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# PHILANTHROPY AND NONPROFIT LEADERSHIP

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**Carleton**  
University

School of Public Policy  
and Administration



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# TITILAYO ADEDEJI

Titilayo, a Biochemistry graduate with both a BSc and an MSc, has embarked on a remarkable academic and professional journey fueled by an unwavering altruistic dedication to humanitarian causes. Founding The Corinth's Humanitarian Foundation in 2017, Titilayo has spearheaded eight annual impactful community outreach projects in West Nigeria, demonstrating a steadfast commitment to positive change.

Driven by a genuine passion for nonprofit services to humanity, Titilayo is pursuing the Master of Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership (MPNL) program at Carleton University to take her humanitarian aspirations to the next level. With a focus on mastering nonprofit management and fundraising, Titilayo aims to leverage this multidisciplinary curriculum to deepen her understanding and practical skills in the field.

Titilayo currently works within the newcomers support department in a prestigious NGO in Canada and volunteers with the Canadian Red Cross. As the founder of her own NGO and with a history of diverse roles in community engagement and organizing health and education initiatives, Titilayo brings a wealth of experience to her professional endeavours. One of her goals is to expand her humanitarian efforts in Africa while also establishing a humanitarian cause in Canada, her second home. Titilayo, a Humanitarian Entrepreneur, Biochemist, Educator, Mother, and Wife, embodies a passionate and informed leader poised to make meaningful contributions to communities in need.

Outside of her professional pursuits, Titilayo enjoys watching good movies, engaging in Zumba sessions, and relaxing through swimming.



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## AMANDA BELL

Amanda Bell (she/her) lives on an acreage just outside of Edmonton, Alberta. She is currently the Interim Executive Director of the Fort Saskatchewan Nourishment Centre, where she previously served as President of the Board.

Over the past decade, Amanda has honed her skills in fund development, event planning, management, communications, and program design and evaluation. She has worked in a variety of organizational types and sizes, most recently developing a fund development department from the ground up for a \$7 million charity.

As a CFRE, Amanda is deeply committed to understanding, practicing, and sharing fund development best practices. She is

extremely passionate about human-centred causes, with a particular focus on combating food insecurity. Her leadership extends beyond her professional role; she has served on multiple boards and thrives on finding small ways to effect significant changes. Currently completing her MBA in Community Economic Development, Amanda is fueled by a belief that no education is wasted, driving her continuous learning and collaboration.

Outside work, she enjoys volunteering, gardening, and spending quality time with her husband and golden retriever. As she looks forward to the MPNL program, Amanda is eager to share with and learn from her new colleagues.



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# POLINA BERGMAN

Polina Bergman holds a Bachelor of Economics from Queen's University and a Bachelor of Public Relations from the University of Ottawa. Her academic journey reflects a diverse range of interests, with a focus on exploring different disciplines to foster personal and professional growth.

Polina discovered her passion for the philanthropic sector while working at the Rideau Hall Foundation. Here, she channels her skills into innovation programming, contributing to the organization's mission with strategic thinking and creative problem-solving.

Looking ahead, Polina aspires to deepen her understanding of the philanthropic sector and hopes to grow into leadership positions within the nonprofit realm. She aims to leverage her academic and professional experiences to effect positive change and contribute meaningfully to the advancement of philanthropic endeavours on both local and global scales. Outside of work, Polina is actively involved in her community, running a neighbourhood stray cat rescue.



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## JESSICA DA SILVA

Jessica is a Development Officer of Major Giving at London Health Sciences Foundation, which is the fundraising arm for the London Health Sciences Centre, supporting their innovative research, equipment needs and providing patient support. She has spent the last 4 years fundraising for the Clinical Neurological Sciences department and Verspeeten Family Cancer Centre by developing cases for support and launching campaigns. She's worked directly with the departments to raise millions of dollars and launch studies that have made direct patient care impact.

Jessica specializes in relationship building. Her main goal has been to better understand how to connect with prospective donors and allow for a collaborative experience. She believes strongly that everyone has a passion that pushes them forward to create change. When a Development Officer better understands this, they can create a solid relationship built on trust and understanding of impact.

To help grow her skills, she has attended the Madison Institute, with the Association of Healthcare Philanthropy at the Wisconsin School of Business. She learned that the current Canadian philanthropic landscape requires growth in development opportunities and has a personal passion to help see it flourish with collaboration amongst the community.

