ACROSS BOUNDARIES

ANNUAL REPORT 2019 - 2020

25th Annual General Meeting (Virtual)
Wednesday, December 2nd, 2020
5:30 pm to 7:30 pm

MISSION

To provide equitable, empowered and holistic mental health and addiction services for racialized communities within an anti-racism, anti-oppression and resisting anti-Black racism framework.

VISION

Dignified, inclusive and compassionate mental health and addiction services for racialized communities

VALUES

We believe in Excellent Quality of Care through:

BEING SERVICE-USER AND FAMILY CENTERED

PRACTICING ANTI-RACISM, ANTI-OPPRESSION & RESISTING ANTI-BLACK RACISM

PROVIDING HOLISTIC SUPPORTS

BEING COLLABORATIVE

BOARD CHAIR & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT 2019-2020

Celebrating a quarter of a century is an achievement for any organization, and for Across Boundaries it is even more so. As leaders in providing services and supports for racialized and Black communities in addressing racism, anti-Black racism and other intersecting forms of oppressions that impact their health and mental health, the agency has been breaking ground in this work for 25 incredible years. While we did not get to celebrate this amazing milestone the way we had hoped, we take great pride in the work we do, the staff that do this work and the service users who allow us the opportunity to support them. We look forward to a proper celebration in the very near future!

The past year continued to provide new and interesting successes and challenges, which we responded to while we aligned our activities with our newly confirmed strategic plan for 2019-2022. This report is presented under the three main strategic directions set by the Board:

Amplify AB's Voice as a Leader in Health and Social Systems

- *Across Boundaries hosted a visit from the UN Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities, in partnership with IRIS (Institute for Research and Development on Inclusion and Society) and its' partners. Rapporteur, Ms. Catalina Devandas Aguilar heard from a number of people, who highlighted the marginalization they experience due to ability, race, gender, sexual orientation and the impacts on their health and wellbeing.*

- *Across Boundaries continued to provide a voice and presence at 2 tables of the Mental Health Commission of Canada – the Expert Advisory Committee on Cannabis and Mental Health as well as the Expert Advisory Committee on Justice and Mental Health. On these tables, the voices and perspectives of racialized and Black communities were meaningfully incorporated in research and policy development.*

Deepen Service Responses to those most Marginalized:

- *Last year, the landscape changed dramatically with the dissolution of the LHIN's and the advent of the Ontario Health Teams (OHT's) announced by the Provincial government. These health teams bring together various organizations to effectively and efficiently, deliver a continuum of services in a defined geographical area. After careful deliberation about which OHT Across Boundaries joined based on our mission and vision and remaining true to the communities we serve, the Board voted to become a partner of the North Western Toronto Ontario Health Team. While the formal partnership is pending, Across Boundaries takes great pride in providing leadership to this OHT in embedding equity as a priority in their work. Our Executive Director sits as the first Chair of the OHT's Health Equity Committee.*

- *The development of the 2SLGBQ++ program continues with dedication. Building on the gap analysis that was conducted last year, feedback from community consultations, direction provided by both an internal and external committee of those with lived experience, and allocation of dedicated financial resources, we now have a very robust 2SLGBQT+. This program fills a much-needed gap for racialized 2SLGBQT++ communities and we look forward to the growth of this program and developing new partnerships for greater collective impact.*

- *The Board has quarterly meet and greet with family members/caregivers and people with lived experience, along with board representation on the Across Boundaries Service User Advisory Committee (ABSUAC). These engagements allow the board an opportunity to hear directly*

from the service users and provides service users access to the highest directing authority of the organization. Board has always found these engagements valuable and insightful resulting in meaningful oversight of the organization.

