

CANDIDATES FOR SAC BOARD ELECTION 2017-2018

DIRECTOR-MEMBER

Term: 3 years

Ten candidates, choose a maximum of four (4) using the following criteria:

- SAC's Board policy states that a maximum of two Directors shall serve on the Board from the same province or territory (speech-language pathologist or audiologist).
- Therefore, if you are choosing an Ontario candidate, please note only one candidate from Ontario may be elected.
- A minimum of two (2) must be audiologists.



Fatima Beauregard, M.Sc., Reg. CASLPO, S-LP(C)
Ontario

Question 1: Which areas of the Board's work are of particular interest to you?

As an S-LP working in the educational setting, I feel that the areas of the Board's work that resonate with me most strongly are the strategies that serve to empower our members to become advocates for our profession and for the patients/clients that they serve. The families and school staff that I support are often unaware of the entire scope of our role and the services that we can provide. Families can encounter multiple barriers to accessing support and don't always have the voice to make their needs heard. Through enhanced public awareness of our professions, the important work we do in supporting communication health can be highlighted to those that have the power to influence the policies and decisions that will impact the access and provision of communication services to our clients and families. The Board's work in engaging the current membership to connect and support each other will also serve to provide our members with the knowledge and the voice with which to promote our profession within our individual workplaces, our larger communities, and across the country.

Question 2: How do you feel your skills and experience could benefit SAC?

As a speech-language pathologist working for over 15 years in the private and public sectors, I feel that I have extensive experience working collaboratively with families and other professionals to support and advocate for children with a range of communication needs. I have excellent communication, organizational, and interpersonal skills. I also have a dedicated passion for my profession and a desire to ensure that the important work that we do to support the communication health of individuals is promoted and understood. I feel that my personal qualities, skills and experiences will benefit Speech-Language and Audiology Canada as they demonstrate the knowledge, understanding and commitment that I can bring to the Board to assist SAC in achieving its mission and vision.

Question 3: What are your short- and long-term visions for SAC?

My long-term vision for SAC is that it will connect speech-language pathologists and audiologists from across the country so that SAC can provide a strong national and united voice to the public and important stakeholders to promote communication health. I strongly believe in the Board's goal to have Canada recognize communication as a basic human right. In the short-term I would like to see SAC continue to develop resources and provide relevant professional development opportunities so that our members can stay informed of evidence-based best practises in their respective fields. I would also like to see SAC be more visible in the media, including social media, to extend its reach in heightening the awareness of communication health and the professions within our communities, our workplaces and the various levels of government.



***Jean Boyle, M.Cl.Sc., S-LP(C), Reg. CASLPO
Ontario***

Question 1: Which areas of the Board's work are of particular interest to you?

The Vision and Mission of SAC speak loudly to me – advocating for our clients, helping to give them a voice, and empowering our members to partake in this advocacy at an individual level. While all of the strategic goals are of importance, the first, advocating for access and communication being a basic human right, resonates strongly with me. Health policy, education and advocacy are areas I have long held interest in and have initiated at an individual and community level. I see this as a key role for SAC moving forward, and think it will impact other strategic goals.

We have all seen clients negatively impacted by lack of access, lack of knowledge in the general populace and policies that do not uphold the right to communication. This needs to change, and I would like to bring my knowledge, experience and passion to move forward. This will not only help our clients, but increase the profile of communication disorders and professionals. These are the types of changes that I think matter to the members of SAC, and thus, will increase engagement and our strength as a profession, alongside the good they do for the people we serve.

Question 2: How do you feel your skills and experience could benefit SAC?

Coming from a diverse work background, involving the spectrum of ages and disorders as a sole charge generalist, as well as more recently specializing in adult neuro rehab, I feel that I bring a comprehensive perspective to SAC, allowing me to see issues and topics from a broader perspective, and look at multiple viewpoints. Further to this, I have lived and worked in some of the most remote regions in Canada, as well as the country's largest city, giving me a broad perspective on health systems in Canada.