Graduating from Brescia University College, Jessica received a degree in an Honours Specialization in Nonprofit Business Management. She is excited and honoured to take her next step and join the MPNL program. She wants to learn from her peers and professors, to gain a deeper understanding of leadership and philanthropy, in hopes of helping to improve the current opportunities for development, as well as lead herself one day.

In her spare time, she can be found reading fantasy novels, baking, and painting!



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## MEKAYLA DIONNE

Mekayla Dionne is an emerging Métis artist from Toronto, Canada. She attended OCAD University and obtained a Bachelor of Fine Arts, with a major in Drawing and Painting and a minor in Social Sciences. Through her observations of the environment, urban and rural landscapes, and details found in nature, she creates abstract paintings and textile projects that explore concepts of community and self-identity.

Alongside her art practice, Mekayla is an educator and has worked extensively with the children and youth in her community through arts and literacy programming.

Through her work at several nonprofit organisations, Mekayla has seen firsthand how demand for services is extremely high but securing consistent funding is difficult, leading to being unable to meet community needs adequately. Drawn to the MPNL program due to the focus on fundraising, financial management and leadership strategies, Mekayla is excited to build a career in helping nonprofit organisations build strong foundations and become more economically resilient.





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## JUSTINE EGGINK

Justine holds a Bachelor of Management and Organizational Studies with a Specialization in Human Resources Management from Western University. She worked in corporate HR leadership for 6 years before making a transition to the nonprofit sector where she currently works as a development leader for a Christian nonprofit in Hamilton, Ontario.

Justine is enthusiastic about serving others in her community and around the world. She believes that in order for nonprofits to serve in sustainable, healthy,

and ethical ways, they need to invest in strong, servant-hearted leaders. As such, she is excited to be a part of the 12th cohort of the PNL program at Carleton as it not only provides the opportunity for an enriching educational experience, but also because of the professionals and leaders she feels privileged to learn from.

In her spare time, Justine loves being on the water and hiking up north, visiting National Parks, volunteering with her local church community, and spending time with friends and family.



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# JENNY FOSTER

Jenny has worked in the nonprofit world for over 10 years. After being inspired at an early age by her Grandmother, she devoted her life to her community and has held fundraising roles across a variety of sectors, including human rights, education, food security, social services and politics.

Jenny is currently a Senior Manager of Foundation Partnerships at CNIB. She has a strong history of volunteerism and sits on the board of The Housing Help Centre

and on the Jane's Walk Steering committee. Jenny also held the volunteer role of Executive Director at West Hill Harvest, a grassroots Scarborough charity, for more than a decade.

She is an avid reader, recreational painter, and an award-winning yoga teacher. Jenny holds a BA in Political Science from The University of Toronto, a certificate in Fundraising Management from Seneca College and obtained her CFRE in 2021.



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## ALEXANDRA GALLANT

Ally Gallant is a dedicated professional with a rich background in the nonprofit sector. She has made significant contributions to various organizations, including the YMCA and the Kelowna Gospel Mission, where she currently serves as a Shelter Manager. Ally's leadership skills are also evident in her role as the president of a small cultural nonprofit, guiding the organization toward achieving its mission. Her extensive volunteer work with several other small nonprofits further highlights her unwavering commitment to community service.

Passionate about serving individuals experiencing homelessness and those struggling with addiction, Ally's work reflects her deep-seated dedication to improving lives and fostering positive change. Currently, she is most excited to learn about policies surrounding nonprofits and to develop her leadership skills, aiming to enhance her impact in the sector and to continue advocating for those in need.



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## EMILY GOODWIN

Emily's interest in the nonprofit sector began at a very young age when she trained and volunteered with a nonprofit dance studio aimed at fundraising for community needs and creating positive opportunities for youth in her small town.

After graduating with both a Bachelor of Arts Honours in Psychology from Crandall University and a Bachelor of Theology from Acadia University in 2019, Emily completed a Post-Degree Bachelor of Social Work at St. Thomas University in 2021.

Emily has spent the past two years working for Phoenix Youth Programs, first in their shelter and most recently in program planning and facilitation focused on holistic youth development and recreation opportunities. This joy-filled work allows her to connect with youth and co-create opportunities for them to engage in their own interests.