- *With the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, and following public health guidelines, all of our programs became virtual, however the agency continues to provide urgent supports around food security with groceries and hot meals prepared onsite and delivered to service users daily. Protective personal equipment (PPE) is another resource provided to our communities. PPE's are sourced from donations and various funders. Despite the office being closed to the public, the agency continues to support service users who drop in, particularly those who may be homeless or precariously housed.*

- *Last year, we implemented an expansion of the agencies hours – operating from 8-8 and open Monday to Saturday. The additional supports were very well received, and while we had to put a lot of the exciting and dynamic programming planned on hold, we look forward to reinitiating these hours as soon as it is safe for our staff and the service users.*

Build Our Organizational Capacity to Meet Our Future:

- *Across Boundaries proudly received the Bronze designation from Excellence Canada for our work on psychological safety and wellbeing of staff. Plans are to work towards the next level of designation in the coming year. Staff continue to lead the Social/Wellness committee and embed a culture of staff wellness in the organization.*

- *An investment of time, resources and energy were made to raise the social media presence of the organization. Staff took on this additional activity and continue to support the agency in promoting social justice issues through these mediums.*

As always, the success of the agency lies in the leadership provided by the Board and the supports of the staff in implementing the directions set. Our service users continue to guide all of our work, challenge us when necessary and encourage us on a daily basis to do the best we can. We look forward to continuing to lead the way for best practices in mental health and addictions for racialized and Black communities in these tumultuous times.

We respectfully submit this report to the membership for the fiscal year 2019/2020.

Hugh Williams
Board Chair

Aseefa Sarang
Executive Director

" Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter."

- **Martin Luther King**

STRATEGIC PLAN 2019-2022

Draft Minutes of the 24th Annual General Meeting of Across Boundaries

Tuesday, December 5th, 2019 5:00 pm to 9:00 pm
Held at 76 Geary Ave., Toronto, ON. M6H 2B5

1. Welcome from the Chair

Chairman of the Board, Fay Sun, hosted the event and welcomed over 50 attendees to the 24st annual general meeting. Fay thanked the Board of Directors, members of the organization, students, volunteers, funders, and service users for their continued support of Across Boundaries over the past year. She acknowledged the hard work and dedication of the staff and management for delivering high quality services before proceeding to the distributed Annual Report, which detailed Across Boundaries activities over the last fiscal year.

2. Approval of Agenda

The agenda of the meeting was approved as circulated.
Moved by: Sirene Qureshi
Seconded: Rahmattullah Rahimi
CARRIED

3. Approval of Previous Year's Minutes

The minutes of the 23rd annual general meeting held on November 22, 2018 were approved as circulated:
Moved by: Alice McGillivary
Seconded by: Surujdai
CARRIED

4. Executive Director's Report

Aseefa greeted and welcomed everyone to the 24th AGM and presented her report

- Last year's activities full of transitions, achieved Accreditation with Commendation (Q-Mentum 2019- 2013) from Accreditation Canada
- Partnership with Excellence Canada – a year long process where Across Boundaries has been awarded a Bronze Status on November 5th, 2019
- Partnership with Excellence Canada – a year long process where Across Boundaries has been awarded a Bronze Status on November 5th, 2019
- Strategic Plan – presented to the membership
- Ontario Perception of Care Survey – there were 196 respondents, information will be taken to the AB Service User Advisory Committee to work on the areas that need improvements
- Agency is now open for extended hours of the day and the week, from 8-8 Monday to Friday and 10-6 Saturdays.
- Partnership with Addictions Services York Region has resulted in additional funding for addictions related supports.
- New programming and supports for the 2SLGBTQ+ communities.
- Robbie Ahmed, Secretary of the Board provided an overview of the work on the 2SLGBQT program.
- Rodney Diverlus, Coordinator for the 2SLGBQT program presented an update on what has been done to date, the outreach, the staffing, and introduced Brie Berry to present on her research on the current state of services and supports for the QTBIPOC community.
- Aseefa concluded her report by expressing gratitude to everyone for their support & quality services in the organization and introduced the AB staff team.