Leadership and public speaking are skills I have been commended on and that I have fostered in myself. I also have an interest and awareness in policy creation and management, and

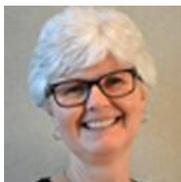
alongside that, advocacy. I believe that these skills will serve SAC well in their goals of increasing the public profile of communication disorders and professionals, as well as advocating for our clients for both systems and attitude changes.

I feel that this combination of experience and skill will make me an asset on the SAC Board.

Question 3: What are your short- and long-term visions for SAC?

In the short term, I would provide a variety of easy to use resources to help SAC members advocate for provision of services and communication access rights. This would include both info/tip sheets, but also statement summaries and article reviews providing support for service provision and client rights. These should be targeted at different audiences, such as colleagues, doctors, lawyers, teachers, parents, caregivers, etc. This is a tangible resource we all need. SLPs and Audiologists I have spoken with rarely have the time to provide appropriate evidence/references that they have read, heard presented, etc. to stakeholders. I have had colleagues in the past tell me that they are unclear how SAC helps them, and this is a clear and tangible benefit.

In the longer term, my vision of SAC is as an instrument of structural and policy change. We all know policies in health care do not shift overnight, but together we can influence policy change to benefit all those with communication difficulties. Providing regular, transparent feedback to the membership regarding initiatives is key, keeping members engaged and momentum moving forward. This will further increase the profile and membership of SAC, truly making it the hub for communication professionals.



***Colleen Braun-Janzen, S-LP(C), MA, M.Mus.
Manitoba***

Question 1: Which areas of the Board's work are of particular interest to you?

I am particularly vested in SAC's work in advocacy and championing professional excellence. As provinces implement accessibility legislation, our professions have a role to ensure that barriers to communication are addressed in a strategic manner across the country. To have a national association that promotes communication as a human right provides a valuable resource for those of us advocating for reducing barriers for individuals with communication impairments. SAC is also committed to promoting swallowing health and raising the profile of S-LPs in the area of dysphagia; this was recently evidenced by the establishment of an SAC Dysphagia ad hoc committee that I am privileged to chair. I am passionate about fostering clinical excellence, both in my job as Regional Clinical Specialist in the Winnipeg Health Region, and as a member of SAC. I am also interested in SAC's work in implementing best practices in association governance. As someone who has participated on numerous committees and boards, I value and take pride in developing, and putting into practice, policies that guide and support well-functioning teams. Finally, I have keen interest in the ongoing discussions between SAC and the regulators regarding a national entry-to-practice exam.

Question 2: How do you feel your skills and experience could benefit SAC?

I am well-versed in SAC governance structures and policies, and I understand some of the key national issues facing our professions. I was privileged to sit at the board table when developing the recent strategic plan. I chair the SAC “Current Clinical Issues in Dysphagia in Canada” committee, and was elected by my peers to serve as 2nd vice chair for the current year. I previously volunteered on the SAC exam committee for 10 years, during which time I gained an in-depth knowledge of the exam-development process. This positioned me well to work on a subgroup of the board that has been in dialogue with the regulators regarding a national entry-to-practice exam. I am a high-energy individual with the capacity to see projects to completion. Over the past 30 years I have volunteered in numerous capacities, both within my profession and in the community. Experience includes chairing a school board, organizing safe grad, planning educational workshops, writing clinical guidelines, and chairing professional working groups. I believe that my skills and experience, together with my passion for SAC and our professions, would benefit the SAC board. I would be honoured to be elected for an additional term.

Question 3: What are your short- and long-term visions for SAC?

Some short term visions for SAC are to: 1) continue discussions with CAASPR regarding provision of a national SLP and Audiology entry-to-practice exam in Canada, 2) enhance quality education offerings to its members, 3) explore whether advanced specialty certifications are something that members would value, and 4) expand cooperative efforts with other stakeholders. SAC has a strong history of collaborating with other organizations; examples include the development of Mutual Recognition Agreements, being a founding member of the International Communication Project, and supporting the International Dysphagia Diet Standardization Initiative. With strong networks already established, there is great potential to develop joint papers with SLP & Audiology colleagues across the globe, and participate in other projects that are national and international in scope. My long term vision is that S-LPs and Audiologists will be recognized in Canada as the primary experts in diagnosing and managing communication, hearing and swallowing disorders. Communication Health Assistants will routinely be members of rehabilitation and education teams. SAC will be nationally recognized for its role in advocating for the professions and be the primary “go-to” source in Canada for information related to communication and swallowing health.



