



Addictions Professionals Association of Saskatchewan, Inc.

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Hi to all and **WELCOME** to some new and newly renewed members.

Another busy month for your APASK Board; one that saw many deadlines set and reached including the signing of the Memorandum of Agreement with the Canadian Addiction Counsellors Certification Federation (CACCF) officially affiliating the two organizations, and getting the membership renewal applications in the mail allowing you ample time to get those returned before the Dec. 31, on time renewal date. Some of this will no longer be brand new news to most members as you will have received the announcement letter, but it remains exciting news to all the Board members for both organizations. It has been a long, three year effort!

Some members will ask why this move is so important and so exciting. Besides making history as the first group of addictions professionals to affiliate provincial and national organizations in Canada, this move further illustrates our dedication to the protection to the public. It will further solidify the understanding that we are a dedicated group of specialized professionals, keeping our education current through the on-going collection of certified education units; that we have an understanding of the sensitivity of our duties and have signed a code of ethics that holds us accountable for our action to a regulating body. By doing so, we further state that we are prepared to offer our knowledge and support to other professional bodies including educators, lawyers, doctors, social workers and others. As well this move signifies to government that we are prepared to be self-regulating; that though we have a national and international affiliation, we are truly a provincial organization. It shows we are focused on working together to bring evidence based, best practices to Saskatchewan through offering more extensive training, education opportunities through sharing conference materials while promoting recovery and the reduction of stigma. We are a diverse group that can also offer extensive, boots-on-the-ground mentorship to new comers and each other, and it is our time to be heard.

Your Board met on Oct. 26. The meeting began with a teleconference with a representative from the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse (CCSA) wishing to discuss the MOA with CACCF, congratulating APASK on making this happen and wishing to gather information on how it was accomplished to use as a template for other provinces.

We began working on the nuts and bolts of making the vision for the future happen:

We have been and will continue lobbying SIAST further to add options such as on-line, distance education to the Addiction Counselling program as well as beginning to offer an applied degree in Addictions thus joining the University of Lethbridge and McGill University.

We also had conversations on how to continue to build bridges with other stakeholders and treatment providers which led to some extensive discussion of what APASK could do to honour National Addictions Awareness Week this year and continue to build our profile? Some suggestions included

What unites us necessitates we work together to find better ways.

providing some word games to school boards across the province to help teachers and students become aware of some of the jargon that is used in the drug culture.

I have planned for some time to attend the CCSA Conference, Issues of Substance, in Ottawa the first week in Nov. and will be meeting with Board members and Executive Director for CACCF and the Executive Director of CCSA while there. My plan is to bring back as much information that can be made available to members through up-loads to the website, wherever possible. As well the CCSA representative, Tamara Williams that met with us via phone conference at the start of our meeting has sent an email to all the CCSA Issues of Substance conference attendees to participate in a meeting at the conference to discuss the APASK/CACCF process with all interested parties

We are beginning to put together a training event for February on how to get certified through CACCF; how to overcome the stallers and stoppers; put your case study together and get through the test. You will always be welcome as a member to APASK but we also want to see as many members as possible get certified.

The conference planning committee is working on the May conference and we are hoping to have that information available on the website shortly. I think you will find this conference will build on your existing skills as well as giving you some new tools. There was also some discussion on the evaluation forms from the 2013 conference which spoke very highly of the conference and the work being done by the conference planning committee. Yay Laurel and Ruth!!

AND we are looking for other means of training delivery such as webinars and satellite events. We have begun using technology, GoToMeeting, to allow us to meet more often and carry on the business of the organization more efficiently.

Exciting times around the Board Room table! We ask that you consider joining us in these dynamic times by putting your name forward for a Board position or talking to your fellow APASK members about becoming a Board member. Attached to this email you will find a nomination form for 2014 positions for your consideration. We are hoping our excitement will translate into equally exciting interaction with APASK members so, again....please forward suggestions and questions to the Board. Contact information is available on the website.

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APASK Board of Directors