


# Annual Report



## 2014-15

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## **Mission, Vision, and Values Statements**

### **Mission Statement**

Abilities Manitoba, a network of agencies, exists to foster excellence in service delivery for people with intellectual disabilities.

### **Vision Statement**

Together we can create a province where all Manitobans value the quality of life of people with intellectual disabilities, and the partnership between communities, governments, families, and agencies that supports them.

### **Values**

- **Community Participation:** We need community participation to make inclusion, choice and respect for all people a reality.
- **Respect:** The people we are supporting are deserving of qualified staff. Member agencies must comply with all pertinent legislation such as the Vulnerable Persons Act, Human Rights and all others to ensure all persons are treated equitably.
- **Human Rights:** We promote the interests, rights and freedoms of supported individuals in member agencies.
- **Transparency:** Member agencies will be respectful of and accountable to the people they serve, employees, funders/government and the community at large.
- **Not-For-Profit:** Services provided to the people we support will be not-for-profit.
- **Natural Supports:** We recognize the value and contribution of natural supports for people with intellectual disabilities.

(adopted in final form in March 2008)

**Annual General Meeting Agenda  
April 23, 2015**

**1:00 – 2:00 p.m.**

**Victoria Inn  
1808 Wellington Ave, Winnipeg MB**

1. Call to order
2. Welcome and introductions
3. Approval of agenda
4. Approval of meeting minutes from June 5, 2014 Annual General Meeting
5. Committee Reports
6. Financial Report
  - a. Financial Report 2014-15
  - b. Budget 2015-16
7. Director Elections
  - a. Expiring Director Terms
  - b. Election of Directors for 2015-16
8. Adjournment

Abilities Manitoba  
Annual General Meeting Minutes  
June 5, 2014  
Canad Inns  
1125 18<sup>th</sup> Street, Brandon, MB