Emily is passionate about working in Nova Scotia which she calls home and is thrilled that this program will allow her to do that while studying. The MPNL will help her to continue to develop the skills needed to grow her work in this sector.

In her spare time, Emily loves music and spending time outdoors with friends and family. She sees life as one big adventure and finds ways to meaningfully celebrate others every single day.



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## SAYED HASHIMI

With over two decades of experience in the development sector, Sayed Farhad Hashimi has dedicated his career to improving the quality of life of individuals and communities. Sayed started as a research assistant with Save the Children in March 2002 and was promoted to program officer to improve the well-being of those affected by war. He also managed three national NGO partners and contributed to developing resources and capacity in South and Central Asia. In 2008, Sayed joined the Afghan Ministry of Rural Development to support institutional development and manage the implementation of the UNDP's National Area-Based Development Program. Later, he advised the Minister of Interior Affairs and Minister of Economy on strategic planning, change and project

management. Sayed worked for over 10 years as Director of Education and research for Sesame Workshop's Baghche-Simsim project in Afghanistan, managing the project and developing educational content that empowered children and met their cognitive, physical, and socio-emotional developmental needs.

Sayed has a BA from the American University of Afghanistan, and WES evaluated his coursework for a Master of International Relations as equivalent to one and one-half years of graduate studies in Canada.

Sayed is excited about the MPNL program, and he looks forward to connecting with nonprofit leaders and organizations.



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## GODE KATEMBO

Gode Katembo, a visionary serial social entrepreneur and community leader, is deeply committed to empowering others and fostering positive societal change. He serves as the President and CEO of Canada African Cup of Nations Inc., which unites 32 African communities across Manitoba and Ontario. Additionally, Gode is the founder and chairman of Sports Without Boundaries, advocating for making sports accessible and affordable for BIPOC and low-income youth. He also owns GK Couturier, blending his passion for fashion with social impact.

With a diverse academic background, Gode earned a Diploma in Business Administration and a Bachelor of Science specializing in international development and theology.

Throughout his career, Gode has received numerous accolades, including the Spirit of Entrepreneurship Award in 2015 and the mayor's 44th Volunteer Award in 2022. His involvement in the Anti-Racism in Sports Youth Advisory Council reflects his commitment to combating discrimination in sports.

Through the PNL program, Gode seeks to deepen his understanding of nonprofit leadership and network with like-minded individuals. After completing his master's degree, he hopes to leverage his knowledge to drive meaningful change in racialized communities. His goal is to use a sports vehicle as a tool for social change and promote inclusivity within sports organizations' governance frameworks.



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## PAIGE KEZIMA

Paige Kezima (she/her) has a history of bringing people together, exemplified through her work with the labour movement (in a member engagement election campaign with the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour), and nonprofit organizations (through volunteer management with Equal Voice and coordinating a professional leadership network for urban Indigenous women at the National Association of Friendship Centres).

An avid volunteer since childhood, she has dedicated years of time to mental health advocacy as a speaker and published writer, in the student movement leading a nationally recognized campaign for 2 international students facing deportation, and on numerous boards and executives in political groups and grassroots coalitions.

She graduated from the University of Regina with a Bachelor of Social Work and a Public Relations Certificate in 2013. Currently, she is the Strategy & Operations Lead at the Ottawa/Gatineau organization, Youth Action Now.

Paige is dedicated to learning and unlearning in all aspects of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging (EDIB) practices in work, academics, community-building, and everyday life. She's not afraid to ask the big and tough questions; this is one of the reasons she was drawn to the MPNL program. It is here where she hopes to instigate, participate, observe, and learn from spirited discussions about the past, present, and future of the sector.



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## DANIEL H. LANTEIGNE

Leading figure in Canadian philanthropy, Daniel H. Lanteigne is Vice President, Talent, Strategy & Impact at BNP Philanthropic Performance. He is celebrated for his holistic approach to governance, talent management, and fundraising. Lanteigne has received multiple distinctions, including the Grand Graduate recognition from Université TÉLUQ, the Quebec National Assembly Medal and the Sovereign's Medal for Volunteers in recognition of his perseverance, influence, and contribution to society.

He is actively involved with the Association of Fundraising Professionals, serving as Vice Chair on the AFP Global Board. Lanteigne participates in numerous forums as an author, speaker and trainer in the philanthropic sector. He is also a lecturer in philanthropic

management at the Université de Montréal. Since 2022, he has also chaired the National Advisory Committee of the Canada's Volunteer Awards and sits on the Board of Trustees of Ingenium Canada.

