



# **ANNUAL REPORT**

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01/04/2021 -  
31/03/2022

# Board of Directors

Dymphny Dronyk - President  
Terry Avramneko - Vice President  
Ahmed Mushtaq - Treasurer  
Meghan Maiani - Secretary  
Josh Naud - Board Member  
Kimber Pipella - Board Member  
Harvey Olsen - Board Member  
Bevin Wiley - Board Member  
Charles Lewis - Board Member

# SABIS Staff

Shane Rempel - Executive Director  
Annalise Harris - Director of Operations  
Haley Christensen - Program Manager  
Christine Verdone - Service Coordinator

# A Message from the Executive Director

As I write this, I find myself 10 months into my role as Executive Director with the Southern Alberta Brain Injury Society. It has been a full 10 months, to say the least. While some challenges inevitably emerged, this time has been fulfilling and rewarding for me, and I hope that has translated into fulfilment for our team here, our board, and most importantly the folks who we serve.

Over the course of the past year we have been focused on curiosity and learning. We have learned the power of dignity, and how every interaction with someone is an opportunity to uphold their dignity. We have learned the power of resilience, and how truly powerful the human spirit can be, despite various obstacles. We have learned the importance of belonging, and how that sense of belonging can often be the missing piece in life's complex puzzle. Most importantly, we have been reminded that things very rarely exist in a silo. The importance of taking an intersectional approach to meeting the needs of those we work to support is paramount to truly meeting them where they're at.

So much has occurred over the past ten months. We've seen staffing changes, funding challenges (and opportunities), strengthened community connections, more individuals engaging with SABIS and our services, and moments which are hard to quantify in a report such as this. Below I will share some highlights of the months leading up to the end of the fiscal year (March 31st, 2022).

SABIS is the nucleus in the journey of supports for brain injury survivors. Being a central figure, we felt it was important to strengthen our community connections with our system partners, and as a result, we have seen increased engagement both from clients as well as partners. We will continue to focus on this, as we must ensure that we are remaining relevant both to those who need our support and those who rely on us to help with those they are supporting.

We have also connected with funders in a meaningful way. With receiving new funding from the Calgary Foundation to help support ongoing operations, we are well supported and stable into the next fiscal year. We have been engaged with provincial efforts shaping the Brain Injury Policy in Alberta, including participation in province-wide discussions focused on enhancing outcomes for brain injury survivors. This has given us line of sight to ensure that our strategic direction is aligned with others within our broader network, leaning in on best/next practice.

# A Message from the Executive Director

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We have also been working on establishing partnerships to support the promotion of our services, awareness of brain injury and its effects, and relationships that may lead to opportunities for funding or support. We have engaged with both the public sector and the private sector, and we have some exciting collaborations coming down the line.

Finally, in the past year, we dedicated some focus to defining our purpose. Purpose, to an organization like SABIS, is the guiding light, or the reason we exist. Our purpose should permeate everything we do, and as such, we should be upholding this in all of our actions. SABIS' purpose is to **make life easier for brain injury survivors and their supporters**. We achieve this by building upon the strengths and resiliency of the over 200 brain injury survivors we support, while embedding dignity in our work and promoting a sense of belonging.

While all of this is great and exciting, I feel outcomes for those who we serve are most important. Which is why we developed a mechanism to gauge how well supported our clients feel. I am pleased to report that we have seen tremendously positive feedback, and our most recent data shows 90% of folks surveyed indicated that SABIS has positively influenced their sense of independence and improved their sense of belonging, while 95% said that SABIS has increased their awareness of, and/or connection to, community supports, and that their overall sense of wellbeing has improved since working with SABIS. And, true to our newly-defined purpose, 95% of those surveyed indicated that SABIS has made their life easier.

I am proud of this organization, and I am proud of our incredible team. Small yet mighty (as I say), I know that we are making a difference in the lives of those who we serve, and while their journeys may still be full of uncertainty and challenges, we will do our best to smooth the path ahead and take this journey alongside them in hopes of making their lives easier. I'm grateful that we have your support on our journey, too.



