

OCTOBER 2020



NEWSLETTER

President's Message

Hear from our stalwart leader, Brenda Christie, about PMAST's focus in the dynamic and unique environment of 2020. Pg 2

Meet the Board

Each month you'll meet a different member of our Board, which has some new faces and talent. Pg 4

Program Update

An update from our Program Director Flo Lye on page 5.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Join us on October 15th at 6pm for our AGM, at Last Best Brewing in Calgary or via Zoom link. Registration required.



WINE SURVIVOR

The rules could not get any simpler!

1. Purchase a ticket for \$40 (\$20 for buy-in + \$20 for a bottle of wine).
2. Wait for our AGM on Oct 15th where the last 5 tickets drawn are winners!
3. Put in another \$5 for a one-time immunity. We put your ticket back into the draw after being picked.

For tickets or info call (587) 333 1353, email Brenda@pmast.org, or go to <http://bit.ly/pmast-wine>

OUR COMMITMENT TO RACIAL JUSTICE AND EQUITY

Many of the young people who participate in our programs, and their families, are likely to have been victims of racism, including from their peers.

At PMAST, we do not feel this is in any way acceptable and we seek to encourage young people to embrace their differences and learn from the diversity of thought and experience they all bring to the table. Our programs are focused on helping equip young people with the tools to

communicate, manage conflict and advocate for themselves in situations where they may feel discriminated against, and to learn about how they may hurt others through their words and actions.

All PMAST programs go beyond inclusiveness and acceptance. We work with our key partners, schools and teachers to better understand how young people may be impacted by racism and we are actively reviewing where there is an opportunity to embed further support on topics like unconscious bias into our programming.

All this work goes on, regardless of the pandemic, as we prepare to get back into schools and communities eventually.

The importance of our work follows our belief that providing youth and families with proactive skills to handle conflict reduces bullying, violence, stress and issues affecting emotional and mental wellbeing. This has never been more critical than right now. The recent suicide of a 15-year-old Chestermere student, due to bullying, is devastating and cannot be allowed to continue. The fact that the bullying was so severe, even when school was not in session - that it was so overwhelming - just demonstrates how crucial it is that we effect change to teach these students how to deal with conflict, how not to be a victim or a bully, especially on social media. They all need these skills. Each youth we lose is one too many!



MEET THE BOARD



THE PRESIDENT: BRENDA CHRISTIE

Brenda is the current sitting president of PMAST. She comes from humble beginnings in rural Alberta. From a young age, she inherited an interest to be involved in youth development from her mother's example. She joined Community Mediation Calgary and was a founding member of a youth project in 1999, which would become PMAST. Since the beginning she has held many offices with PMAST Board of Directors, and her vision of what PMAST should be in order to provide a service so critical to youth and their families, keeps her on track to try and reach those goals. Her energy is fuelled by seeing the lives that have changed, the youth who have turned their lives around to become happy, well-functioning members of society.

We caught up with Brenda to ask her a few questions about herself and her position. Here's what she had to say!

Is your glass half full or half empty?

Mine is more than half full

Do you have a "motto" – spoken or unspoken?

A favorite is "the greatest miracle is to change the life of a child"

Why did you join PMAST?

I have always liked to work with children and youth. When I took the mediation/negotiation program at U of C I had already raised two sons on my own and it was not easy. It made me realize how different it could have been if I had these skills then and how it could help other families.

Where do you see PMAST in five years?

In five years we should be recognized as the mark of excellence for programs necessary for all children and youth. Recognition also by the provincial government and partial funding to provide the program in all junior and senior high schools in the province.

What three items would you take with you on a deserted island? A friend, a good book and my music.

If you were ruler of your own country what would be the first law you would introduce? That every child and youth would receive our programs and as many parents as we could bring in.



Peacebuilding Skills for Youth, Families & Communities

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

COVID-19 has hit us all and totally changed how we live, learn and play; PMAST is no exception. Our programs in Good Shepherd School in Airdrie (see page 3 to learn more about our impact there last year) and Nelson Mandela High School in Calgary ground to a halt as schools suddenly closed. Our pilot program for Connected Families in Airdrie was ready to go but had to be put on hold, as were all programming initiatives. These projects remain on hold until such time as gatherings are permitted and we are allowed back in schools.

