

Women’s Advisory Voice of Edmonton Committee - Appointment Recommendations

Public Members	Appointment Term
<p><u>Appointments (10)</u></p> <p>Sara Awatta Erika Eamer Saniya Ghalehdar Stella Igweamaka Laurence Jayawardane Cherie Klassen Nicole Rodriguez Jess Smith Jasmine Virk Candace Yung</p> <p><u>Alternate (1)</u> Trena MacGillivray</p>	<p>May 1, 2024 to April 30, 2026 May 1, 2024 to April 30, 2026 May 1, 2024 to April 30, 2026 May 1, 2024 to April 30, 2026 May 1, 2024 to April 30, 2026 May 1, 2024 to April 30, 2026 May 1, 2024 to April 30, 2026 May 1, 2024 to April 30, 2026 May 1, 2024 to April 30, 2026 May 1, 2024 to April 30, 2026</p>

New Appointee Biographies:

Sara Awatta

Sara Awatta is a social entrepreneur and an advocate for gender and racial equity, diversity, and community empowerment. She brings a wealth of experience in strategic planning, collaboration, and leadership to the Women's Advisory Voice of Edmonton Committee (WAVE). With a strong commitment to social inclusion and advancing opportunities for women and gender-diverse individuals, Sara has dedicated herself to creating safe spaces and promoting inclusive leadership in both professional and social settings. With a track record of collaborating with governments, NGOs, and community groups to research and provide recommendations for advancing economic opportunities for women, Sara is poised to make a significant impact on WAVE's initiatives and contribute to positive change in the Edmonton community.

Erika Eamer

Erika Eamer is a university student passionate about dismantling barriers to inclusivity, equity, and diversity across local, provincial, and institutional spheres; being motivated by love for her community and her desire to cultivate meaningful relationships with its inhabitants, Erika prioritizes being actively involved in her community through volunteering. With a focus on empowering women and gender-diverse students and individuals from other marginalized communities, Erika acts as one of twelve representatives for Albertan youth

Attachment 1

stakeholders and consistently utilizes her ability to analyze gender-based issues using a gender and equity lens as a member of the University of Alberta's WISEST (Women in Scholarship, Engineering, Science, and Technology) Youth Council. This analytical approach has enabled Erika to contribute meaningfully to discussions, propose effective solutions, and mediate opposing perspectives, skills she extends to her work as an operations coordinator with Superposition Toronto, a non-profit dedicated to bridging the gender gap in STEM.

Erika furthers her commitment to mobilizing others to effectively participate in society as an involved member and initiative lead of the City of Edmonton Youth Council. Having a core tenet of community, Erika is involved as a Reading Circle Volunteer for Edmonton Public Libraries/ United For Literacy and a volunteer at the Telus World of Science. Erika ultimately aims to continue to be involved in inspiring positive change and fostering a culture of inclusivity and collaboration, while contributing her passion, dedication, and adaptability.

Saniya Ghalehdar

Saniya Ghalehdar immigrated to Canada as a young child with her parents. She is proud of her Persian roots and so grateful to be Canadian. Saniya recently graduated from the University of British Columbia's Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Certificate Program. She is also a women's and gender studies major at Athabasca University and works for an Inclusive Leadership team at NorQuest College. She loves causes that help advance women's rights and marginalized communities, has a creative side, and a great love of the arts.

Stella Igweamaka

Originally from Nigeria, Stella Igweamaka is an award-winning market and social researcher. Stella is passionate about using research and storytelling for impactful change and was recently featured in CBC News for her work with Black Canadian Women in Action (BCW) on Adultification Bias of Black Girls in Canada. Stella holds an MBA from the University of Lagos, Nigeria and currently works at Servus Credit Union as a Senior Execution Consultant responsible for executing growth initiatives, notably focusing on programs such as "New to Canada" to service a critical segment of the market. In 2022, Stella collaborated with Pitch Better and Canadian's Women Foundation in conducting the first national survey for Black women entrepreneurs in Canada, and she has since then contributed to Philanthropist's journal as a writing fellow focused on the non-profit sector, where she adds a strong perspective of diversity, inclusion and belonging to the articles. In April 2024, Stella was recognized as a Young Impact Leader by Future of Good.

Laurence Jayawardane

Laurence Jayawardane identity is a rich tapestry woven from the diverse cultural threads of her French and Sri Lankan heritage. Navigating the complexities of her

Attachment 1

biracial roots and upbringing across multiple continents, her journey has endowed her with a profound understanding of the shared human experience and the nuanced interplay of cultural identities. Having returned to Edmonton after pursuing a career in geosciences internationally, she is now focusing on constructing a 3D model of the shallow geology beneath Edmonton, collaborating with the City of Edmonton (and others) to identify alternate water resources.

In addition to her professional endeavors, she is a passionate advocate for diversity and inclusion in STEM fields. As co-chair of her workplace's Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Reconciliation Committee, she tirelessly champions the elevation of underrepresented voices and the creation of more inclusive work environments. Choosing to make Edmonton her home, she has embarked on a journey to broaden her sense of community and actively participates in efforts to create a more equitable society, pursuing a Certificate in Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion from the University of British Columbia. She is not only a dedicated professional but also a compassionate advocate for positive change, inspiring those around her to strive for a more inclusive and equitable world.