Shane Rempel,  
Executive Director



# A Message from the Board President

The past twelve months have been a journey of regrouping, taking stock, and working through a long and vital list of tasks so that we can focus on the path ahead with a renewed purpose and a clear vision. Our role as the Board is to understand and support the work of our amazing staff, and to ensure that our governance systems, such as the Society Bylaws and the Policy Manual are up-to-date and fit for purpose.

As is the case for so many organizations and the folks who do frontline work, the pandemic created an environment of relentless change and adaptation, including virtual service offerings and creative supports that protected the safety of our clients and our staff.

I believe organizations can survive just about any challenge if there is genuine, responsive teamwork, which, in the case of a board and a staff, is best managed through a cohesive and trusting relationship between the Executive and the Executive Director.

Shane Rempel, our ED, has proven to be a proactive and transparent communicator, and as a result, the Board was able to support the staff through numerous nimble responses to the ongoing challenges of the pandemic as well as fiscal challenges such as not being able to conduct the casino fundraiser critical to our budget for two consecutive years.

Less than a year after Shane joined our team, SABIS is not just surviving, but thriving. We have renewed and built important partner and community relationships, refocused on how to best serve our clients in an inclusive and intersectional ways, and been an essential voice in shaping the provincial approach to the Brain Injury Policy.

As a board we have also focused on ensuring that we are building a long-term, active, and informed team that embraces the necessities of succession planning and board renewal. We have dedicated ourselves to recruiting brilliant board members and understanding all the ways the board can best uphold the hard work of our staff.

We have also analyzed how to improve and update our governance documents and are now ready to ratify our new and improved Bylaws at this AGM.

# A Message from the Board President

-Continued-

We are excited to continue to support the staff through the next year as our world slowly, safely, and surely gets back to normal – or perhaps, to describe it more accurately – the New Normal. For example, we were recently able to collectively respond to an unexpected invitation to host a casino fundraiser. In less than two weeks everyone worked together to fill the 30 positions required to host a casino. Truly an example of tenacity, generosity, and teamwork. Thank you to everyone who volunteered.

The SABIS Board hereby expresses our ongoing gratitude and admiration for our cheerful, resourceful, empathetic, hardworking staff. And as President, I would also like to extend hugs and high fives to the Board members for their dedication, grace, curiosity, wise insights, and good humor.

Regards,  
Dymphny Droynk



A picture from our group room showcasing art created by SABIS program participants

## Messages from our Program Manager and Director of Operations

Throughout 2021-2022 SABIS continued supporting and meeting our participants where they are at in their journey through numerous adaptations already mentioned by our Program Manager, Haley.

In addition to the challenges presented by the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, SABIS said goodbye to some long-term staff and welcomed new staff members including our Executive Director, Shane; Service Coordinator, Christine; and Program Manager, Haley, to the SABIS team. Our team is stronger than ever as we launch exciting new initiatives including the Lived Experience Advisory Panel (LEAP) and a 1:1 Peer Mentor program lead by a volunteer with lived experience.

There has been an overall increase in applications and new participants accessing SABIS supports and we are now noticing participants accessing one of the supports that makes SABIS unique, lifelong support. As their circumstances change, particularly with aging out of financial support programs, SABIS is welcoming back former participants and supporting them in accessing resources they are now eligible for.

As we move forward, we are excited to continue on our journey of growth while increasing visibility and awareness of brain injury and SABIS in the community.

- Anna, Director of Operations

Throughout the Covid-19 Pandemic, we have seen resilience, kindness and hope from SABIS' participants, staff, and the community at large.

Despite the ongoing challenges and the resulting adaptations SABIS implemented, we were met with an understanding and willingness from the folks we work with. It was because of this that we were able to continue to support our participants through largely virtual service coordination, meetings, and groups.

I would like to extend a thank you to everyone for choosing to continue their journey with SABIS during this time. As 2022 continues, it is with great excitement that we are returning to in-person services to support our participants in reaching their goals, creating connections, and accessing resources in the community.

- Haley, Program Manager



Haley (left) & Anna (right) in our group room

# Thanks for Your Support!

SABIS Could not do what we do to make life easier for brain injury survivors and their supporters without a little bit of help from our own supporters.

We are so grateful for every form of support we receive, whether from a grant or funding, or in the form of volunteerism or a donation, every little helps in a big way.

