says Harris, whose husband Ross Harris is also a former CASA Board Chair.

"Dave said, 'We'll get back to you,' and not long after that Fred Horne called and said, 'Gwen, I think we're going to be able to do this.' I was so excited I could barely speak."

Two years later, in September 2016, backed by \$17 million in government funds and another \$7 million from the CASA Foundation and its donors, the 43,000-square-foot CASA Centre opened its doors.

The blazing speed with which CASA Centre was planned, designed and built – on time and on budget, no less – was no fluke. Harris says years of advance planning had already gone into the project. She credits former CASA CEO Germaine Dechant and former CASA Board member Don Smith for doing much of the heavy lifting.

While Harris clearly relishes those memories and takes pride in the contributions she has

made to the growth of CASA, she's not one to live in the past, and she still maintains a jam-packed schedule.

"I'm still working on subdivision appeals as a Chair of the Alberta Insurance Council Appeal Board, and I do a bit of consulting for one of the health colleges," she says.

Although Harris wasn't admitted to the bar until her 50th birthday, she helped to establish the Alberta Provincial Court Civil Claims Mediation Program in the late 1990s. She also Chaired the Child Welfare Appeal Panel and served for 12 years as hearing Chair of the Appeals Commission for Alberta Workers' Compensation.

Besides her many professional and philanthropic activities, Harris is also a devoted grandmother.

"I have four wonderful grandchildren, two in Calgary and two in London. I just conducted 'granny camp' for a week in Calgary. Then I flew to London where I've got a 12-week-old grandson and a year-and-a-half old grandson who just had a tonsil operation, so I'm busy," she says.

"We've only got 80 years on the planet so we'd better get it all done. The clock is ticking for all of us."



Dr. David McNeil Nominated as **NEXT CASA BOARD CHAIR**

Dr. David McNeil, former Clerk of the Alberta Legislature and current Vice-Chair of the CASA Board, has been nominated to succeed Faye Parker as **CASA's Chair**.

Dr. McNeil holds a PhD in Management Science from the University of Waterloo. He worked for the Saskatchewan government and for Bechtel, the U.S. engineering giant, before assuming his post with the Alberta Legislature in 1987.

"We're thrilled to announce that Dr. McNeil has been nominated as the new Chair of the CASA Board. He brings a wealth of experience, knowledge and connections to CASA," says Dr. Denise Milne, CEO of CASA and CASA Foundation.

"We're also very pleased to announce that Janet Hancock, Bob McColl and Manraj Deol have also joined the CASA Board. Our team has never been stronger than it is today."

CASA's Board of Directors will formally elect a new slate of officers for 2019-2020 at its next regular board meeting, on Nov. 13. In addition to Dr. McNeil, other nominees include Lori Sheremeta, as Vice-Chair; Bob McColl, as Treasurer; and Jennifer Fisk, as Secretary.

Faye Parker will remain on the CASA Board as Past Chair.



CASA Board Vice-Chair Dr. David McNeil, along with CASA and CASA Foundation CEO Dr. Denise Milne (*right*), honour outgoing CASA Board Chair Faye Parker.



Dr. David McNeil, Vice-Chair of CASA's Board of Directors, honours outgoing CASA Board Chair Faye Parker.



Outgoing CASA Board Chair Faye Parker presided over her final AGM. Thanks Faye, for your immense contributions to CASA!



Dr. David McNeil (*right*) has been nominated to succeed Faye Parker (*left*) as CASA's new Board Chair.



Highlights from CASA's 2019 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Approximately 100 CASA and CASA Foundation staff members, board members and supporters attended CASA's Annual General Meeting Oct. 3rd at Edmonton's Derrick Golf & Winter Club.

Kaycee Madue, Alberta's Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs, was the special guest speaker at this year's AGM. **Kalee Kent, Ministerial Assistant to Minister Madu**, was also in attendance.

Retiring CASA Board Chair Faye Parker presided over the meeting, while CASA Board Vice-Chair Dr. David McNeil was officially nominated as her successor.