Cherie Klassen

Cherie Klassen is a community builder and small business advocate with over 20 years' experience in communications and strategic business development. In addition, she's served in various capacities in her community league, business advisory boards, and political campaign teams.

As the executive director of the Old Strathcona Business Association (OSBA), Cherie leads the second largest business improvement area in the city. During her tenure at the OSBA, she has successfully led the association through a global pandemic, advocated for diversity and inclusion, and achieved gender parity on her board.

Cherie is an ally to the LGBTQ+ community, having raised two gender-diverse children, while also regularly advocating for LGBTQ+ rights and inclusion.

Nicole Rodriguez

Nicole Rodriguez is a dedicated professional with a diverse background spanning non-profit programming, government, post-secondary education, and women's health research. She completed her Masters in Medical Sciences from the University of Alberta, focusing her research on women's mental health and children's development. Nicole also conducts design thinking and entrepreneurship workshops as part of a city non-profit. Furthermore, she has previously served as a Career Advisor, facilitating career education services and work-integrated learning activities for university graduate students. Her experience in government involves projects supporting children's education and enhancing access to supports and services.

Jess Smith

Jess Smith (they/them) is a skilled project manager with experience working in the non-profit sector. As Manager of Commercialization and Operations for CUTRIC (Canadian Urban Transit Research & Innovation Consortium), a national non-profit organization that supports zero emission public transit initiatives, Jess uses their project management skills to advance the organization's goals in alignment with its core values of collaboration, innovation, and sustainability. In addition to their work in project management, Jess is also experienced in digital production and social media. They have used their content creation skills to assist 2SLGBTQ+ community members (including small businesses, non-profits, and entertainers) with their online presence. Jess is a detail-oriented individual who values structure and checklists. They have previously served on the boards of various organizations, including Halifax Pride, Fierté Canada Pride, Nova Scotia Rainbow Action Project, and East Coast Rainbow Softball Association.

Jasmine Virk

Jasmine Virk, a second-year honours nursing student at the University of Alberta, is a proud Sikh Indian woman with a deep commitment to amplifying marginalized voices. Rooted in her cultural heritage and personal experiences, Jasmine's journey is shaped by a profound sense of identity and a desire to advocate for those whose voices are often unheard. As a nursing student, Jasmine's passion for health care is imbued with sense empathy and cultural sensitivity, driven by her belief in the importance of holistic care that respects the diverse backgrounds and perspectives of patients. Her pride in her heritage fuels her dedication to advocating for inclusivity and representation, both within health care settings and society at large. Jasmine's journey is guided by her unwavering commitment to uplifting others and creating a world where every individual feels valued and heard. She has immersed herself in various volunteer and professional roles where she has served as a passionate advocate. Alongside her academic pursuits as a strong nursing student, she has dedicated her time to volunteering and working in numerous settings, amplifying marginalized voices and promoting inclusivity. Jasmine's diverse experiences have fueled her aspirations to seek out further opportunities for advocacy, driven by her unwavering commitment to making a positive impact in her community and beyond.

Candace Yung

Candace Yung is a passionate consultant, coach, and educator. She believes in the power of storytelling to deepen connections and help others find meaning in their experiences. Candace has spent her lifetime being an advocate for equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI), and leadership. Her mission is to help create inclusive environments where everyone feels safe, valued, and inspired to be and do their best. Candace has over 15 years of experience in learning and development; organizational development; and leadership development. In particular, she brings her unique perspectives to specialize in the intersection of EDI, leadership,

Attachment 1

organizational culture, employee engagement, instructional and graphic design, adult learning, and facilitation. Candace has developed and delivered custom solutions to hundreds of thousands of individuals, teams, organizations, and communities. Coupled with her years of experience, Candace also holds numerous degrees, designations, and certifications in psychology, EDI, leadership, coaching, change management, emotional intelligence, communication, mental health, and various psychometrics.

Trena MacGillivray (Alternate)

Trena MacGillivray is the Program Coordinator for the City of Edmonton's Problem Property Initiative. She has over twenty years of experience in law enforcement, including over a decade as a Sergeant with the City of Edmonton Peace Officers Unit. Trena holds a Bachelor of Professional Arts in Criminal Justice. Throughout her career, she has worked to promote a safe and inclusive city for all Edmontonians, all the while championing gender equality and representation within the law enforcement field. As a former Co-Chair for the Women@theCity Employee Resource Network, Trena helped to plan and execute multiple events to celebrate International Women's Day and Gender Equality Week. For this work, her team was recognized with the City's Cultural Commitment Spirit Award. As a volunteer with the Girl Guides of Canada, Trena has mentored and empowered girls to reach their full leadership and decision-making potential to become everything they want to be. In her free time, Trena enjoys traveling, skiing and spending time with her family.