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**In Attendance:**

**Leslie Udell – Winnserv Inc.**

**Lori Zdebiak – HCG – Selkirk**

**Brenda Elmes – BCO Inc.**

**Jeff Daly – Simaril**

**Nancy Hughes – Shalom Residences**

**Daryn Turcotte – St. Amant**

**Richard Neufeld – Blue Sky**

**Scott Morden – Pulford CLS**

**Leanne Fenez – St. Amant Inc.**

**Jeremy Knaggs – Community Venture**

**Ed Barkman – enVision CL**

**Richard Dyck – Rainbow Residence**

**Anne Kresta – CL Manitoba**

**Kim Park – Community Venture**

**Grahame Wyllie – FASD life Journeys**

**Charmayne Dube – New Directions**

**Malinda Roberts – Winnserv**

**Wendy Humphrey – enVision CL**

**Darryl Marsch – enVision CL**

**Bonnie Gingrich – Mountain Industries**

**Maria Freeman – CL – Selkirk**

**Teri Joynt – Rolling Dale Ent.**

**Jennifer Hagedorn – Visions of**

**Courtney Welch – Fairfax**

**Audra Penner – ImagineAbility**

**Rod Retelback – Pulford CL Services**

**Jeannette DeLong – enVision CL**

**Wendy Kennedy – Westman**

**Michelle Hammond – Community Respite**

**Carla Dixon – ACL Swan River**

**Kim Longstreet – Family Visions Inc.**

**Ilene Mayne – PRVS Inc.**

**Crystal Ryland – Community Venture**

**Jacqueline Wall – Macdonald Youth**

**Jolene Smith – Community Respite Ser.**

**Dana Hope – St. Amant**

**Karen Penner – enVision CL**

**Terri Silvius – COR Enterprises**

**Tara Smith – ACL – Interlake**

**Andrew Morris – Trailblazers**

**Jason Dyck – Prairie Partners**

**Karen Hannem – Epic Opportunities**

**Patrick Falconer – Abilities MB**

**Scott Smith – DASCH**

**Tara Mullen – RRC – DCSP**

**Elaine Hawkins – Family Services –**

**Brenda Fisher – ACL Swan**

**Marina Wilderspin – Turning Leaf**

**Kim Steele – Brandon Community**

**Tracy Fidler – ACL - Interlake**

**Shelley Savy – ACL - Virden**

**Jennifer Perron – Epic Opportunities**

**Ruby Reimer – Epic Opportunities**

**Kimberley Nelson – Gateway Resource**

**Carolyn Crossley – Grandview Gateway**

**Oly Backstrom – SCE Lifeworks**

**Arleigh Wilson – Touchwood Park**

**Nancy Born – Changes Winnipeg**

**Angie Conrad – New Directions**

**Arlene Bodnar – CL Manitoba**

**1. Call to order:**

Malinda Roberts called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

**2. Welcome and Introductions**

Malinda welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised introductions would not be completed due to timing and the fact people had been together since this morning.

**3. Approval of Agenda**

Moved by Jeannette DeLong      Seconded by Charmayne Dube.  
CARRIED.

**4. Approval of 2013 Annual General Membership meeting minutes,**

Moved by Richard Neufeld      Seconded by Jennifer Hagedorn.  
CARRIED.

**5. Committee Reports**

**CLDS Redevelopment:** Malinda Roberts reviewed the written report that was shared in the AGM package.

**Barrier Free:** Jeannette DeLong reviewed the written report that was in the AGM package and highlighted the importance of membership remaining engaged as the standards are developed.

**Manitoba Alliance of Direct Service Professionals:** Courtney Welch reviewed the written report that was in the AGM package and highlighted the fact that the Alliance will be holding their first Board meeting next week. Leanne Fenez asked organizations and individuals to consider joining as members to show support of this alliance.

**Disability and Community Support Program (RRC) Advisory Committee:** Leslie Udell spoke to her written report that was in the AGM package and Tara Mullen provided an update that Family Services has committed to funding 15 workplace students in the upcoming year.

**Day Service Advisory Committee:** Charmayne Dube reviewed the report that was in the AGM package.

**Winnipeg Safety Network:** Daryn Turcotte reported on the work of the network as highlighted in the written report in the AGM package. Daryn spoke to the fact this network has become active again thanks to Community Living Winnipeg designating staff Amy Shawcross-Campbell to take on an active role with the network.

**Executive Committee Report:** Malinda Roberts reviewed her written report that was in the AGM package and highlighted the excellent work of Patrick Falconer. Malinda spoke to the amount of work that has been achieved in this past year and the dedication of the executive and Abilities membership in helping to have achieved the many successes that took place.

**6. Financial Report**

**a. Financial Report 2013-14**

Malinda Roberts reviewed the financial report as shown in the AGM package  
Motion: to accept the financial report as presented.

Moved by: Oly Backstrom  
CARRIED.

Seconded by: Carolyn Crossley

**b. Budget 2014-15**

Malinda Roberts reviewed the budget as shown in the AGM package  
Motion: to accept the 2014-15 budget as presented.

Moved by: Jeannette DeLong  
CARRIED.

Seconded by: Richard Neufeld

**c. Non-voting Membership Fees**

Malinda Roberts spoke to the fact that some non-service provider agencies such as Red River College would like to join but there is no fee structure established so the Executive needs direction on how to proceed.

Motion: That we defer the decision on non-voting membership fees to the Executive as it will not have a significant financial impact on the organization.

Moved by: Jennifer Hagedorn  
Seconded by: Courtney Welch  
CARRIED.

**d. 2015-16 Draft Budget discussion**

Malinda Roberts reviewed the draft 2015-16 budget and membership fee structure that was included in the AGM package. This was completed so we could look at how to sustain our momentum within the coming years and to provide membership with some advance notice that to make build the capacity of the organization and maintain a staff position in the future we will be looking at changes to the membership fee structure. This is a draft and the Executive will be working this year to finalize this structure and further discussion will take place throughout the year. Malinda asked if anyone had any questions or concerns around this draft budget and membership fee structure – no questions asked or concerns raised.