Highlights of the evening included presentation of the **Dr. Myer Horowitz Book Award to CASA's Family Advisory Council**.

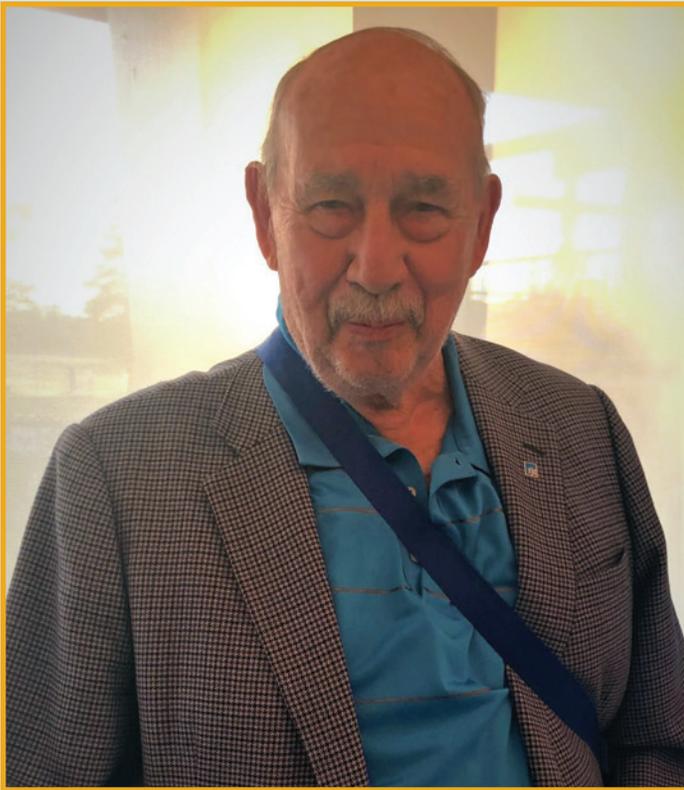
The **Harris Award for Outstanding Volunteer Contributions to CASA** was presented to **Richard and Marjie Drewry** who both served on the CASA Board of Directors (Marjie 2003-2011; Richard 2011-2019).



CASA welcomed Bob McColl (centre) as the new treasurer for both CASA Boards. Bob is pictured here with his wife Deb and longtime CASA supporter Don Cranston.



Scott Phillips, new CASA Foundation Board Member.



We bid a fond farewell to Gino Ferri, veteran CASA Foundation Board member, at the 2019 CASA AGM.



Dr. Denise Milne, CEO of CASA and CASA Foundation, with Brett Klewitter, who stepped down as treasurer of both CASA Boards at this year's AGM.



Rebecca Marsh, CASA's Director of Evaluation & Research (*left*) with Chelsey (*centre*) and Jennifer of the CASA Youth Council.



CASA Foundation Board member Brian Moody did some high steppin' at this year's AGM. Check out his fancy footwear.



CASA's Family Advisory Council Captures the DR. MYER HOROWITZ BOOK AWARD

The **Dr. Myer Horowitz Book Award** was presented to CASA's Family Advisory Council at CASA's 2019 Annual General Meeting.

Outgoing CASA Board Chair Faye Parker presented the award to FAC members who attended the AGM (see photo), including FAC Co-Chair Candace Fehr.

The annual award, established in 1997, is named after CASA's former honorary patron, who served as the ninth President of the University of Alberta.

The Dr. Myer Horowitz Book Award is bestowed on a person or persons who have made outstanding contributions to the field of child and adolescent mental health in the Edmonton region.

It is given to professionals or non-professionals who have demonstrated excellence in such areas of children's mental health services as policy development, research, education, clinical practice, service delivery, funding/sponsorship, and advocacy.

The Family Advisory Council (FAC), formed in 2014, is a committee of caregivers with lived experience in the children's mental health and youth addictions system who provide valuable feedback to support CASA's mission.

Family input into program development, implementation, and evaluation – as well as organizational policies and community initiatives – ensures that services are truly family-centred, thereby meeting patient and family needs, priorities, goals, and values.