***Andrea Bull, M.Sc., Aud(C), RHIP
British Columbia***

Question 1: Which areas of the Board’s work are of particular interest to you?

My interest in working with this board is rooted in my belief that communication is a basic human right. I seek to further this mission by advocating for accessible communication health services and supports for all citizens and will continue to champion for professional excellence and quality in service delivery.

I strive to work for a values-based organization with a strong social mission and am particularly interested in SAC's work promoting communication as a basic human right by advocating for access to optimal communication health services and supports across the lifespan and championing professional excellence and quality in service delivery. I believe that strong work in these areas will propel the speech-language pathology and audiology professions forward in a positive and progressive manner growing as a trusted and progressive industry, always on the cutting edge of science and research.

Question 2: How do you feel your skills and experience could benefit SAC?

I have had the pleasure of working and volunteering in a variety of industries and positions throughout my professional career. From medical clinics in Africa to publishing a children's book promoting autism awareness, my audiology and non-audiology related experience is diverse and always rooted in my belief that each person deserves the best possible care. This has provided me with a broader understanding of how organizations can make a valuable impact on the lives of many.

My work experience has been both incredibly demanding but equally rewarding; requiring strong leadership and the ability to effectively work with multiple teams. Coupled with a passion for advocacy and my dedication to the growth of the profession, SAC will enable me to lead from within and provide a contemporary point of view that would be a valuable asset to the Board.

Question 3: What are your short- and long-term visions for SAC?

Short term, I would like SAC to remain as an industry leader, setting the highest standards of practice and providing comprehensive resources to both professionals and the public. I would also like SAC to continue pursuing progressive and innovative approaches to achieving the four core strategies outlined in the 2016-2019 strategic plan.

Long term, my vision for SAC is to continually bring great minds together to work collaboratively on addressing the communication, industry, and professional issues and seek out viable, thoughtful and sustainable solutions informed by the very people they are meant to support. SAC has a duty to stay ahead of current trends and adapt to the rapidly-changing landscape of this industry.



Jennifer Cameron-Turley, M.Sc., S-LP(C)
Saskatchewan

Question 1: Which areas of the Board's work are of particular interest to you?

The promotion of communication as a basic human right is a particular passion of mine and is the driving force behind my enthusiasm for my patients. I have had the pleasure of assisting those affected by the sequelae of head and neck cancer, brain injuries, progressive neurological

diseases and trauma for over the last fifteen years. There is no question that communication is the cornerstone to our patient's sense of belonging in their family and their community, their ability to learn and grow, their ability to achieve meaningful work, and their ability to achieve self-determination at any age.

I have also had the distinct pleasure of serving as President of my provincial regulatory body (SASLPA) in 2011-2012 and I feel that my experience facilitating professional engagement, ensuring effective management and utilization of resources, liaising with government bodies and media outlets, and advocating strongly for my peers will be of benefit to the SAC Board of Directors. I am very much looking forward to taking what I have learned at the provincial level and working at a national level for my colleagues.

Question 2: How do you feel your skills and experience could benefit SAC?

As a clinician, I am a strong advocate for early identification and screening, ensuring that all patients have timely access to services even in rural or remote areas, and that they have access to adequate and timely follow-up care. I am involved in Inter-professional education and collaboration at every opportunity, and I endeavor to deliver coordinated and complex services to diverse populations. I would be very honoured to assist my colleagues on a national level. I was recently involved in the development of Provincial Head and Neck Cancer Guidelines for Saskatchewan, and successfully advocated with my colleagues for laryngectomy patients to receive voice prostheses and related supplies through the Ministry of Health.

I have been a frequent Student mentor and preceptor, and I am privileged to "give back to the profession" in this way. I learn from my students as they learn from me.