5. Treasurer's Report

i) Presentation of Financial Report

Hugh Williams, Treasurer of the Board, presented the audited financial statements for the year ended March 31, 2018, which has been reviewed by the Board of Directors. He said that the funding, that was just over 3

Treasurer's Report cont….

million dollars was spent on different programs and audited by independent auditors. Hugh stated that Across Boundaries has been very strong and stable, receiving the bulk of its' funding from Central LHIN, along with funds from CMHA Toronto and ASYR, as well as some income from donations and other revenue. Hugh attested that Across Boundaries finances were managed responsibly. He also mentioned that Across Boundaries, being a small organization, had great accomplishments (Accreditation with Commendation and Bronze Recipient from Excellence Canada) and thanked Wangari Muriuki, Director of Operations/Accreditation Consultant, for her help and encouragement. He moved a motion for approval of the Audited Financial Statements for the fiscal year 2018-2019.

Moved by: Sirene Qureshi
Seconded by: Maria Domiguez CARRIED

ii) Appointment of Auditor

Hugh also made a motion to appoint the firm of *Hogg, Shain & Scheck Professional Corporation*, to be the auditors for Across Boundaries for the fiscal year 2019-2020.

Moved by: Maria Dominguez
Seconded by: Rahmattullah Rahimi CARRIED

6. Nominations Committee Report

The slate of nominees for the Board (2019-2020) was proposed as circulated. The following slate was tabled:

New Members:
1. Nadia Aleem
2. Simone Atungo

Returning Board:
3. Fay Sun
4. Robbie Ahmed
5. Maryam Ebrahimpour
6. Dawnmarie Harriott
7. Hugh Williams
8. Jia Hui Yan

Moved by: Maria Dominguez
Seconded by: Surujdai CARRIED

Jia, Vice Chair of the Board gave a brief profile of each Board Member and introduced them to the membership.

7. Adjournment and Thanks
There being no other business the 24th Annual General Meeting of Across Boundaries was brought to a close. Meeting was adjourned at 7:02 pm

Moved by: Sirene Qureshi
Seconded by: Surujdai CARRRIED

8. Guest Speakers were invited to speak to the current environment of Ontario Health Teams

- **Adrienne Spafford – CEO of Addictions and Mental Health Ontario** provided an overview of the formation of Ontario Health Teams in the province, the current state and what to expect moving forward.

- **Barbara Collins, CEO of Humber River Hospitals**

  Co-chair of the NorthWest Toronto Ontario Health Team (OHT), provided an update on the formation of the North West OHT and the journey to date, including next steps. Was pleased that Across Boundaries has agreed to join this OHT and commended Aseefa for the leadership in raising the question of Equity and being the first Chair of the Equity Committee for this OHT.

9. Program Presentation

- **Staff Choice Award**

  Aby Thomas, presented the current fiscal year's Staff Choice Award to Qudsia Hadizai. Qudsia received the award for her 16 years of commitment to quality service delivery, dedication to service users and colleagues, willingness to take on new initiatives and being a role model to all. She was described by her colleagues as very

Program Presentation cont…

approachable and pleasant.

- **Across Boundaries' Service Users Advisory Committee (ABSUAC) Recognition**
  The committee works collaboratively with peers, staff, and family members and identifies service gaps. Long standing members and new members were presented a certificate of appreciation for their leadership and work on the committee.

- Program Manager Abdulai introduced all staff who have been with Across Boundaries, based on their years of service.

Meeting Concluded.