(Front from left) Faye Parker, Greta Gerstner, Candace Fehr.
(Rear from left) Donna Bremner, Meg Smale and Betty Wedman



The Dr. Myer Horowitz Book Award is presented annually by CASA's Board of Directors to individuals in the Edmonton area who have made outstanding contributions to child and adolescent mental health.



Got Five Minutes? Here is How CASA's PAC Program Works

Registered Psychologists Naomi Lee (*right*) and Kendal Toll (*left*) are members of the six-person team that manages CASA's Psychological Assessment and Consultation (PAC) Program. We asked them to describe PAC's activities. Here's an edited version of that interview.

Q Can you give us a brief overview of PAC?

NL: Sure. PAC is an internal contract service that provides psychological assessment and consultation to almost every program CASA offers. We provide psycho-educational assessments, which are important tools used by schools to help plan a student's programming, and important tools therapeutically as well.

Q What is involved in the assessment process?

NL: Basically, we help therapists or psychiatrists answer a question they can't answer themselves. No matter which program it is, usually at some point someone says, 'Maybe there's something else going on here,' or 'We don't know what diagnoses fit this child,' so they ask PAC to help clarify it.

Q What are the most common questions you get?

KT: The most common questions are about a child's cognitive functioning, such as: 'Is this client cognitively able to handle the demands of therapy?' Inside the tertiary programs CASA offers, there is a level of functioning that's needed to be able to manage group work, going to school and attending individual therapy, all simultaneously.

NL: Outside of the tertiary programs, a common question is to query behavioural versus learning difficulties.

Q Does PAC also do more specialized types of assessments?

NL: We do standardized batteries of cognitive assessments, academic assessments, memory assessments, executive functioning assessments, personality assessments and adaptive functioning. We can also help therapists narrow down the details about an anxiety or depression diagnosis, for example, or help a psychiatrist determine whether a diagnosis of ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) is appropriate.

Q Who receives your reports?

NL: Our reports are used within CASA and are shared with the family. They can also be given to a school, and to other service providers such as family physicians, external therapists or speech language pathologists.



Q How long does an assessment typically take?

NL: About a month and a half. We'll usually see the client over one to three sessions, and over the next few weeks we'll look at the results, write the reports, provide a debriefing and make our recommendations.

Q What other ramifications do PAC's assessments have?

KT: They can also have implications for funding through programs like AISH (Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped), and can be used to make decisions about school programming and funding for students.

Q Has demand for PAC's services increased?

KT: In CASA's tertiary programs the demand over the years has really increased, since these assessments have had really positive practical applications for our kids.

Q What do you enjoy most about your work with PAC?

KT: I feel that our job is very much like piecing together a puzzle. I get a lot of satisfaction from putting together the puzzle and having that 'aha' moment when we discover the missing piece.

NL: I really enjoy seeing children learn better, so when I have the ability to help a child understand how they learn, that's extremely important. I can actually help them to access and use those strengths inside the classroom.

"The most common questions are about a child's cognitive functioning, such as: 'Is this client cognitively able to handle the demands of therapy?'"



Edmonton's Bateman Family Raises Funds for CASA

The 1932byBateman Open, a Mackenzie Tour – PGA Tour Canada event that took place from July 29th to Aug. 4th at the Edmonton Country Club, raised an estimated \$60,000 for the CASA Foundation and YOUCAN Youth Services.

Golfer Taylor Pendrith won the event with a closing round of 62, setting a new Edmonton Country Club course record in the process.

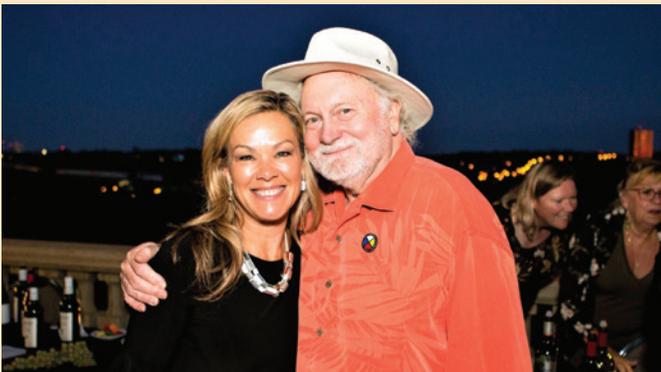
Edmonton's Bateman family has made a three-year commitment as title sponsor of the event, with CASA as a selected charity.