Lanteigne has completed corporate governance training at Université Laval, earning the Chartered Director designation, is a Certified Human Resources Professional (CHRP), and holds a CFRE accreditation.

Upon completing his Master of Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership (MPNL), he plans to further enhance his contributions to the Canadian philanthropic sector, particularly through research and capacity building.





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## MAGGIE LAROCQUE

Maggie Larocque (she/her) graduated with Honours from McGill University with a Bachelor of Arts in Gender, Sexuality, Feminist, Social Justice Studies and Indigenous Studies. Her undergraduate research consisted of two core projects: bridging the gap between the academy and community by working with the local and multi-provincial unhoused population, as well as working in local shelter housing to reimagine un-gendering within women's shelters in Montreal.

Maggie has gained experience in the nonprofit sector in the gender equity, environmental and youth mentorship arenas. Maggie is currently running a neighbourhood house in British Columbia, as a Coordinator of BGC South Coast BC, while continuing to operate her environmental work in her own nonprofit, the Uplift Canada Foundation.

In her off-time, Maggie can be found training for marathons, travelling and spending quality time with friends and family.



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# KAREN LAWFORD

Dr. Karen Lawford is an Anishinaabe midwife (enrolled member of the Lac Seul First Nation), a registered midwife (Ontario), and is the first Indigenous midwife in Canada to obtain a doctoral degree. She is a founding member of the National Council of Indigenous Midwives and of the Global Council of Indigenous Midwives.

Her health systems research champions comprehensive, gender-inclusive sexual and reproductive health and care, which is underpinned by Indigenous theories, methodologies, and methods.

Dr. Lawford is committed to advancing the Calls to Action (TRC), Calls to Justice (MMIWG), and the Recommendations of RCAP by influencing policy, program, and systems change at all levels of government. Dr. Lawford is the 2020 Indspire Laureate in Health and became a member of the College Member of the Royal Society of Canada in 2021. Dr. Lawford is an Associate Professor in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology (Midwifery Education Program) at McMaster University. Her research lab, Returning Care and Health Home, can be found here: [RCHHIndigenous.com](http://RCHHIndigenous.com)

Dr. Lawford is a founder and Member of the Board for two nonprofits: *Bringing Birth Home* and *Zaagidwin Ndaknaan: A Centre of Excellence for Indigenous Midwifery*.



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## ADRIAN MALCOLM

Adrian was born and raised in Toronto. He holds an Honours BA History/Law and Society from York University and an LL.B. from Osgoode Hall.

Adrian was influenced by his late father and mother to pursue charitable interests as a young child and continues to do so volunteering for many local charitable organizations. He is particularly involved with City Outreach, a nonprofit organization providing food, clothing, and necessities to the homeless community in downtown Toronto.

Private practice has allowed Adrian to provide pro bono work and services to various charitable sectors. He has also sat on numerous boards and foundations.

The MPNL program is a personal pursuit for him and one, in which, he hopes to gain a greater understanding of in order to assist with his professional and personal endeavors.

Adrian enjoys sports, reading, writing, cooking and walking his beloved but excitable dog Charlee. He has two wonderful children of which he is immensely proud. He has been searching for a further educational opportunity and is delighted to have discovered this program to further his goals and knowledge.

## PHILANTHROPY AND NONPROFIT LEADERSHIP



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## KATIE MCKENNA

Katie McKenna is a nonprofit leader with two decades of experience working at the intersection of storytelling and social change. She is the co-founder and former Executive Director of The Leap, a climate justice organization dedicated to building a more powerful climate movement through connections to struggles for Indigenous rights, and racial, social, and economic justice.

Prior to The Leap, Katie worked as an impact producer, connecting documentary and academic projects to real-world social change. She also co-produced the Avi Lewis and Naomi Klein documentaries *The Take* and *This Changes Everything*, and directed *The Year Before* for the National Film Board.

Katie holds an MSc Global Politics from the London School of Economics and an Honours B.A. (Anthropology) from the University of Toronto. She is the former Board Chair of the Documentary Organization of Canada, and a graduate of the Rockwood Leadership Program. Katie is looking forward to deepening her knowledge of emerging and best practices in the philanthropic sector as part of the MPNL.