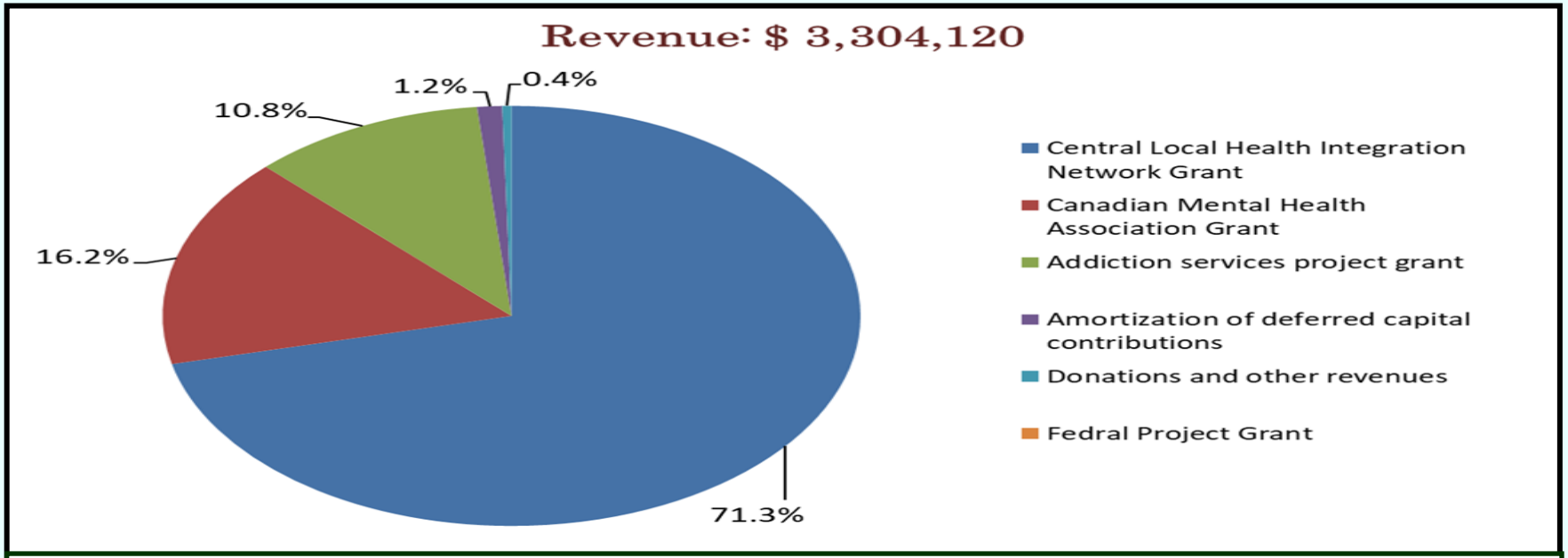
"Leaders will have to give clear and decisive leadership towards a world of tolerance and respect for difference, and an uncompromising commitment to peaceful solutions of conflicts and disputes"