In my time as SASLPA President I was responsible for carrying out fiduciary and governing responsibilities, approving position statements, guidelines and other policy documents; creating and dissolving standing committees, councils, boards, ad hoc committees; creating and dissolving special interest divisions; and making decisions based on timely advisory information from various stakeholders.

Question 3: What are your short- and long-term visions for SAC?

In the short term I would like to continue to advocate for early screening, education, treatment, and appropriate follow-up care for our patients across the lifespan. This country has many people living in rural or remote areas and I would be honored to continue to advocate for services on their behalf at a national level. Supporting members' cultural competence and enhancing the diversity of the membership are also issues I feel strongly about.

Over the longer term I would like to continue fostering inter-professional, national and international collaboration and engagement. I believe that we are stronger together and that through these partnerships we can learn and deliver more than we could apart. I would also like to continue to advance the professions, support and promote evidence-based practice and research, foster excellence in professional practice through ongoing education opportunities, and advocate for members and those that they serve.



Janet Campbell, M.Sc., S-LP(C)
Prince Edward Island

Question 1: Which areas of the Board's work are of particular interest to you?

I am most interested in continuing to advocate and promote the importance of communication health. Throughout my day to day work I am continually reminded that the general public is not fully aware of the scope of practice for both SLPs and Audiologists. Linking with SAC helps achieve the goal of making the public aware of the importance of our roles in communication health. Throughout my time on the board, I have been astounded by the advocacy work that has been completed and I want to continue to be involved by continuing my board term. The connections that SAC has worked so hard to foster with government are invaluable and have helped make significant changes, such as support for Early Hearing Detection and Intervention and awareness of swallowing disorders.

With the increase in the number of provinces that are regulated, it is important to have a sustainable organization to support professionals in their day to day work. SAC does this through their professional development program, their rapid response to arising issues and position statements. Ongoing work continues to improve upon and find new ways to give SLPs and Audiologists the tools needed to be competent and current in their practices.

Question 2: How do you feel your skills and experience could benefit SAC?

In both my professional and personal lives, I have always taken the initiative to be actively involved in work groups and volunteer opportunities that have presented themselves. Being a participant in a variety of different groups has allowed me to meet professionals from different disciplines and has developed my skills in the areas of team work, decision making, diplomacy and collaboration. Throughout my career, I have had the opportunity to develop presentations for a variety of community groups, professionals, and families which has given me skills in presenting as well as knowledge in the areas of health promotion and advocacy.

I first volunteered with SAC on the Standing Committee for Supportive Personnel. To increase my involvement in the organization I applied to be a board director. Being on the board the past 2 years has been a tremendous learning experience. It has broadened my knowledge around all aspects of our professions and has taught me skills in the areas of strategic planning, broad thinking, health promotion and objective listening. It has provided invaluable opportunities to engage in problem solving and active listening during group discussions. I would value the opportunity to continue this learning by continuing on the board.

Question 3: What are your short- and long-term visions for SAC?

When I think of the future of SAC, my long term vision is one that includes a thriving membership with members who are engaged in their professions and the association's work. I want to strive to have current and new members truly understand the value of belonging to

their national organization. Becoming a board member has increased my knowledge of all the valuable work that SAC engages in and I would like all members to have this awareness. In order to do this, my short term visions include continuing to support organizations in promoting the professions during Speech and Hearing Month and throughout the year, providing high quality continuing education that is available to all members through use of technology, continuing to publish position papers to guide members in their day to day practice, and finding new and innovative ways to engage students. I would like to develop initiatives to encourage more members to volunteer for the organization as I feel this is the best way to truly understand how valuable SAC is to our professions. SAC has recently produced successful promotional ad campaigns; I would like to build on these to continue to create awareness and positive conversation for our professions.



***Laura Conway, M.Sc.(A), S-LP(C), Reg. CASLPO
Ontario***

Question 1: Which areas of the Board's work are of particular interest to you?