**7. By-Law Changes**

Maria Freeman reviewed the proposed by-law changes that were included in the AGM package.

Motion: To accept the following by-law changes as presented:

5.1: At the annual general meetings members shall elect sufficient replacement directors to bring the executive board to a compliment of six (6) **to eight (8)** voting directors.

5.3: **The immediate Past President may serve the remainder of an elected term as a director and will continue to uphold all duties and responsibilities of directors sitting on the executive board. If the immediate Past President`s**



**lected term has expired**, the immediate past president shall be a non-voting member of the executive board ex-officio. **The Past President shall advise and assist the President to ensure a smooth transition in executive board leadership. The office of Past President is for a one year term only.**

5.5: Each officer shall be entitled to re-election but no officer shall continue in any one office for more than **three (3)** consecutive years.

Moved by: Maria Freeman                      Seconded by: Jeannette DeLong  
CARRIED.

## **8. Director Elections:**

### **a. Expiring Director Terms**

Malinda spoke to the contribution of each of the executive members whose terms have come to an end this included Ed Barkman, Brenda Elmes, Jason Dyck and Courtney Welch.

### **b. Election of Directors for 2014-2015**

Nancy Hughes and Michelle Hammond were the nominating committee.

Nancy and Michelle asked if there were any nominations from the floor – no nominations from the floor.

Nancy reviewed the slate of nominations included in the AGM package – people nominated were: Jennifer Hagedorn, Jeannette DeLong, John Leggat, Wendy Kennedy, Oly Backstrom.

Motion: to accept the slate of nominations as presented as there are now 5 positions open.

Moved by: Leslie Udell                                      Seconded by: Brenda Elmes  
CARRIED.

Nancy noted that while Malinda has been thanking everyone else it has been clear to many of us that Malinda`s hard work and dedication has made this one of the most productive years she can remember.

## **9. Adjournment**

Motion: to adjourn the meeting

Moved by: Rod Retelback                                      Seconded by: Charmayne Dube  
CARRIED.

## **External Committees with Abilities Manitoba Representation 2014-15**

**Community Inclusion Awareness Working Group** (Daryn Turcotte)

**Background:** The incidence of neighborhood opposition to residential programs for persons with intellectual disabilities and youth-in-care has been increasing in Manitoba communities. The Manitoba government is interested in working with community stakeholder organizations to address this problem of NIMBYism (Not In My Back Yard) by raising public awareness in support of community inclusion. A working group of community and government stakeholders has been established to plan and implement the public awareness initiative.

Since 2013 the Working Group members have all been adding information and suggestions to this toolkit in an attempt to create a toolkit that will provide service providers with knowledge regarding successful transitions to the community for people with intellectual disabilities and youth-in-care. Specifically the toolkit will provide strategies to reduce neighbour concerns and smooth the process of opening or maintaining a community, shift-staffed, home operated by a local service provider.

**2014-2015 Progress:** During the past year, the Working Group reviewed the first draft of the toolkit. It was very well written and contained a lot of useful information. However, not all the information included in the kit was useful to all members around the table. We discussed how important ease-of-use would be and how we could design and communicate the toolkit so people could easily access the section(s) of the kit they needed in response to Nimby.

Committee members have decided to meet with a writer who can alter the toolkit into a web postable document. A writer was identified for this project, comes highly recommended, and has agreed to undertake the work required along with another individual with writing and design experience. Together they will craft a smaller, simple to use toolkit.

It is expected that this work will be completed by June 2015. We will then be able to post both the big and the more user friendly versions of the toolkit onto various websites. Our hope is to post both versions on websites dedicated to support service providers in managing community opposition to new homes being opened in their neighbourhoods.

### **Day Service Review Advisory Committee** (Charmayne Dubé)

**Committee Composition:** Family Services Representation includes: Elaine Hawkins, Lisa Lacroix, Brad McAllister, Marylea Mooney, Manpreet Singh, Lisa Sutton, Andrea Thibault-McNeil. Community Representation from Manitoba Supported Employment Network and Abilities Manitoba includes: Oly Backstrom, Krista Bissett, Irene Boyse, Charmayne Dubé, Darryl Marsch, Richard Neufeld.