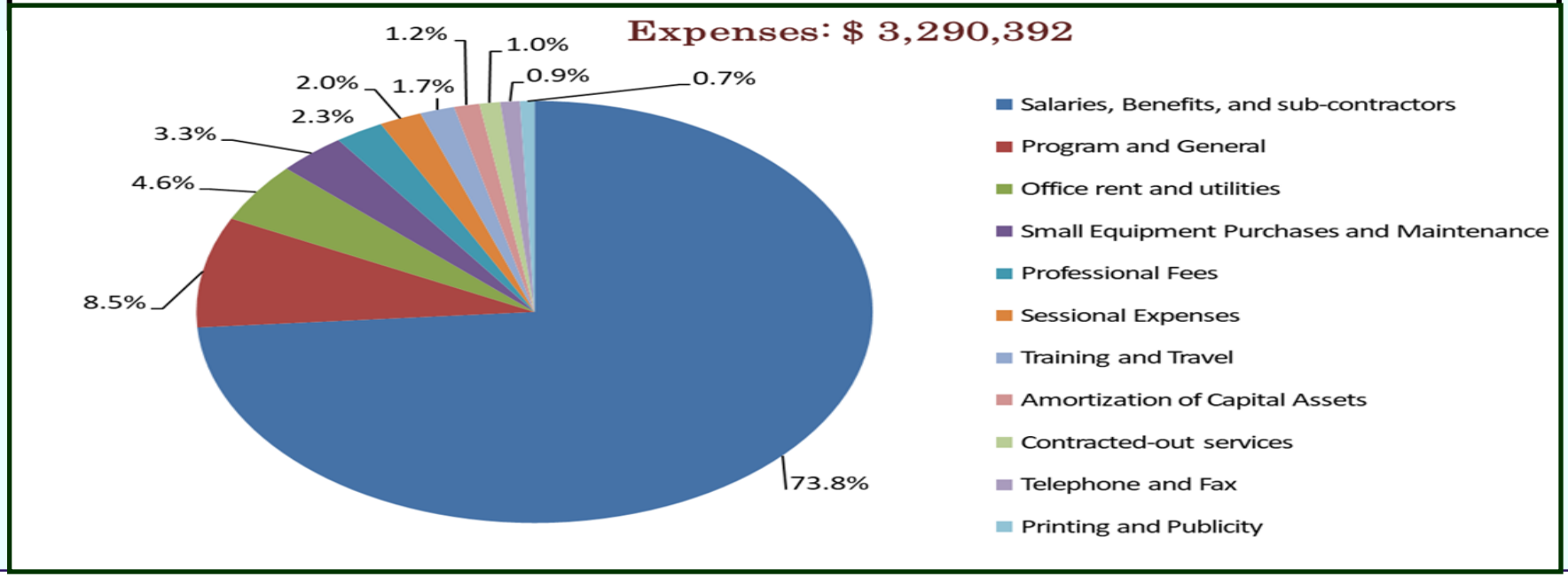
- Nelson Mandela

ACROSS BOUNDARIES:AN ETHNORACILA MENTAL HEALTH CENTRE

Statement of Operations

Year Ended March 31, 2020





ACROSS BOUNDARIES PROGRAM AND SERVICE REPORT

Across Boundaries programs continue to grow and expand to meet the needs of our service users. One of the main changes was the expansion of program hours from a 9-5, Monday to Friday model to an 8-8, Monday to Saturday model. The agency recognized that the needs of our communities does not end at 5 on a Friday afternoon, that supports are needed 24 hours 365 days of the year, as such this was a huge step in the right direction.

The following provides a brief update on some of the key programs within the agency:

TRANSITIONAL AGED YOUTH PROGRAM (TAY)

The TAY program provides a robust array of streamlined services that are accessible to racialized and Black youth in the Jane and Finch corridor. TAY has worked closely with the Nurse Practitioner and the sexual health clinic at Black Creek Community Health Centre (BCCHC), where youth have been able to access primary healthcare. In 2019/2020, TAY has focused on youth employment and building youth focused employment skills. Youth were encouraged to shape and lead the program using a by-youth-for-youth model which gives them a chance to plan and deliver workshops that they are interested in, while developing leadership skills. The youth took the opportunity to plan a talent show where they showcased their poetry, guitar and singing talents. They were also given a platform to engage in civic participation by learning about advocacy work and speaking about the ways in which anti-Black racism impact their lives. At the beginning of the pandemic TAY program was successfully moved on-line.

2-SPIRITED LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANS, QUEER + (2SLGBTQ++) PROGRAMMING

In June of 2019, Across Boundaries was able to increase services for yet another vulnerable racialized community – the 2-Spirited Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer + communities (2SLGBQT++). This team consists of Social Workers, Case Manager, and a Peer Support Worker.

The team provided outreach, intensive case management supports and counseling to the service users in a wide range of area, including but not exclusive to the following: gender identity and sexuality, issues around housing, employment, and family relations. Time was dedicated to defining what the program will offer and to create a robust outreach strategy. This work is supported by an advisory committee of leaders from the 2SLGBQT++ community, which meets regularly to review and provide input on the direction for the program.

The team is working on a guiding document that centers on trans-inclusivity and incorporates AB's service delivery frameworks of resisting anti-Black racism and anti-oppression.

SOCIAL REHABILITATION

The demand for our Social Rehabilitation program continued to grow in 2019-2020. This program is deemed the "home away from home" by our Service Users who find a place to rest, to connect, to heal through a therapeutic community setting.