There are several areas of the strategic plan that are of interest to me. I have had the opportunity to see first-hand the successes and challenges faced in different parts of the country including Québec, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Ontario. I feel that having a national conversation and sharing ideas with colleagues from across Canada is invaluable. Developing communities of practice and connecting members with each other to share expertise and experiences is of particular importance to me.

Promoting our skills and services to key decision makers is pivotal in ensuring services are accessible when and where they are needed and are provided by the appropriate professionals. One way this can be accomplished is by putting resources into the hands of members in order to advocate for services in their area. Growing our inventory of position statements and papers, guidelines, and information sheets would help members promote awareness and understanding of our professions.

Finally, ensuring our membership dues are put to effective use is crucial. Members often are part of other associations and colleges and dues can add up quickly. I would like members to feel that SAC is accountable and that dues are being put to appropriate use.

Question 2: How do you feel your skills and experience could benefit SAC?

Over the past 8 years of professional experience I have worked in many settings including emergency, intensive and acute care, inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation, and palliative care. This has provided me with an understanding of issues faced by clinicians across several healthcare settings. Furthermore, clinical placements and professional experiences across three provinces have given me a wider perspective on the clinical landscape, specific challenges faced by members and the creative ways these challenges have been addressed.

Most recently, I have acted as the Professional Practice Leader at Providence Healthcare in Toronto. This position has honed my managerial skills including leadership, strategic planning, policy development, governance, human resources and personnel management. These skills are essential in order to be an effective board member.

I have also had occasion to work with SAC on the End-Of-Life Care committee and have co-authored a position statement on the role of communication health professionals in end-of-life care and continue to develop tools and resources for members who are working with or are interested in this population. This involvement with SAC has given me the opportunity to work collaboratively with colleagues from across the country and has refined my writing, editing, and diplomacy skill sets.

Question 3: What are your short- and long-term visions for SAC?

My short-term vision for SAC is to continue to grow and retain membership and highlight the roles of our professions to the general public as well as decision and policy makers. Our professions are relatively new, small, and often misunderstood by many people. I believe that there is power in numbers and having an engaged and involved membership would increase our voice, presence, and public awareness. The rebranding of SAC in recent years has gone a long way in advancing these goals but there is still much work to be done in these areas. I would like members to feel proud and see the benefits of being part of SAC.

In the long-term I would like SAC to be recognized not just nationally, but internationally, as a source for continuing education, expertise and information for speech-language pathologists, audiologists, communication health assistants, other professional colleagues, media, policy-makers and government.



Amanda Reindorp-Young, M.Sc, Aud (C)
New Brunswick

Question 1: Which areas of the Board's work are of particular interest to you?

While I consider all areas of the strategic plan important and valuable, I am drawn to one particular area. With nearly 25 years of clinical and administrative experience in audiology, including diagnostic audiology, hearing aids, cochlear implants and bone conduction implants, I am particularly interested in the first strategy, which promotes communication as a basic human right through advocacy for access and supports for all. With advancements in technology and an aging population, many government and private funding programs are lagging behind. Audiologists across the country find themselves not only treating clients but also advocating for funding and resources for their clients within the constraints of outdated and, sometimes, non-existent federal and provincial/territorial programs. Clinicians and clients across Canada should have access to similar funding for communication devices and programs. Funding should include provisions for advancements in technology. I believe that SAC has a strong, united voice and an ability to tackle issues such as these that affect every corner of the

country and to influence positive change. I would be proud to be able to use my knowledge and expertise to further strengthen SAC's voice in calling for improved communication health access, supports and services for all in Canada.

Question 2: How do you feel your skills and experience could benefit SAC?

Given my clinical and administrative experience with various aspects of audiology and my years spent working alongside and supervising S-LPs and CHAs, I believe that I am well positioned to contribute to SAC as a Board Director. As a clinician, I understand the challenges facing communication health professionals and our clients. My duties as manager of the Audiology Department and the Provincial Cochlear Implant Follow-up Program have provided opportunities to advocate for programs, services and professionals, as well as to manage and to try to mitigate risks to clients on a regular basis. Along with colleagues, I have advocated for the reinstatement of preschool hearing screenings. I have collaborated with provincial government officials regarding service provision and have written practice guidelines, policies and procedures. I helped develop a unique financial assistance and technology upgrade program for cochlear implant users and, with my director, oversee the program. I have participated in departmental and regional strategic planning and I am responsible for implementing our department's plan. I would be thrilled to share my skills and knowledge, which encompass respect for and support of our professions as well as compassion for our clients and their unique needs and challenges in today's society.