A bilingual Montrealer, Katie has studied and worked in Argentina, England, Japan, Nicaragua, Toronto, and Panama; she lives in the Laurentians with her husband Matt Thompson, and ten-year old son, Leo.



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## DEIRDRE MCMURDY

Deirdre began her career as a broadcast and print journalist, specializing in business and capital markets. She has worked in policy, politics, crisis communications and corporate strategy. Currently, Deirdre is the Chief Communications Officer for Peerage Capital, a North American private equity company with investments in Canadian and US real estate, storage, and wealth management.

Along the way, she has been involved in a number of nonprofit boards and is currently the National Chair for the BGC Canada (formerly Boys and Girls Club), chair of the National Business Book Awards, and trustee of the Dare to Dream Foundation. Deirdre has also volunteered at Kensington Hospice for many years.

Deirdre has a long-term interest in becoming a more effective and informed foundation trustee and board member in the nonprofit sector. Governance issues are of particular interest in this context. (Her secret dream is to run a small, community-based organization at some point).

Married with two children, Deirdre enjoys being out of doors for hiking, running, snowshoeing, kayaking, and gardening in particular. She loves animals and shares her Toronto home with several lovely rescue cats and a dog.



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## ANGELINA MIGHTY OSBORNE

With over 12 years of dedicated service in the nonprofit sector, Angelina has passionately worked alongside underserved communities, striving to implement quality and impactful programs that address their unique needs. Her journey has been defined by a commitment to social justice and empowerment, driving her to foster positive change and advocate for those often marginalized or overlooked.

Throughout her career, she has honed her skills in program development, community engagement, and strategic planning, consistently seeking innovative solutions to address complex challenges. Guided by empathy and a deep understanding of the diverse populations she serves, Angelina forges meaningful connections and cultivates trust within the communities she works with.

As she looks to the future, her aspirations extend beyond direct service provision. She is driven to leverage her wealth of experience to provide consultations and mentorship to nonprofit organizations and their leaders. By sharing insights, best practices, and lessons learned, she aims to empower others to navigate the intricacies of the sector and maximize their impact on the communities they serve.

With a steadfast commitment to equity, collaboration, and sustainable change, Angelina is dedicated to continuing her journey as a catalyst for social progress and positive transformation in the nonprofit sector.



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## AIMABLE MPAYIMANA

Aimable Mpayimana holds a Master's degree in Development Studies and has significant experience within the development sector. He is the founder of Hope of Family, a nonprofit organization dedicated to reducing extreme poverty among vulnerable families while actively involving them in their children's education in Rwanda.

His daily responsibilities include supporting a group of grantees from East Africa funded by Woven Foundation; this is a US-based philanthropic organization that envisions a world where human rights are upheld and protected for everyone, everywhere. This work allows him to foster greater interaction within the philanthropic community, particularly among nonprofit leaders from East Africa.

Aimable is optimistic that the Master of Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership (MPNL) program will have a profound impact not only on his professional career but also on the growth and development of the nonprofit organizations he is connected to within Africa. The program serves as a valuable resource, providing tools and insights to other professionals from philanthropy space committed to empowering local communities in Africa through partnerships with grassroots nonprofit organizations.

Aimable is a permanent resident of Canada and lives in Ottawa with his wife and two children. In his free time, he enjoys outdoor activities.

## PHILANTHROPY AND NONPROFIT LEADERSHIP



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# PHIL NICHOLS

Phil Nichols, a dedicated advocate for animal welfare, has shaped his career around enhancing community animal welfare. Graduating from Seneca Polytechnic, Phil began his career as a Registered Veterinary Technician at Toronto Humane Society. His journey from 2010 forward evolved through various roles, from RVT, through management roles, culminating into his current position as CEO. Along the way he also became engaged in the Board of the Ontario Association of Veterinary Technicians, serving as President through his tenure.

Phil's approach to animal welfare is deeply influenced by his own life experiences, which taught him resilience and deepened his bond with animals, who always provided him with unconditional support and companionship. His journey instilled a strong belief about the importance of accessible, proactive care and support for guardians.

Phil's leadership has been instrumental in launching several initiatives focused on holistic approaches to animal welfare, including significant expansion of Toronto Humane Society's Public Veterinary and Support services, now supporting more than 30,000 guardians and animals annually.

As he joins the 2024 cohort, Phil is eager to expand his influence in philanthropy and nonprofit leadership, focusing on sustainable practices and policies that will support animal and community welfare through a One Health approach.