Our fund-raising projects were also all cancelled. The raffle which was underway for a Calgary Flames hockey jersey and a pair of hockey tickets had to be terminated when the hockey schedule was cancelled. Our spring comedy night was also cancelled which meant no 50/50 draw or silent auction. These were all funds which went towards our Birdies for Kids Campaign which would have netted us an additional 50%. Our last casino was September 2019 and we are unclear as to when our next one can be scheduled. This has all had a significant impact on our ability to plan programming and adapt our approach as needed for this unique school year. We are trying to be creative with on-line fund-raising, and appreciate any support that you're able to give through those channels.

On the positive side, however, this time has brought forward new talent and vigour to our board, and an opportunity to get them all trained and revamp our committees and governance. We have put together a remarkable Board of Directors who have worked tirelessly to make the best use of this downtime. You will meet them throughout the next few newsletters.

Thanks to this Dream Team we have been working on the following projects:

Our Articles of Association have been completely rewritten and are ready for acceptance at our AGM on October 15th. PMAST's Strategic Plan has been redrafted and is ready for final approval.

A Board Training and Development Workshop was necessary to bring our new board together and ensure building organizational capacity to meet our future needs.

We have a brand new Promotional Committee looking at revamping our graphics, design, messaging and channels to build better awareness and clarity around our work.

We have a refreshed social media strategy and active presence on Facebook to start, and other channels to follow.

A new website will be rolled out within the next month.

Our Fundraising Committee has been working hard to find creative ways to raise funds online, including our online 50/50, Wine Survivor and Online Auction – visit our website for more info!

We are working with other community service providers to develop community programming and online training at this time.

**All the best,
Brenda**

UNITED WAY CAMPAIGN

It's that time of year again when fund raising campaigns are going on in Calgary for the United Way. On the bottom of the manual donation card there is a place where you can specify the name of the charity you want to receive your donation. In order for your donations to come to PMAST, write PEER MEDIATION AND SKILLS TRAINING in that box and the money will make its way to us.

VOICE FROM THE SCHOOLS: PMAST'S IMPACT ON MY STUDENTS



ELIZABETH BENNETT

Principal of Good Shepherd School, Airdrie

In the dozen or more years that I have participated as a board member of PMAST, I have been repeatedly astounded at the amazing work that this team has accomplished with various communities and with a growing number of schools. The dedication to building programs that support youth is truly amazing.

Youth Empowerment Skills (YES) Training

This 6-8 week workshop was completed with a class of 25 students at this school in 2019. This pilot program supports youth in understanding gender difference and approaches to dealing with conflict and disputes. Practical skills are shared to help participants reduce bullying and tension in their social environments. The program builds respect, compassion, empathy and resiliency as life-long skills.

This workshop is also designed to support culturally diverse populations and English Language Learners in order to assist students in recognizing social diversity within families and communities.

The YES Program provided significant learning for our students. Feedback from our students included:

- Understanding the importance of creating relationships.
- Understanding 'healthy vs un-healthy'
- Being able to solve problems / arguments with others in an easier way; listening and understanding before reacting helped me to understand others and their situation finding out that I'm not alone, some people's problems were bigger than mine we can find solutions without making it a big deal.

CURRENT FUNDRAISING UPDATES



COMEDY NIGHT IS COMING TO YOU!

There are a multitude of ways to give back to your community and one of amazing option is to train to be a comedian and perform it in front of your loved ones! PMAST is on the recruit for aspiring comics to register and come on board. Check our website for tickets to the upcoming live show via Zoom! Register at arrowcomedytraining.com/standup

THE 50/50 RAFFLE

TEST YOUR LUCK, WILL YOU WIN?

Here's the deal: the jackpot is up to \$20,000. The winner will be going home with half! Ticket prices are such:

- X1 = \$10
- X4 = \$20
- X20 = \$50
- X100 + \$100

Purchase your tickets at <https://rafflebox.ca/raffle/pmast>. Ticket sales are ending on Oct 19 with the draw will be on Oct 23! Join in the fun!



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

PMAST
PEER MEDIATION AND SKILLS TRAINING
Peacebuilding Skills for Youth, Families & Communities

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

October 15th, 2020 at 6:00 pm
Come on out and enjoy an evening with us!

Attendees Welcome at Event (subject to health regs) or on-line
Registration is required on-line at pmast.org
Further information will be provided after registration.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION DAY (CRD) 2020 TRAINING
will be hosted Live at the event after the AGM.

This year's topic is:
"The Art of Listening"



PEER MEDIATION AND SKILLS TRAINING

Peacebuilding Skills for Youth, Families & Communities

A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL OUR SPONSORS!