Question 3: What are your short- and long-term visions for SAC?

My short- and long-term visions for SAC align with the current Strategic Plan. I would like to ensure that the needs and concerns of audiologists, across the country and in a variety of practice settings, are represented by SAC. Similarly, I am confident that I will be able to draw upon my years of experience working with S-LPs and CHAs to represent their interests at the national level. I believe that SAC must continue to promote and model collaboration amongst S-LPs, CHAs and audiologists, as well as other health care professionals, in order to maximize outcomes for individuals with communication health difficulties. I would like to see SAC continue to promote Early Hearing Detection and Intervention programs, increase the focus on the importance of accessible technology funding for clients across the country and emphasize the importance of communication health in our society. Most importantly, I would like to help SAC advance its work to ensure that people with communication health difficulties, as well as their family members, have equal access to all of the services and supports that they need throughout their lives.



Andrea Richardson-Lipon, AuD, Aud(C)
Manitoba

Question 1: Which areas of the Board's work are of particular interest to you?

To be honest, all of the areas interest me. Each area helps develop and shape the other. Communication as a whole touches so many aspects, as do these areas.

I can see myself being a part of each of the different strategies; from promoting communication as a basic human right to working with stakeholders to build a stronger Speech-Language and Audiology Canada.

Each one serves a purpose to help create awareness for hearing health and ensuring that Canadians are properly educated and represented. Speech-Language and Audiology Canada serves as a sounding board for Canadians. Members also need to know that the board is there supporting them. By doing so, the members are able to be the voice for Canadians regarding communication health.

Each strategy that is outlined in the 2016-2019 strategic plan provides an area of interest for me. I am very passionate about advocating and promoting communication health and working with all the stakeholders. To me, this is the framework that will continue to develop to build a stronger Speech-Language and Audiology Canada.

Question 2: How do you feel your skills and experience could benefit SAC?

I have been a clinician for five years. During that time, I have grown and developed as a clinician and as a professional. I lobbied the provincial government to make mandatory hearing tests for infants; I do hearing seminars on hearing health awareness and I am presently petitioning the provincial government for adult subsidy for amplification.

I ran for office in the last Federal election. That experience alone has provided me with a wealth of information that I am able to apply to our profession. I had an inside look on how to successfully work with the government to make changes. Being able to listen and accept constructive criticism are qualities that I embrace. These are all things that will help me to benefit and work as a Director of SAC. At every opportunity, I am always looking to create awareness regarding communication health.

I continue to learn and grow as a clinician and professional and being a Director of SAC would enable me to support and empower our members and also educate Canadians on communication health.

Question 3: What are your short- and long-term visions for SAC?

My short-term vision for Speech-Language and Audiology of Canada is create more of a presence with Canadians. From working in clinic, none of my patients are aware of SAC. Canadians need to know that there is a board advocating for them regarding communication health.

Also, being more of a presence within our own professions. Promoting the importance of SAC among the members and letting them know that they are supported. Being able to illustrate the importance of SAC and how it empowers its members. There is strength in numbers and our voice can be strong when we are all working together.

My long-term vision would have to include creating more of a cohesion across the country regarding communication health. This would include working with the different levels of government on how to best address these issues. The long-term vision would be to ensure that every Canadian receives optimal communication health.

Creating a framework for working with other professions to help promote communication health and making it less stressful for internationally trained professionals to be able to work in Canada.



Sharon Walker, EdD, R.SLP
Alberta

Question 1: Which areas of the Board's work are of particular interest to you?

