



**Class
of
2015**

Directory



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Kirsti Alaksa has been the Manager of Financial Services at Lakehead District School Board since 2009.

Kirsti's leadership journey has spanned over 20 years of financial experience in the private and public sector. This experience has encompassed public accounting, retail, manufacturing, pulp and paper and school board finances. From being on numerous system implementation teams to directly supervising non-union and union staff in the fields of accounting, purchasing and payroll, as well as providing training and support to all levels of an organization, her leadership skills have continued to grow.

As the Manager of Financial Services, one of her most important and challenging responsibilities is building and managing the Board's annual budget. Preparing this budget is a collaborative effort built from input received by Non-Union Employees, Unions, Trustees, Parents and the Public. Every budget supports the commitment to the success of every student and this input is very important to ensure that this is the case. Building and managing the budget involves strong communication and listening skills, accountability, innovative ideas and a solid team.

Kirsti is a Chartered Professional Accountant, Certified General Accountant with a Bachelor of Administration Degree in Accounting from Lakehead University. Kirsti is very excited for the opportunity to be a part of Leadership Thunder Bay, to work with colleagues on becoming better leaders and to have the chance to make a contribution to our City.

Kristina Baraskewich

brings valuable marketing management know-how and organizational skills to Firedog Communications.

After completing her diploma in Business Marketing, Kristina became the first student to complete a Post Graduate Advanced Diploma in Business Marketing Administration at Confederation College.



Prior to joining Firedog Communications in 2006, Kristina worked as Manager for a Division of Comark Inc., where she successfully led the Northern Ontario region to increased sales success and co-coordinated all internal corporate marketing and sales communications.

As part of the Firedog team, Kristina focuses on the development and implementation of marketing strategy for a variety of client accounts. Planning and project management are some of her key talents. Kristina is also often retained to assist clients with internal operations and workshop training on topics including integrated marketing strategy and marketing planning.

Kristina exudes a natural flair for relationship management and professional presentation that is truly distinctive. Kristina is also a member of the Marketing Advisory Board and part time faculty for Confederation College Marketing Programs.



Kimberly Upton *is a Human Resources Professional who, since 2003, has been employed by St. Joseph's Care Group an organization providing services in addictions & mental health, rehabilitative care & chronic disease management, and seniors' health. Her primary role in the Human Resources department is a Human Resources Assistant but she is fortunate to have also gained experience*

in the temporary role of Benefits Officer as well as her current temporary role of Coordinator, Recruitment & Retention. Kimberly has also been a dedicated employee of the Thunder Bay Community Auditorium since 1999 working in the Box Office and participating in various Auditorium events and fundraisers including the annual Blues Festival and the Wine Affair.

She graduated from Lakehead University with her Bachelor of Administration degree as well as completed the post-degree Human Resources certificate program from Confederation College. She is currently a member of the Human Resources Professional Association and is in the process of obtaining her Certified Human Resources Professional designation.

Lifelong residents of Thunder Bay, Kimberly and her husband Matthew are looking forward to raising their daughter in a city that they both love. In her downtime, Kimberly enjoys spending time with family, going to camp in the summer and has been introducing her daughter to a variety of activities including dancing and gymnastics.

Kimberly is looking forward to being a part of the 2014/2015 Leadership Thunder Bay program and was delighted to have been chosen by her employer. She not only sees it as a way to grow and develop personally, but also looks forward to gaining knowledge and experiences that will benefit her organization and the city of Thunder Bay.

Courtney Strutt

Working with children and youth has been a growing passion of mine, leading me on a career path that is challenging, inspiring, and always pushing me to learn new things about myself and broaden my perspectives.

My professional life began with a degree in International Development Studies, which provided me with the opportunity to live in West Africa and work with a local education coalition. My experiences with community development in Ghana gave form to my interests and energies.

Upon my return to Canada, I began working in First Nations communities through summer literacy camps.

Impacted in ways I never anticipated, this pushed me to obtain my

Bachelor of Education and to return to the community of Eabametoong First Nation to teach. Through participating in a number of community projects and informal youth programming opportunities in Eabametoong, I became affiliated with Right To Play's Promoting Life Skills in Aboriginal Youth (PLAY) program. I now work for PLAY as a Program Officer, supporting the implementation of seven locally developed and implemented First Nations youth programs across Northern Ontario. I have been privileged to meet talented First Nations youth from across the province, work with Community Mentors whose motivation drives the success of their programming, and to see the impact that positive play-based learning can create for youth and communities. While I'm never sure where my professional path will lead me, I know that the journey has only just begun!