**Advisory Committee Purpose:** The Day Services Review Advisory Committee began meeting in the fall of 2013. Our purpose is to develop a standardized consistent approach in how agencies are funded and to identify efficiencies in services while

promoting greater independence and community participation. This review also includes the goal to develop a sustainable and equitable funding structure which was previously identified by the CLdS Re-development Committee.

**Current Status:** While we continued to meet this past year, these meetings were less frequent as other priorities within the Department took precedent. This year's efforts primarily focused on completing the data collection process and compiling the results to develop an interim report. To date, all data including information from agency surveys and additional material gathered during the province-wide CLdS visits have been incorporated into the draft Interim Report.

**Next Steps:** Moving forward, the Advisory Committee's focus will concentrate on refining a process to engage with service users and families. The intention is to develop a better understanding of gaps and strengths of current programs offered from individual perspectives and their overall satisfaction with CLdS Day Services.

While a full report and recommendations are being constructed, the inter-national trend towards enhancing employment based programs when and where applicable has been acknowledged. As well, emphasis on ensuring perspectives from the next generation of service users who are transitioning from high school have been identified as an area that needs to be incorporated into this review.

### **Disability and Community Support Program (Red River College) Advisory Committee** (Leslie Udell)

An advisory committee meeting was held on October 31, 2014. The college reported that the full time, first year program has 37 students enrolled with 11 of those being workplace students. There are 17 students in year two with three of those being workplace students. Six students choose to leave with their certificate after the first year and two were suspended for either unsuccessful practicums or low GPAs. There are three Recognition of Prior Learning students and a total of 18 grads at the June convocation.

Katherine Wong, from Family Services, was successful in getting approval for sponsorship for 15 workplace students and hopes to be able to maintain that in the next year. She has put forward a proposal that consideration be given to paying for travel and accommodation for rural students. It would be helpful if agencies, students and family members could continue to write the Minister to highlight the importance of the sponsorship as well as to thank her for her current support.

The program and Katherine are still working on the online format for the Foundations course and the hope will be that it is up and running in 2015.

There was some discussion around the program organizing a networking event between agencies and the students so the students could get a more up close and personal chance to explore their employment opportunities. The job fair at the college is a great event but it would be helpful to have an event more specific to the field.

Continuing/Distance Education: There are two Foundations courses running in Winnipeg with a total of 48 students and one Supervision course with 23 students. A Supervision course is being offered in Dauphin. Katherine Wong indicated that she would be willing to run a Foundations course in Swan River if there were at least 15 students and an instructor could be found.

### **Barrier Free Manitoba** (Jeannette DeLong)

The proclamation of The Accessibility for Manitobans Act in December 2013 led the way to the first proposed standards being developed in the area of Customer Service. Barrier Free Manitoba developed responses to the discussion papers in early spring 2014 and participated in the public consultations calling for stronger, more effective content in the standards.

Even though this Act was landmark legislation and draft standards had been proposed, there was no mention of commitment to implementing the Act in the November 2014 throne speech.

With the provincial political climate being in a state of unrest, a change in Minister and a leadership challenge in the NDP, the progress in developing standards was seriously delayed. The Minister finally released the recommended customer service standards developed by the Accessibility Advisory Committee in mid-March 2015. Barrier Free Manitoba is once again developing a response calling for a higher standard to be achieved.

Once public consultation is complete in May 2015 and after considering public feedback, the Minister will submit a final proposed customer service standard to Cabinet for approval. Upon Cabinet approval, the Standards will become law, requiring all public, private and non-profit organizations to comply with Customer Service Standards. The next standard that will be developed is in the area of employment.