While I feel that all four strategies are essential to the organization, I am particularly passionate about two of them: *promoting communication health as a fundamental human right* and *ensuring professional excellence* in providing service and support. Too much of our ability to provide support relies on management and funding decisions made by those uneducated about communication health. We need to educate and advocate to targeted stakeholders about the impact communication health has on Canadians. In turn, we must also ensure that, when called upon, we provide high-quality, evidence-based, and research-driven support. If we are going to call attention to communication health and our professions, we need to back it up with excellence. Within our professions, we need to continually seek new information and innovations to remain current. This includes understanding the current climate in health and education as these are the primary worlds in which we work.

Question 2: How do you feel your skills and experience could benefit SAC?

I believe that both my clinical and managerial skills would be an asset to SAC. I am a proven leader with experience in clinical practice, professional development, and management. My strong communication skills assist me when providing coaching and feedback to staff as well as mentoring speech-language pathologists new to the profession. Along with my team, I have developed and implemented a new service delivery model in my workplace including development of all relevant policies and procedures. My efficient organization and planning skills allow me to remain focused and timely in any situation. I am comfortable speaking to large groups and pride myself in my ability to adjust the learning experience in response to the audience. I work closely with other teams, both within and outside of my own organization, and have excellent collaborative skills in this regard. I promote our profession throughout my workplace and within the various committees and planning groups in which I participate. My doctorate in educational research has provided me with knowledge of current research in speech-language pathology, leadership, and global educational reform. I feel that I can bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to the Board of Directors.

Question 3: What are your short- and long-term visions for SAC?

Short-term: I would like to increase our membership across Canada by highlighting the benefits of SAC and the differences between the role that SAC plays in our profession and the role of our provincial/territorial regulatory bodies. I feel that there is more education needed amongst non-member SLPs, Audiologists, and Communication Health Assistants in understanding the importance of a strong national organization to advocate and educate federally and to be a central hub of information across provinces and territories. With a large and dedicated membership, SAC can continue to gain the respect of both the government and public and become a national, professional voice similar to those of lawyers, doctors, and other professional groups.

Long-term: Related to my short-term objective, I would like to see SAC grow their influence and voice across Canada. We are still relatively unknown professions to the general public and government officials. My vision is that SAC becomes the go-to voice of communication health in Canada and is recognized internationally in this role as well. SAC has been making great strides towards this recently and I look forward to assisting SAC in continuing to increase understanding of communication health and the professionals that support it.

DIRECTOR-STUDENT

Term: 1 year

Two candidates, choose one.

May reside in any province or territory.



***Elaine Kwok, M.Sc.
Speech-Language Pathology Student
Western University***

Question 1: Which areas of the Board's work are of particular interest to you?

My personal experience and community involvements align with SAC's Strategy 1: promoting communication as a basic human right. I have personal experience with communication challenges. Four years ago, I decided to move to Canada in order to advance my research on childhood language impairment. As a new immigrant from Hong Kong with no connections in Canada, I faced many challenges due to the language barrier. Academically, I felt unable to communicate at my full intellectual potential. Socially, I felt isolated as I struggled to understand and speak English. This experience motivated me to pursue a career in the communication profession so I could support other individuals who struggle with communication. In addition to this career pursuit, I have extensively volunteered to promote communication rights. For instance, I have translated FOCUS into Chinese to ensure greater accessibility of communication services. I also maintain a blog to promote the communication health of multilingual families. Through these experiences, I learned firsthand that the ability to communicate effectively is crucial for individuals to reach their full potential. I am honored to

be a part of the communication profession, and I hope to continue to empower individuals with communication challenges as the SAC Director-Student.

Question 2: How do you feel your skills and experience could benefit SAC?

It is essential that more members of the communication profession join SAC in order to establish SAC as the central hub for communication health. As a SAC student-representative, I have motivated students to join SAC as student associates through developing creative methods to broadcast SAC's mission. For instance, I have created a bulletin board for students to learn about, and comment on issues related to SAC's mission, including strategies to raise awareness for the communication professions. Through representing students' opinion, I have established myself as a student leader in our university. This has earned me the nomination from Western University for the Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarship, a prestigious scholarship that supports doctoral candidates who demonstrate exceptional leadership qualities. I believe my diverse research background in genetics, cognitive science, and health service evaluation has enabled me to understand communication health from a broad perspective and appreciate the diverse needs our profession services. Furthermore, I believe my communication skills have prepared me to be an effective Director-Student. My written work has recently won me the Isabel Richard Student Paper Award (Doctoral Level) and an Ontario Graduate Scholarship. I aim to employ all of these skills to impact more members of our profession.