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## VICTORIA REDDING

Graduating from Wilfrid Laurier University with an Honours BA in Social and Environmental Justice, Victoria has a passion for achieving the greatest good for all. Presently, she serves as a Digital Marketing Coordinator for a nonprofit which specializes in international disaster response and community development. She loves to share testimonies of global families who are changing their stories of poverty into sustainable hope.

During her time at Laurier, Victoria had an opportunity to study human migration in Mexico. While visiting migrant shelters, hearing stories of humility and generosity from local humanitarian workers inspired her to pursue a career in the nonprofit sector. Now, early in her career, she is pleased to learn more about nonprofit leadership and the future of philanthropy.

In her spare time, Victoria is an avid sports fan. Throughout the year, you can find her cheering for the Toronto Blue Jays, Toronto Raptors, Saskatchewan Roughriders – and Canadian football in general!

Victoria is excited to join the MPNL program to further her passion of pursuing justice and encouraging constituents to partner with the work and mission of nonprofit organizations across Canada and around the world.



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## RIDDHIMA SHARMA

Riddhima Sharma (She/They) is currently a Communications Coordinator at Mothercraft Ottawa, a nonprofit based in Ottawa. She has over eight years of experience working in the nonprofit sector across multiple countries. Riddhima started her nonprofit journey at the grassroots level after the 2015 earthquake in Nepal.

During her time in Nepal, Riddhima gained experience in various sectors such as Child Early Forced Marriage, Reproductive and Maternity Health, Education, Gender Justice, and Disaster Risk Reduction, with

a focus on the Indigenous population. She is eager to expand her knowledge about how nonprofits operate and take on tasks to bring measurable changes. She hopes to focus her research on highlighting tried and tested methods that often go unnoticed in nonprofits and use her innovative and creative skills to make them more efficient.

In her free time, Riddhima loves to travel and has visited six countries so far. She enjoys trying and replicating new cuisines. She considers herself energetic and is always eager to learn new things.



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## LINDA SUMBO

Linda's decision to pursue a career in the nonprofit sector was influenced by the positive impact of charitable and nonprofit organizations on her family's quality of life while growing up in a rural community in northern Ghana. These organizations provided crucial services that significantly improved their well-being, motivating Linda to dedicate herself to serving others and positively impacting people's lives.

After completing her Bachelor's degree in Development Studies in Ghana, Linda worked as a project coordinator for over six years at World Vision International—an international nonprofit organization engaged in humanitarian aid, development, livelihoods, and social justice advocacy.

Linda immigrated to Canada in 2018 and studied a postgraduate program in Project Management at Fanshawe College in London, Ontario. During her studies, she volunteered with various immigrant service nonprofit organizations, assisting newcomers in settling and integrating into Canadian society. Her research interests revolve around exploring how community perceptions of immigrants and the available services in the local communities can enhance the overall immigrant integration experience.

Linda hopes the MPNL program, through its unique blend of theory and practicum, will enable her to gain knowledge and hands-on experience, especially in the governance, leadership, and policy environment of Canada's philanthropy and nonprofit sector.

On a bright sunny day, Linda likes riding a bike with her three kids.



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# ANNA TAVERNA

Anna, a resident of Toronto, is currently engaged with two nonprofit organizations: The Down Syndrome Association of Toronto and The Centre for Accessible Sport and Play. With over a decade of experience in serving the disability community, Anna aims to persist in her career within the nonprofit sector and continue to foster inclusive environments where individuals with disabilities can flourish.

She completed her studies in Kinesiology at McMaster University in 2020 and went on to complete the Recreation Therapy program at Mohawk College in 2021, with a focus on disability, health, and recreation. Upon joining a nonprofit organization, Anna recognized the importance of continuous learning to effectively support her organization and advance as a leader. Learning about the MPNL program, she felt it aligned perfectly with her aspirations, providing her with the ideal platform to learn and progress towards her goals.



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## GRAHAM THOMAS

As he was working on his Master's in Neurosciences at McGill, Graham came to a realization that although he loved the research and experimentation, he found it made no sense to spend his life in an ivory tower fuelling his own curiosity while civilization continued to fuel itself with planet-warming energy sources. So, he hung up his pipettes and turned his attention to the energy transition.