### **Innovation Working Group** (Maria Freeman)

The Innovation working group was formerly a subcommittee of the Redevelopment Committee. Since the Redevelopment committee was disbanded in September 2014 the innovation subcommittee has become the Innovation working Group. The committee is chaired by: Michelle Dubik and the members are: John Leggat, Janet Forbes, Scott

Smith, Jennifer Frain, Dave Hebert, Karen Fonseth, Barkley Engel, Patti Chiappetta and Maria Freeman as the Abilities Representative.

Since September 2014 the following work has been done:

**Eastman Pilot Project:** An internal project for Family Services looking at case loads and delegations based on type of supports needed by the individual/family from case worker. Currently working on developing service standards for how people are placed in a category independent/Assisted/supported and the number CSW can manage on a case load based on points of contact and intensity of support needed from CSW.

**Innovation Service Sub-committee:**

**Members:** Karen Fonseth, Scott Smith, Maria Freeman, Craig Wynands, Allen Hewins

**Summary:** Working on developing a proposal for a pilot project on innovative service options to assist in moving towards self-directed funding options for families and self-advocates that would be accessible through several options including service providers. Group is working on a final draft of the proposal to submit in the new fiscal year.

**Case management Sub-committee:**

**Reporting for the sub-committee:** Allen Hewins and John Leggat

**Summary:** This group is working on a pilot project around case management with St. Amant. The committee is currently drafting role responsibilities and addressing delegation of authorities.

The work is progressing and agency and Government staff are working together to ensure they are both ready for when this rolls out.

**Investigations:** Noted that clarity around investigations needs to be determined as they are handled in many different ways – a document is being developed by Government to assist with this.

**CHAP:** Comprehensive Health Assessment. St. Amant and New Directions are involved in this process and it is very positive and the committee is looking forward to hearing more info in the future.

These last 12 months have seen us work together to produce some amazing results for services to adults with intellectual disabilities. Highlights of our accomplishments include:

- Abilities Manitoba is now recognized as the body that represents the sector on a provincial level. We have consistently been invited to respond to and advise Community Living Disability Services (CLdS). We regularly meet with the Minister of Family Services, the Assistant Deputy Minister, the Executive Director of CLdS and other influential personalities in government. They are interested in and listen to what we have to say.
- Thanks to member support from across the province, we went to every region for our 2014 Spring Stakeholder Engagement to ask questions of people who are directly and indirectly impacted by the services provided by CLdS. We talked to over 750 people about what matters to them and produced a report highlighting the top eleven priorities for Manitobans.
- From this report and with endorsement from member agencies, we completed "A Path Forward to Ensure the Long-Term Sustainability and Quality of Services for Adults with Intellectual Disabilities in Manitoba". This Five Priority Pathway action plan clearly outlines the key priority areas arising from the Spring Stakeholder Engagement and it calls for change outcomes, adequately resourced strategies to achieve the outcomes, and clearly identified and time-bound deliverables.
- We have presented this action plan to government and have been actively engaged with them regarding follow through on the outcomes. We have also requested resources from CLdS to begin work on the Five Priority Pathway in the areas of Professionalizing the Community Living Services Sector and Developing and Implementing Quality Assurance Measures.
- In early 2015, we partnered with Barrier Free Manitoba to support thousands of Manitobans to ask all three of the NDP leadership candidates to publicly state their position on key disability issues during the NDP leadership campaign. All three candidates responded favourably and indicated clear support for the implementation of the Five Priority Pathway.
- Continuing to build the capacity of Abilities Manitoba and ensure financial sustainability has been a key priority for the Executive Committee. We have submitted grant applications to Winnipeg Foundation and to the Manitoba Community Services Council to carry out work with three main goals: 1) Develop a financial sustainability plan for Abilities Manitoba, 2) Actively engage and energize Abilities Manitoba stakeholders, and 3) Expand the products and services offered by Abilities Manitoba to build member agency capacity to provide quality services.

- The successes that we have accomplished over the last 18 months are largely attributable to the relentless work of volunteers with some support from ad hoc consultants. Knowing that it will be difficult to sustain this momentum in the long term, and thanks to on-going financial support from member agencies, Abilities Manitoba has hired our first Executive Director!