The Bateman family has been involved in grocery retailing in the city for decades. Their real estate development firm, Bateman Properties, is behind 1932byBateman, a stylish new highrise condo project in the Strathcona neighbourhood.

CASA Foundation is truly appreciative of the Bateman family for their wonderful support.



(From left) Kyle Dube, Executive Director, YOUCAN Youth Services; Victoria Fehr, CASA Youth Council Co-Chair; and Nadine Samyca, Executive Director, CASA Foundation.



Wine rep Leila Zuniga and the unstoppable Nick Lees



Zin on the River a Big Splash with CASA Supporters

Hosted by veteran *Edmonton Journal* columnist and loyal CASA supporter Nick Lees, Zin on The River created a major splash again this summer.

The Aug. 28th event on the sprawling patio of the city's historic Fairmont Hotel Macdonald, which celebrated its 20th anniversary, raised \$30,000 to support the fundraising efforts of the Minds over Mountains Cycle Tour.

Guests were treated to an elegant evening of lively music, Indigenous drummers, fine wines and delicious food from the Hotel Macdonald and Edmonton's Haweli Indian Kitchen & Bar.

Mark Connolly, the affable host of CBC Radio's Edmonton AM program, and well-known former Edmonton radio host Rob Christie served as auctioneers with their usual panache.



Indigenous drummers wowed the crowd at Zin on the River



Co-presenting sponsor Bill Knight, Mosaic Home Services



4th Annual CASA Golf Classic Scores Another Hole in One

The big hitters were out in force for the 4th Annual CASA Golf Classic FORE Children’s Mental Health.

The Sept. 19th event at Blackhawk Golf Club in Spruce Grove, played under gorgeous clear blue skies, drew 120 golfers and raised \$70,000 for CASA.

Harry Sunner, CASA Foundation’s Vice-Chair and the President of Durabuilt Windows & Doors, served as tournament Chair and Co-Presenting Sponsor. Harpreet Singh of AMRIK Developments was also a Co-Presenting Sponsor.

CASA is grateful to the many other sponsors who joined us at Blackhawk and helped to make the event such a huge success. Golfers were treated at every hole by sponsors offering food, beverages and fun activities.

A dinner and program in the Blackhawk clubhouse followed the tournament, with former TV and radio show host Mark Scholz serving as emcee. Karl Merritt, Program Manager for CASA Day Programs, discussed how tournament proceeds will be used to support CASA’s activities.



(From left) Don Smith, Joe Dhami, Harry Sunner of Durabuilt Windows & Doors (Co-presenting sponsor), and Azad Sadeghi.



Our key event sponsors included: Harpreet Singh, Amrik Developments, Co-presenting sponsor and host of the 10th hole; Q Cigar Room, which provided cigars; Baijiu prepared Asian-inspired sushi; and Amrik Developments provided Johnnie Walker Blue Label Scotch Whiskey.



(From left) Nadine Samyia, Executive Director, CASA Foundation; Stephanie Taylor, Emily Taylor Legacy Project; Rick Taylor, Emily Taylor Legacy Project; Dr. Lynn Davis, CASA Program Manager; and Renee Strong, CASA Program Manager.



Emily’s Memorial Fun Horse Show a Whinnying Event

Hosted by Stephanie and Rick Taylor – the driving forces behind the Annual Emily’s Memorial Ride for Mental Health Awareness – the 2019 Emily’s Memorial Fun Horse Show was a hit.

The July 20th event at Affinity Stables, northwest of Camrose, is the second annual fundraiser launched by the Taylors as part of the Emily Taylor Legacy Project.

The Taylors have been raising funds for CASA since their 17-year-old daughter Emily took her own life in 2013, following a battle with depression. Emily had been a resident at CASA House in Sherwood Park.