Graham went on to work for solar energy and energy efficiency project developers in Ontario and achieved tangible impact in reducing emissions in his community, while gaining valuable business development and project management experience along the way.

More recently, Graham has had the great privilege of acting as an advisor to a high-capacity philanthropist. In this role, he has explored impactful interventions for climate and nature, and has been awakened to the crucial and symbiotic role of intentional philanthropic funders with the organizations, projects, and movements their money supports.

He joins MPNL 2024 with a desire to expand his knowledge of the philanthropic and nonprofit sectors and to develop his impact strategies, with the ultimate goal of helping other donors maximize the potential good their funds can create. Graham lives in Ottawa, on unceded Anishinabe Algonquin territory, with his partner and two boys in their almost entirely fossil fuel-free home.



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## SAA MICHEL TOLNO

Saa Michel Tolno, hailing from Guinea, embodies the spirit of positive change and empowerment. Based in Conakry, his tireless efforts span various crucial issues, including empowerment and sustainable development goals, entrepreneurship, mentorship, and gender equality.

At the heart of his advocacy work lies the Associations of Children and Young Workers of Guinea (AEJT), to which he is committed to enforcing youth and children's civil rights by securing project funds and easing their participation in noble societal endeavors like advocacy, capacity building, and community support.

Saa Michel holds a Bachelor's degree in International Relations from General Lansana Conte University and a Bachelor of Honours in Development Studies from the University of Johannesburg as the first Mandela Rhodes Scholar from Guinea. Through the MPNL program, he aims to further enhance his skills in effective leadership, strategic thinking, financial management, and fundraising, allowing him to have an internationally leading role in the future, such as serving as a minister in Guinea and the United Nations Representative across Africa.

Upon completing his Master's degree, he intends to pursue a Doctoral Degree in Public Policy and Governance to drive global change, empower his communities, and advocate for the well-being of young people and children globally.



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## CHRISTINE VLAMING

Christine (she/her) holds a Bachelor of Arts from Carleton University and a Bachelor of Education from the University of Ottawa. She has worked with children and youth in various capacities in education for over 25 years, internationally, in Brazil and Mexico, and locally, in Ottawa. Christine recently retired as a teacher to pursue her lifelong dream of working in the nonprofit sector.

Christine's passion is to work in a nonprofit, addressing systemic barriers that make it harder for those marginalized to access resources. She would like to participate in research that informs policy, seeing more government funding for social services addressing child poverty and racial disparity.

Christine is excited and honoured to have the opportunity to learn from professors, experts and peers in a program developed to prepare her to be successful. Christine is particularly interested in fundraising and social advocacy, and she looks forward to having dedicated time for research while in the program.

Christine enjoys going on outings with her two daughters, who are themselves in or about to start university. She loves reading and usually her dog and cat snuggle up beside her. Her hobbies include painting, gardening, and spending time in nature.



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# CAROLINE WORKMAN

Born and raised in Calgary, Alberta, Caroline made her move to Ottawa in pursuit of a Communications and Media Studies degree at Carleton University. Developing an interest in fundraising, Caroline spent the majority of her undergraduate years working with the Telephone Outreach Program within the department of University Advancement.

Her leadership development grew as she took on supervisory positions, and throughout various co-op work placements she developed a passion for communications in the nonprofit sector.

Excited to meet new peers and faculty, Caroline is embarking on a Master's degree in Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership to aid her future goals of creating change through communications.

In her free time, Caroline enjoys walking the canal, and spending time with friends and family!





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## FENGWEN YU

Fengwen came to Canada as an international student. After graduating from the University of Ottawa with a Master of Education, she has been working in the international education field including working at Toronto Metropolitan University as an international student advisor. She is also a translator with five published books and a female entrepreneur.

Like anyone else who came to Canada alone, Fengwen has met different challenges when she landed in Canada as a student. At that time, she already found that social supports and resources for international students were scarce. With years of field experience, she gained a profound understanding of what services

and supports international students need, as well as the barriers and gaps in community support services for them. In 2021, Fengwen established a nonprofit organization named Open Path International Student Service Centre to provide support services and resources tailored to international students and newcomers' unique needs.

Fengwen is thrilled to join the MPNL program and looks forward to enhancing nonprofit leadership skills through this program. She's also eagerly anticipating the opportunity to collaborate with a diverse group of peers who share her passion for making a positive impact in the nonprofit sector.