We have engaged Margo Powell on a contract basis for one year (April 2015 - March 2016). She will work a minimum of 25 hours a week and her contract will be re-visited as resources become available.

Margo began working in the disability sector in the early 1990's. She has worked for small and large community organizations both in Winnipeg and rurally. Her experience also includes being the Executive Director of a provincial organization. Margo brings with her post-secondary education directly related to our sector and a passion for inclusion, equality, community living and quality of life.

The accomplishments we have achieved together over the last 12 months have been amazing – THANK YOU!!! The unprecedented support of the membership has been truly inspirational to your Executive Committee.

United we have a voice, we have power, and we have affected tangible change. I have every confidence that we will continue to accomplish even greater things on behalf of adults with intellectual disabilities in Manitoba as we move forward together into 2015-16.

Respectfully submitted,

Malinda Roberts  
President

**2014-2015 Executive Committee Members**

Malinda Roberts (President)

Jeannette DeLong (Vice-President)

Jennifer Hagedorn (Treasurer)

Maria Freeman (Secretary)

Oly Backstrom (Director)

Charmayne Dube (Director)

Wendy Kennedy (Director)

John Leggat (Director)





**ABILITIES MANITOBA INC.**

Statement of Revenues and Expenditures

For the Twelve Months from April 1 2014 to March 31 2015

	<b>Actual 2014/15</b>	<b>Budget 2014/15</b>	<b>Actual 2013/14</b>
<b>Revenue</b>			
AGM and Other Events	\$ 15,187	\$ 3,000	\$ 4,130
Memberships	4,775	7,000	5,100
Special Contributions	84,300	30,000	86,100
Bank Interest	541	135	133
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 104,804</b>	<b>\$ 40,135</b>	<b>\$ 95,463</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>			
AGM and Other Events	\$ 20,852	\$ 4,800	\$ 6,789
Honorariums / Donations	380	500	500
Constituencies Engagement	12,926	20,000	-
Project Group Contract	45,125	24,000	-
Staff Contract	25,606	22,400	33,017
Printing / Marketing	-	2,000	-
Office Expenses	336	1,000	389
Service Charges	20	20	18
Information Technology	1,937	5,000	580
Administrative Assistant	62		2,400
Executive Committee Travel	619	1,200	1,043
Contractor Travel	-	2,000	-
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 107,864</b>	<b>\$ 82,920</b>	<b>\$ 44,736</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>\$ (3,060)</b>	<b>\$ (42,785)</b>	<b>\$ 50,727</b>

**Bank**

March 31, 2015 Balance	\$	70,000.38
March 31, 2015 Balance Savings		10,440.20
<b>Total Cash</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>80,440.58</b>

**Abilities Manitoba 2015/2016**                      **Budget**  
**(without special projects)**                      **Annual**

AGM / Special Events	\$	16,000
Memberships		21,000
Special Contributions		80,000
Bank Interest		200
		<b>\$ 117,200</b>

AGM / Special Events	\$	10,000
Meeting Costs		10,000
Honorariums / Donations		500
Consultants		20,000
Staff Contract		48,000
Printing / Marketing		2,000
Office Supplies		1,500
Admin Costs		500
Technology		2,000
Executive Committee Travel		1,200
Stakeholder Engagement		14,500

Contractor Travel/Expenses	7,000
	<hr/>
	<b>\$ 117,200</b>
	<hr/>
	<b>\$ -</b>
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**Note:** Proposals have been submitted to Winnipeg Foundation and Manitoba Community Services Council for a special project.

This project if approved will have a separate budget. We are also submitting two proposals to CLdS that would have a significant impact on our activities and budget for this year.

### Slate of Nominations 2015-2016

Elections will be held at the **Abilities Manitoba Annual General Meeting April 23, 2015** in Winnipeg. Each agency that is a paid member is allowed one vote.

There are currently eight 2-year term executive positions.