Emily’s Memorial Fun Horse Show raised close to \$10,000, and included ribbons for the top six places, a pancake breakfast, lunch, t-shirts and other fun activities.

An appearance by Emily’s pony Lily was a key highlight, with Emily’s 13-year-old cousin Lina at the reins. Participants learned that Emily carefully saved up her funds for a year and a half to buy Lily.

Among other things, she bred a sow and sold the piglets to raise the money. When Lina learned about the event, she was determined to bring Lily. Clearly, Lina has a big heart – and some serious horse sense!



Some of the many young riders who participated in the inaugural Emily’s Memorial Fun Horse Show.

CASA'S FALL 2019 Community Events Calendar

OCTOBER 18

PAINT NIGHT

Head to "SPHSA Paint Night" on Eventbrite for tickets.

The students of Public Health Student's Association at the University of Alberta are hosting a Paint Night in support of CASA from 7:00pm – 9:00pm at the Amber Café + Restaurant. Join us for a fun evening where you can practice your art skills.

OCTOBER 19

TAKE A BREAK WITH MON AMOUR

<https://monamourflowers.com>

Mon Amour are encouraging shoppers at Kingsway Mall to take a break at their flower shop. Pop in for a hot drink and a Confetti Sweet on October 19th in exchange of a donation to CASA. Mon Amour is also donating 10% of their sales from Oct. 19th to 26th to CASA.

DECEMBER 3

GIVING TUESDAY

<https://givingtuesday.ca/partners/casa-foundation>

This year we're putting our own spin on Giving Tuesday with "Boost for the Youth at CASA House". Youth come to CASA House for a four month stay to receive intensive mental health treatment. In order to support the youth to have a smoother transition into CASA House, they are provided with a welcome package, which consists of hygiene products, a journal, inspirational messages, blanket, towels, sensory items, etc. You can help ease this transition for them by donating towards their welcome packages.

DECEMBER 7

KINGS DAY

The Sherwood Park Kings Club's annual day of hockey will be hosted at the Sherwood Park Arena and Sherwood Park Shell.

DECEMBER 14

GLOW GARDENS

<https://www.glowgardens.com/>

You will find CASA Volunteers at Glow Gardens coat check on December 14th where we will be promoting CASA. Make sure to stop by, say hello, and check your coat for CASA!

VARIOUS DATES

CASA PRESENTS THE DR. ROGER BLAND LECTURE SERIES ON IMPROVING CHILD & YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH

<https://www.casaservices.org/lectureseries>

CASA is proud to continue this conversation about infant, child, youth, and family mental health. Check out the CASA website for dates, times, and more information on topics and to view videos of previous lecture sessions.



CASA PRESENTS:

THE DR. ROGER BLAND LECTURE SERIES

on Improving Child and Youth Mental Health
At TELUS World of Science

CASA Child, Adolescent and

Family Mental Health is proud to announce we will be continuing this series, which has included insights from leading national experts, clinicians, professionals, families, and youth to start the conversation about child and youth mental health. We thank each of our keynote speakers, panelists, and volunteers who have so generously dedicated their time to us in order to facilitate these imperative conversations thus far.

UPCOMING SESSIONS

- **SURVIVING TRAUMA**
September 17, 2019
- **INFANT & PRESCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH**
October 16, 2019
- **YOUTH PERSPECTIVE ON MENTAL HEALTH, PRESENTED BY CASA'S YOUTH COUNCIL**
November 19, 2019
- **SELF-CARE AND THE WINTER BLUES**
January 21, 2020
- **ADDICTIONS**
February 18, 2020
- **CHILDREN IN CARE**
March 17, 2020
- **AUTISM AND MENTAL HEALTH**
April 21, 2020
- **MENTAL WELL-BEING: LESSONS LEARNED**
May 26, 2020

CASA AIMS TO CONTINUE TO COVER THE TOPICS THAT MATTER THE MOST TO YOU.

Do you have a suggestion for a lecture topic?
Let us know at feedback@casaservices.org