Donna Faye is a Communications Officer at Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre. She develops and implements various innovative communication initiatives to engage with internal and external stakeholders, including the francophone population of Northwestern Ontario.



She supports the implementation of the Strategic Plan and manages communications projects such as the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre's Annual Report, the organization's Tenth Anniversary celebrations in 2014, and the coordination of other internal and external Communications and Engagement events, including media conferences. She is also actively involved in the Smoke-Free Grounds Working Group, Mental Health/Illness Awareness Committee, and the French Language Internal Working Group.

Donna researches, writes, edits, and publishes key messages, stories, and photographs about patients and families, staff, volunteers, and activities at the Health Sciences Centre. These are published in a wide range of internal and external media including social media, online, and print publications.

Born and raised in Thunder Bay, Donna is a graduate of Lakehead University (BA English, BEd). After completing a diploma in Journalism at Cambrian College in Sudbury, she then spent seven years living in Ireland, Belgium, and France. She returned to Thunder Bay in 2007. She speaks French and Flemish.

Donna has contributed to various local and regional publications including the Sudbury Star, Thunder Bay Chronicle-Journal, and Northern Ontario Business. In Thunder Bay Donna has been a volunteer with the Club Canadien Français and the French-speaking Toastmasters group and is a member of Thunder Bay Metre Eaters.



Lindsay Fenton is currently the Manager of Plant Engineering and Maintenance at Bombardier Transportation.

She is a Professional Engineer and received her Chemical Engineering Degree in 2004 from Lakehead University. At the beginning of her career, Lindsay worked 4 years in the Pulp and Paper Industry

as a Technical Service Representative for Kemira Chemicals Canada supporting Northwestern Ontario. She was hired in 2008 as an Environmental Specialist for Bombardier, and has been employed with the company for almost 7 years.

Lindsay is also a member of the Board of Directors for the Avila Music School charity, and although she does not currently teach music lessons, is a certified piano teacher and a registered member of the O.R.M.T.A.

Lindsay spends most of her time enjoying a busy life with her husband Curtis, and two boys, Cohen and Braden.



Jessica Saunders is proud to have grown up in Thunder Bay. She attended Lakehead University where she earned her Honours Bachelor of Kinesiology in 2005 and Masters of Public Health in 2007. During her academic career, she participated in diverse leadership opportunities including student orientations and teaching assistantships among various science disciplines.

After graduating, Jessica worked as a Public Programs and Services Coordinator for the Canadian Diabetes Association - Thunder Bay Branch from 2007-2010. During this time, she supported schools, workplaces and community organizations in delivering diabetes awareness and prevention programs. Jessica credits her experience with CDA to helping her develop community engagement interests and skills.

In 2010, Jessica accepted a position with St. Joseph's Care Group where she has worked for the past four years in roles supporting privacy obligations, public education and community engagement initiatives. Currently, Jessica works as a Client and Community Relations Coordinator and is responsible for engaging with clients, families and community partners to improve client-centred care practices across the organization. Jessica is proud to work for an organization that is so committed to the people they serve.

Jessica also enjoys volunteering in the community through being a member of the Metro LIONS Service Club and recently she has become a new member of the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre Vision Care Centre Advisory Board. For the past four years, Jessica has also been a co-chair of the Out of the Darkness Memorial Walk Planning Committee that helps raise awareness about depression and suicide in our community. Outside of work life and volunteering, Jessica and her husband Wes enjoy fishing, gardening and cooking together.

Mandy Price

I was recently hired as the Proposal and Partnership Development Officer for Anishinabek Employment & Training Service (AETS) and am now new resident of Thunder Bay. Before being hired, I was an AETS Board of Director for 4 years and served on the Executive Board for 2. Prior to being employed with AETS, I was the Economic Development Officer for the Red Rock Indian Band of which I am also a member. I was born and raised in Nipigon/Lake Helen Reserve and own a home there which I travel to on a weekly basis.