**Current Executive:**

Malinda Roberts  
Jeannette Delong  
Maria Freeman  
Jennifer Hagedorn  
Oly Backstrom  
Wendy Kennedy  
John Leggat  
Charmayne Dubé

Winnserv Inc.  
enVision Community Living  
Community Living Selkirk  
Visions of Independence  
SCE Lifeworks  
Westman Opportunities  
St. Amant  
New Directions

President  
Vice President  
Secretary  
Treasurer  
Director at Large  
Director at Large  
Director at Large  
Director at Large

Jeannette DeLong, Jennifer Hagedorn, Oly Backstrom, Wendy Kennedy and John Leggat have one more year in their terms.

Malinda Roberts, Maria Freeman and Charmayne Dubé are completing their terms. Malinda will move to Past President which is a non-elected position. Maria has agreed to let her name stand for re-election while Charmayne will not stand for re-election.

Nominations are therefore open for 3 positions on the Executive Committee. The membership elects Directors to the Executive Committee. The new Executive Committee then elects Officers within the Executive after the AGM.

*The following people have been nominated for the Executive Committee:*

**Maria Freeman: Community Living Selkirk**

Maria Freeman is currently the Executive Director with Community Living Selkirk. In this role, she leads a team providing services in residential care, supported independent living, day service, community based skills program, respite and crisis supports. Outside of the service model she also works closely with her team to ensure their community has family outreach and to oversee the operation of 2 social enterprises with a focus on skill development leading to employment.

Maria has more than 20 years of experience in the Community Living sector and served as an executive member with Abilities quite a few years ago. Her passion for working together within the sector led her back to the Executive for her most recent term as secretary.

She believes that the work of Abilities Manitoba is instrumental in ensuring we have quality services and that working together as service providers will enhance the quality of lives for the people we support. Maria states she would be honoured to serve another term as an executive member if chosen by the membership.

**Audra Penner: ImagineAbility**

Audra Penner is President & CEO of ImagineAbility Inc. (formerly Versatech Industries), a non-profit day service organization that provides employment and recreational activities for persons labelled with intellectual or developmental disabilities in the Winnipeg Area.

Prior to joining ImagineAbility in May 2012, Audra worked for 16 years as a senior executive helping to refocus, redirect and rebuild companies and organizations

through clear and strategic thinking and a consensus building management style. She also has previous experience in public policy, education and fundraising. She enjoys bringing 'fresh eyes' to organizational challenges and working collaboratively with diverse stakeholders.

Audra is interested in participating on the Executive of Abilities Manitoba because she believes these are exciting times for our field. She would like to continue to help build on the incredible work that has been done so far and to work collaboratively with the Executive and Members of Abilities MB to effect sustainable and meaningful changes to services provided to Manitobans living with a Disability.

### **Ruby Reimer: Epic Opportunities**

Ruby Reimer is the Executive Director at Epic Opportunities in Winnipeg. Her leadership is focused on fulfilling the vision for all people to be valued and contributing members of the community. Her belief is that our communities are more beautiful, healthy and strong when diversity is embraced. She understands the challenges that exist in fulfilling this vision especially when resources are limited and common purpose sometimes strained by competing demands.

She comes with a solid background in both rural and urban settings and has experience in a wide variety of service areas such as day, residential, respite and outreach supports.

Prior to her work with Epic Opportunities from 2009 to present she worked in a variety of senior leadership roles with enVision Community Living in Steinbach from 1997 onwards.

Ruby is interested in participating on the Abilities MB Executive because she is passionately aligned with the priorities outlined in our action plan. She believes she can contribute to the work that is required to help fulfill these priorities. She is eager to participate at this new level due to the exciting work that lies ahead within our Province.

Nominations must be in writing (email will suffice) and consented to in writing by the nominee. Additional nominations may also be made from the floor, providing the person is present to agree to let their name stand. Please submit any further nominations to Charmayne Dubé at New Directions:

[Charmayne.dube@newdirections.mb.ca](mailto:Charmayne.dube@newdirections.mb.ca)

Thank you,

Charmayne Dubé, Michelle Hammond, Nancy Hughes & John Leggat  
Nomination Committee