Our complementary health services – Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), Yoga, African Drum Therapy, Acupuncture, and Art Therapy operated at near capacity throughout the year. We saw tremendous growth in our skills development program. We established a Supper cooking club, wood-working program and bead making program. The computer training program the ESL program and the current affairs programs continued to be main attractions.

Weekly fresh food donations to Social Rehab Programs

WELLNESS COLLABORATIVEADDICTION SERVICES

The Wellness Collaborative is a partnership of six agencies, Across Boundaries, Black Creek Community Health Centre, Caritas, Krasman

Centre and Vitanova with Addictions Services of York Region as the lead agency. This program allows increased supports specific to addictions, which includes outreach activities, case management, counselling and n particularly around opioids and related substance abuse. Peer Support Workers conducted outreach through the Lunch "n" Learn program where they provided information on opioids and other substance addiction to new service users and their families. The Lunch 'n' Learn sessions are designed for Service Users to share information, resources, and referrals with the attendees.

Across Boundaries provided a Winter Wellness Program that included outreach, hot meals, and distribution of winter survival kits, case management and peer support services to racialized members of the community who do not ordinarily have access to addiction services.

AT HOME/CHEZ SOI AND HOUSING FIRST PROGRAMS

Our Service Users in the At Home/Chez Soi and Housing First programs continue to be highly successful, and our partnership with COTA, CMHA and Toronto North Support Services continues to keep our Service Users housed along with our Registered Nurse and a Social Worker for specialized services to complement the case management supports. While this is a very successful program validated by research, recent years has shown a decline in housing availability as the costs for housing continues to skyrocket in Toronto. As a result, many of our Services Users continue to be without a fixed address even with access to rent subsidies. Furthermore, ongoing experiences such as racism/anti-Black racism, homophobia, transphobia create other layers of barriers that interconnect to deny housing to our service users.

MENTAL HEALTH AND JUSTICE – SHORT TERM CRISIS BED PROGRAM (MHJI-STCB)

These programs provided case management (short and long-term), housing and court supports to those involved in the criminal justice system. The Mental Health and Justice Program is a collaboration with the Canadian Mental Health Association-Toronto and is one of our longest partnerships. The short-term crisis program provided mental health and addictions supports to transition individuals from the courts to the community.

Case managers spent a significant amount of time in the court houses, building relationships and coordinating a seamless transition from the courts to the MHJI-STCB program of service users eligible for this program. We have become involved on the FOCUS/SPYDER table, which is a resolution table that identifies and provides wrap around supports for service users with complex needs and have particular involvement in the criminal justice system. This has contributed to an increase in the number of referrals to the program with a complementary increase in demand on our staff time.

ADULT MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM

The Adult Mental Health Program offered moderate to intensive case management supports, counseling, advocacy, training, and education to our adult Service Users (aged 16 and up). Recent years has shown staff supported a large number of service users with applications for Old Age Security/Canada Pensions Plan, as well as applications to long term care facilities and seniors housing. We noted the increasing need for specialized services to serve an older population whose needs are complex. These needs range from mental health challenges such as dementia, schizophrenia, Alzheimer's, to social challenges of isolation and lack of appropriate programming. The Access Point has reported that Across Boundaries accepted the highest number of service users from their program.

"Ignorance and prejudice are the handmaidens of propaganda.
Our mission, therefore,
is to confront ignorance with knowledge,
bigotry with tolerance, and isolation with the outstretched hand of generosity.
Racism can, will, and must be defeated."