Question 3: What are your short- and long-term visions for SAC?

My short-term vision is to ensure students in speech-language pathology and audiology programs receive the highest quality of training. I hope to achieve this goal as a Director-Student who receives and contributes to proposals regarding the use of student-funds across various programs throughout Canada. I believe these extracurricular trainings will enrich the skill-sets of future communication professionals. In addition, by supporting students during their training, it will also establish SAC's image of empowering clinicians. This positive image will be essential to ensure future professionals join the national organization. My long-term goal is to elevate the public's awareness of the role speech-language pathologists and audiologists play in healthcare. I believe members of our professions are both compassionate and client-centered. We can harness these characteristics to promote a better image of our profession. In addition, I think our role as communication specialist is going to become central in the lives of an aging and culturally-diversifying Canadian population. I hope to continue to support the work of SAC as a member of the standing committee or a member of the SAC board of directors to realize this long-term vision.



***Remington Shandro, B.Sc.
Audiology Student
Dalhousie University***

Question 1: Which areas of the Board’s work are of particular interest to you?

The area that I am most passionate about is advocacy for communication health services. I was born with a hearing impairment, which was diagnosed late. As I grew up, I attended dozens of appointments with audiologists and speech-language pathologists to get me on the right track. I know firsthand just how critical a role our professions are in the lives of many, and I want to work hard to make more people aware of what we do.

I would also like to develop better awareness and understanding about communication impairments in Canada, with a focus on eliminating the negative stigma amongst children and teenagers. I have experienced these things firsthand and desperately want to contribute to developing more positive outcomes for all those affected.

As well, in my personal experience and having worked in an audiology clinic for 3 years, I understand the needs for patient empowerment and education as well as the gaps that prevent people from getting the services they require to reach their full communicative abilities. I believe many of these gaps can be addressed by making Canadians more aware of the services SLPs and audiologists offer, advocating the unique value of our skills and knowledge.

Question 2: How do you feel your skills and experience could benefit SAC?

I believe my personal experience and my considerable time already spent working within the field give me a unique perspective. As a first-year student, I already have an understanding of communication disorders from both the viewpoint of the patient and the clinician. I have all of the optimism and enthusiasm of a student, with much of the understanding and insight of a practicing professional. I’ve spent a considerable amount of time working around other people with communicative impairments and understand the variety of needs, expectations, concerns, and opinions that people accessing communicative services may have. I’ve also worked as a summer camp staffer, a public zoo interpreter, and volunteered with organizations like Big Brothers and Special Olympics.

I don’t just see the study of human communication as a job; for me, it’s a burning passion. I constantly follow new research, listen to podcasts about the industry, and maintain a blog about my own experiences, opinions, and ideas. Everything I’ve done for the last several years of my life has been towards being able to improve the lives of others with communication impairments, and I know that this preparation and passion will serve SAC well.

Question 3: What are your short- and long-term visions for SAC?

My short-term vision for SAC includes building on the success of programs such as Speech and Hearing Month and expanding the focus to include increasing public awareness of the variety of

people affected by communication disorders. I believe there are stereotypes of people with communication disorders that exist in public perception. These may be expressed in thoughts such as “Only old people wear hearing aids,” or “People who have speech impairments also have cognitive impairments.” By promoting the diversity of those affected, public education and understanding could be increased, leading more people to feel comfortable accessing the services they need.

My long-term vision for SAC involves ensuring the organization continues to promote the value of its professionals and the services they offer in a changing world. With emerging technologies and the growing roles of technical professions, such as communication assistants and hearing instrument specialists, I believe that SAC has a critical duty in educating the public about the knowledge and abilities of its professionals to ensure patients continue to receive the best possible care.