I attended Lakehead University and studied Honours Bachelor of Science Biology/Chemistry. While I attended Lakehead, I met my husband and was married on August 17, 2013. I am an animal lover and own three toy poodles, Rumbles, Gigz, and Teeny. My favourite season is football season. I am a “diehard” Peyton Manning fan and have followed him since his College playing days at Tennessee. During football season I will be found every Sunday, Thursday and Monday nights cheering for his team. My other hobbies include reading, movies, hunting, fishing, watching Bones and Criminal Minds.

Having lost my Grandfather, Father and Sister to cancer, I am an avid supporter of all cancer awareness, research and support programs. It is my hope that the Leadership Thunder Bay program will allow me to expand my professional network, learn to collaborate with differing personalities, and provide me with the necessary tools for future advancement in my chosen career path.



Lynda Fraser is a Health Promotion Planner with the Thunder Bay District Health Unit. She has had an extensive career promoting public health for the last 16 years. As a graduate of Lakehead University with a Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Education degree, and of the Food and Nutrition Management program at Canadore College in North Bay, health promotion was a natural fit! Lynda is passionate about encouraging residents, young and old, to make the small lifestyle changes that make a big difference in living well.

Lynda currently works on the Healthy Living team and specializes in research, program development and evaluation efforts aimed at promoting healthy behaviours to children and families. Her present focus is to establish a community strategy to support young people to thrive by eating well, being active and feeling good about themselves, regardless of their body size. Over the years, Lynda has worked with many other community agencies in Thunder Bay on various health-related initiatives and has led several committees. She has an expertise in health communications and has written numerous health resources, reports, articles, and advertisements.

Lynda grew up in Northwestern Ontario and has made Thunder Bay her home since 2001. She has a special concern for women and children in need and volunteers for programs that provide assistance. Lynda enjoys country living with her husband and two children. Together, they make time for family hikes, bike rides and goofing around.





Ana Hernandez is a Project Contract Manager at Bombardier Transportation Americas; she is currently working with the BiLevel* team (commuter trains manufactured in Thunder Bay, Ontario).

Ana holds a B.A. in Law from one of the most renowned Public Universities in Centre of Mexico (UASLP - class of 1998) and an M.D. in Social Sciences by the CONACYT (National Council of Arts, Culture and Technology, for

its acronym in Spanish – class of 2000). Ana specializes in Civil and Constitutional Law, and for 10 years she worked in one of the Appellation Courts of the Mexican Judiciary System holding various positions throughout the years.

Four and a half years ago, Ana and her husband (Wences) decided to take the challenge and accept a work offer outside their country. Along with their two young children Daniela (4) and Sofia (9) said good-bye to the scenery (and weather) of Pachuca, Mexico, and moved to Thunder Bay, where they have found an adoptive home.

Languages and Literature are Ana's passion: She speaks Spanish, English and French. She enjoys reading, cooking and hiking – in that order, and has promised herself to try-out skiing "one of these winters".



Originally from Lockeport, Nova Scotia, **Andy Meisner** has lived in Thunder Bay for the past 11 years.

Andy previously attended Acadia University in Wolfville, Nova Scotia, and played for Acadia's varsity soccer team. He also attended Lakehead University, and holds Honours Degrees in both Sociology and Social Work.

His employment experience has ranged from child and youth work in Halifax and Thunder Bay in residential and correctional services, to social work in school board, walk-in clinic, group, and individual settings.

Andy currently works at Children's Centre Thunder Bay, where he has been employed as a social worker with the Intake & Brief Treatment Services team for 8 years. He works with youth ages 7-18, providing mental health counseling, as well as parent education services.

Away from the office, Andy has a keen interest in sports and enjoys playing soccer, snowboarding, running, and mountain biking, as well as spending time with his wife and son.





*“Community” has always been a strong foundation for all of **Jessica McLaughlin’s** goals, from her economic development experience and capacity building work with Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) to her personal volunteer experiences she fosters a community approach to whatever she tackles.*

Jessica is a graduate of the Business Administration – Human Resources program from Confederation College and holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Political Science from Lakehead University. Since graduation Jessica has been working in First Nation Community Economic Development in the Nishnawbe Aski territory, where she has successfully developed and administered a Housing Manager Community and Capacity Development Training Program in collaboration with the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. She has also done research into First Nation Housing Policies and has assisted many communities with housing policy and related issues. Jessica’s work has also had a strong focus on food security and she has worked closely on the implementation of the NAN Food Strategy and continues to strive for a better understanding of First Nation food insecurity and ways to eliminate it. With a strong passion for economic development and Northern Ontario Jessica plans to contribute to the North for a long time.