- Kofi Annan

Our special thanks to our funders, donors, service partners, volunteers, facilitators, consultants and students who have helped us in numerous day-to-day tasks

OUR FUNDERS:

Your support has helped us make our programs the success that they are:

- Central– Local Health Integrated Network-(C-LHIN)
- Addiction Service York Region (ASYR)
- CMHA Toronto

OUR FORMAL SERVICE PARTNERS:

- Addiction Service York Region (ASYR)
- CMHA Toronto
- COTA Health
- Mainstay Housing
- Malvern Employment and Social Services
- Ontario Shores
- The Institute Research and Development on Inclusion and Society (IRIS)
- Toronto North Service

FACILITATORS, VOLUNTEERS, CONSULTANTS, & SUPPORTS:

- Alexander, Geraldine
- Ali, Shabana
- Chintoh, Dr. Araba
- Diverlus, Rodney & Pascale
- Gajaria, Dr. Amy
- Kwok, Caroline
- Lee, Kanae
- Lo, Dr. Hung Tat
- Martinez Law
- McPherson, Patricia
- Morris, Kofi
- Nhio-Son, Donette
- Perez, Fidel
- Privatech
- Providence, Marcia C.
- Raju, Priya Dr.
- Samara Starkman, Barrister and Solicitor
- Sandor, Gary
- Scott, Paula
- Sherwood, Celene
- Timothy, Roberta
- Verma Anu Radha
- Walcott, Rinaldo
- Walker, Nzinga
- Wang, Dr. Chao

OUR TEAM

BOARD MEMBERS 2019-2020

- Fay Sun
- Jia Hui Yan
- Hugh Williams
- Robbie Ahmed
- Dawnmarrie Harriot
- Maryam Ebrahimpour
- Tunde Fakunle
- Nadia Aleem
- Simone Atungo
- Fizza Khalid

MANAGEMENT TEAM 2019 -2020

- Aseefa Sarang - Executive Director
- Genoveva Policarpio - Office Manager
- Wangari Muriuki - Director of Quality and Operations
- Vidoll Regisford – Director of Quality and Operations
- Abdulai Bayraytay - Program Manager
- Lorraine Payne -Acting Program Manager

STAFF 2019-2020

- Ackie, Peter
- Adachi, Shen
- Adja, Michael
- Alasvand, Nader
- Areekaran Surendran, Manju
- Ataollahi-Eshqoor, Shirin
- Brathwaite, Daneisha
- Chai, Mawuli
- Chirackal Babu, Beena
- Deran, Eren
- Ebuta, Chukuka
- Emiri, Tegeste
- Fawzi, Zaina
- Fiture, Wafa
- Hadizai, Qudsia
- Headley, Charmaine
- Jama, Ayan
- Kirkham, Mahadevi
- Kollamparampil, Abhilesh Thomas
- Koorappillil, Joby Joseph
- Lau, Ruth Ikinori
- Lee, Jessica
- Li, Han Yi (Olivia)
- Martineau, Maya
- Mendoza-Reyes, Katherine
- Miller, Dorrett
- Mohammed, Alwiya
- Mohan, Namrta
- Mullings, Suzette
- Narain, Radha
- Newland, Abigail
- Nkrumah, Irene
- Ogunshola, Melissa Phipps
- Ormsby, Andrine
- Payne, Lorraine
- Poovathumkal, Lijo
- Pullemkannappallil, Aby Thomas
- Ramsingh, Shobha
- Saleh, Mariam
- Segovia, Martha L
- Shadoe, Kelsang
- Song, Stephanie
- Sundaralingam, Faith
- Tu, An-Ni Nguyen
- Varatharajan, Saathana
- Varghese, Anoop
- Vyramuthu, Perinbanathan
- Weekes Popo, Peggy

"Doing the best at this moment puts you in the best place for the next moment"

— Oprah Winfrey

ACROSS BOUNDARIES

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Web Site: http://www.acrossboundaries.ca

/acrossboundariesmentalhealth @ABMentalHealthCentre @AB_MentalHealth

Across Boundaries is proudly Accredited with Commendation by Accreditation Canada 2019-2023

ACCREDITED WITH COMMENDATION
ACCREDITATION AGRÉMENT CANADA

CANADA AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE
PRIX CANADA POUR L'EXCELLENCE
2019
BRONZE RECIPIENT MENTAL HEALTH AT WORK
RÉCIPIENDAIRE BRONZE SANTÉ MENTALE AU TRAVAIL