Board of Directors Applicant Bios

- The POUNDS Project Society: November 2026 AGM

Name: Mandy Cormier

What motivates you to be a board member for the POUNDS Project Society? (Statement of interest):
Over the past decade, Mandy has dedicated her career to supporting Indigenous communities across British Columbia, the Northwest Territories, and New Zealand through leadership, community development, mental wellness, and addictions recovery. With experience in senior leadership roles, including Director of Nation Operations, Health Director, and Advisor, she brings a strong understanding of community needs, strategic planning, and collaborative leadership. Her work has involved building meaningful partnerships with First Nations leadership, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, community members, and government partners to advance culturally grounded programs and initiatives.
Mandy remains committed to strengthening communities through prevention, early intervention, cultural revitalization, and land-based wellness initiatives that honor knowledge and lived experience. She believes in the importance of community-driven decision-making, inclusive engagement, and building long-term capacity to support the well-being of individuals. As a candidate for re-election to the Board of Directors, she brings a continued commitment to thoughtful leadership, meaningful collaboration, and advancing initiatives that reflect the values, priorities, and aspirations of the communities she serves.

Do you have previous board experience?
Over 4 years of Board Governance experience, including a Board President, Treasurer and Secretary position for non-profit organizations.

Specific areas of relevant experience or interest:
-Experience: community engagement, health equity and social justice, Indigenous rights, advocacy and public policy.

-Interest:

Human resources, Substance use, Mental Health and Wellness, Harm Reduction, Indigenous Rights, Community Stakeholder engagement, Governance and Leadership, Strategic Planning, Health Equity and Social Justice, Advocacy and Public Policy.

Board of Directors Applicant Bios
The POUNDS Project Society: November 2026 AGM

Name: Alex McNight

What motivates you to be a board member for the POUNDS Project Society? (Statement of interest):
Alex began her career in frontline work at Two Doors Down with the Pounds Project Society in 2021, eventually leading her into a community outreach position at AWAC. Drawing on her own lived experience with substance use and survival, Alex now serves as lead on AWAC's Willow Project: a youth program where she draws on that lived experience to support and divert young people trapped in or at risk of sexual exploitation and substance use, as well as leveraging her own experience as a survivor to educate and advise professionals and institutions on how to address sex trafficking and exploitation at a systemic level. Alex has immense gratitude for the Pounds Project and the role it played in her personal journey. She joined the board in 2025 with the hope of giving back and furthering the mission of the Pounds Project, in which she still passionately believes.

Do you have previous board experience? Yes. Alex currently serves the Board as the Secretary.

Specific areas of relevant experience or interest:
-Experience: Substance use, mental health and wellness, harm reduction, advocacy and public policy, education and training.

-Interest: to help.

Board of Directors Applicant Bios

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Name: Auroara Leigh

What motivates you to be a board member for the POUNDS Project Society? (Statement of interest):

Auroara is seeking to join the POUNDS Board because of a strong belief in the dignity of all people and the importance of creating communities where individuals feel safe, valued, connected, and supported. Auroara's values closely align with POUNDS' commitment to harm reduction, peer leadership, and community care. Throughout her career, she has focused on addressing the root causes of human suffering, including trauma, systemic inequities, Indigenous-specific racism, mental health challenges, and the social conditions that shape wellbeing. Her work in education, healthcare, anti-racism initiatives, and community development has centered on challenging harmful narratives, advancing systems change, and fostering more inclusive and equitable responses to complex social issues.

A key theme throughout her experience is a trauma-informed belief in meeting people where they are at and recognizing that adversity, poverty, trauma, and disconnection can profoundly influence a person's life. Auroara advocates for looking beyond individual circumstances to understand the broader systems and conditions affecting people, while supporting opportunities for safety, belonging, healing, self-determination, and dignity. She hopes to contribute strategic leadership, community partnerships, advocacy, and long-term sustainability to POUNDS, while ensuring that people with lived and living experience remain at the center of decision-making. She also expresses humility and a commitment to continued learning, particularly from people who are unhoused or precariously housed and from frontline staff supporting them every day.

Do you have previous board experience? Fireweed Women's Society, Spinoza Foundation, BC Human Trafficking Response Society

Specific areas of relevant experience or interest:

-Experience: Fundraising, substance use, mental health and wellness, Indigenous Rights, community engagement, governance and leadership, program development, strategic planning, health equity and social justice, education and training.

-Interest: Human resources, harm reduction, organizational development, legal and compliance, advocacy and public policy.

Board of Directors Applicant Bios

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Name: Emily Christensen-Sweeney

What motivates you to be a board member for the POUNDS Project Society? (Statement of interest):

Emily has been working with and for people who use substances for the past 9 years. She has had the honour of leading the PG Community Action Team for the past 4 years. Through this we have led peer initiatives, provided harm reduction and overdose response training across the community, and have supported local peers and peer organizations to fostering employment and connection for people who use drugs. Emily is a huge fan and supporter of the POUNDS Project and its ability to provide low barrier, non-stigmatizing access to health, wellness and cultural services for individuals needing support. She believes her experience, knowledge, passion, and compassion would be assets for the POUNDS Board.

Do you have previous board experience? No

Specific areas of relevant experience or interest:

-Experience: Substance use, mental health and wellness, harm reduction, community engagement, governance and leadership, program development, grant writing, health equity and social justice, advocacy and public policy.

-Interest: Helping in any way that may serve the organization.