Jessica is from Nakina, Ontario and is a member of the Long Lake #58 First Nation she resides in Thunder Bay with her partner Erik and son Jaxon.

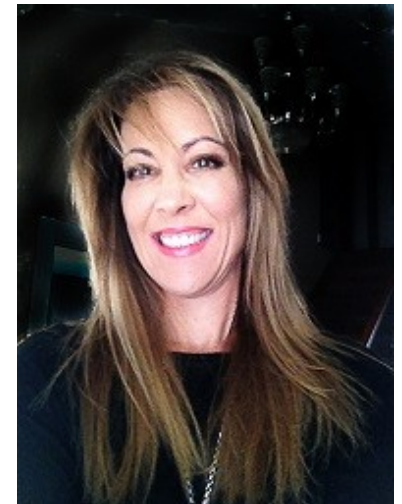
Nadene Hunley-Johansen is a lifelong resident of the City of Thunder Bay. Nadene has lived and travelled all over the globe further serving her position that Thunder Bay is the best place to live, work and raise a family.

Nadene attended Confederation College and Lakehead University excelling in her studies in Communications and Geography. She has worked for the Municipality of Shuniah for the past 14 years and is the Municipal Clerk and Manager of Planning.

Nadene enjoys all physical activity but is mostly passionate about cycling. She enjoys looking for anything that challenges her physically, mentally and spiritually but she mostly enjoys spending time with her three children and husband Rod.

Nadene has a steadfast loyalty to her friends, a profound love of her family and a deep sense of commitment to her community. Being a Municipal Manager requires a great deal of organization, diplomacy, concise decision making all while taking into consideration the best interests of the Corporation, the Community as a whole and the Citizens’ wellbeing and living conditions.

She is looking forward to working and developing her leadership skills with Leadership Thunder Bay and the opportunity to address some of the critical issues affecting the City of Thunder Bay, then bringing those skills back in her endeavour to provide effect management and leadership to her position with Shuniah.





Josh Tinkler-Josephi

is the Policy and Communications Coordinator for the Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce. New to the Chamber world, Josh has been a part of the Thunder Bay team for just over a year. Prior to joining the Thunder Bay Chamber, Josh worked at the Ministry of

Municipal Affairs and Housing and the Kenora and Lake of the Woods Regional Community Foundation.

At the Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce, Josh plays a significant role in leading the Chamber's public policy research and development initiatives to further the interests of its members and in implementing an effective plan to communicate creatively and effectively with all stakeholders. Since joining the Chamber, he has worked on several key advocacy projects and worked on improving the Chambers overall communication strategies.

Prior to starting at the Thunder Bay Chamber, Josh spent over a year working at the Kenora and Lake of the Woods Community Foundation where he helped shape the organizations approach to donor engagement and communication. He played a significant role in the organization's efforts to maintain and expand its local donor base.

Josh holds a HBComm with a major in Marketing from Lakehead University. Born in Thunder Bay and raised in Oliver Paipooonge, he likes to devote as much time as he can to being outdoors and to his interest in website development.

Suzanne Kruppa *is the Executive Assistant to the Director of Education at the Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board.*

She began her employment with the Board in August, 1986 as the Guidance Secretary at St. Ignatius High School. She commenced her duties as Executive Assistant to the Director of Education in August, 2011. Previous to her current position, she was also Executive Secretary for the Student Achievement Department K-8 and the Departmental Secretary in both the Special Education and Curriculum Departments.

A very important part of Suzanne's life is her husband of 21 years, her two boys (ages 17 and 19), and their dog and cat.

Born and raised in Thunder Bay she enjoys the beautiful outdoors either by running through the parks with her dog or biking on the municipal paths. She is a half-marathon, marathon finisher and participates in the Fire Fighters Ten Mile Road Race.

She is also an active member of the Athletic Club, where she regularly attends aerobic classes and challenges herself in the weight room. She is also generous of her time and spirit and supports the fundraising activities of the Auxiliary to St. Joseph's Care Group and St. Agnes Catholic Women's League.

She enjoys travelling and has prepared a bucket list of places she plans to visit and challenges to face. Next up - skydiving! Good Luck Suzanne.