## 2021 Donors

Brian Beck  
Lloyd Crosby  
Trevor Swatzky  
Patricia Jones  
Judy Paisley  
Artin Ashraf  
Lloyd Crosby  
Andrea Paisley

Rod Rempel  
Alan Glover  
Anthony Reimer  
Anonymous  
Ian McKinnon  
Amanda Cram  
The Winnifred Griffith Legacy Fund  
Erin Woodward

## Grants & Support



# Our Amazing Volunteers

Edith Baker  
Brian Stanko  
Tara Paisley  
Aeliot Blackwell  
Stephanie Barrett  
Jesse Harris  
Anita Gaylard  
Roberta Harris  
Kevin Schwaiger

Jeff Justason  
Megan Justason  
Elizabeth Mackay  
Dymphny Dronyk  
Josh Naud  
Ahmed Mushtaq  
Meghan Maiani  
Terry Avramenko

Kimber Pipella  
Harvey Olsen  
Charles Lewis  
Susan Mate  
Allison Parder  
Megan Rutledge  
Kelly Bishop  
Byron Thompson  
Luanne Whitmarsh



**SOUTHERN ALBERTA BRAIN INJURY SOCIETY**  
**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION**  
**AS AT MARCH 31, 2022**

	2022	2021
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>CURRENT</b>		
Cash	\$ 189,658	\$ 128,591
Donations and fundraising revenues receivable	-	7,491
Goods and services tax recoverable	1,299	1,234
Prepaid expenses and deposits (Note 3)	7,738	13,252
	<b>198,695</b>	<b>150,568</b>
<b>CAPITAL ASSETS (Note 4)</b>	<b>14,730</b>	<b>17,981</b>
	<b>\$ 213,425</b>	<b>\$ 168,549</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
<b>CURRENT</b>		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities (Note 5)	\$ 17,982	\$ 11,513
Government remittances payable	7,804	6,047
Advances from the Alberta Minister of Human Services (Note 5)	50,765	45,910
Deferred revenue (Note 6)	68,075	57,721
	<b>144,626</b>	<b>121,191</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		
<b>UNRESTRICTED</b>	<b>68,799</b>	<b>47,358</b>
	<b>\$ 213,425</b>	<b>\$ 168,549</b>

**SOUTHERN ALBERTA BRAIN INJURY SOCIETY**  
**STATEMENT OF REVENUES and EXPENSES and**  
**CHANGES in NET ASSETS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 , 2022**

	2022	2021
<b>REVENUES</b>		
Alberta Minister of Human Services (Note 5)	\$ 357,391	\$ 272,083
Donations and fundraising	33,062	24,182
Grants (Note 6)	66,672	17,279
Advertising	3,225	-
Records transfer fees	240	-
Memberships	100	50
Government COVID assistance	53	7,431
Raffle funds (Note 6)	-	-
	<b>460,743</b>	<b>321,025</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Direct program costs	332,975	271,865
Rent (Note 7)	60,027	67,928
Office and administrative	40,172	44,002
Fundraising	355	2,270
Amortization	5,773	4,679
	<b>439,302</b>	<b>390,744</b>
<b>EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES</b> before the following	<b>21,441</b>	<b>(69,719)</b>
<b>LOSS ON DEPOSIT (Note 3)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>10,250</b>
<b>EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES</b>	<b>21,441</b>	<b>(79,969)</b>
<b>NET ASSETS, beginning of year</b>	<b>47,358</b>	<b>127,327</b>
<b>NET ASSETS, end of year</b>	<b>\$ 68,799</b>	<b>\$ 47,358</b>

## **A Word From Aeliot**

My name is Aeliot Blackwell. I have been going to SABIS since spring of 2000. It has turned out to be a wonderful experience and very personally meaningful to me. The staff at SABIS have always and continue to be very caring and helpful to all brain injury survivors. I continue to be a part of the support groups. There is no other place that I could ever find where I can just be totally myself with other survivors.

When I first started going to SABIS, I was very anxious as to my loss of income due to having lost another job because of my disability. My coordinator at the time helped me apply for AISH and have been on it ever since. I was a long time volunteer for the Walk n Roll event that used to be in June every year. Both myself and another volunteer were always at the halfway point to re-direct participants for the walk. I especially enjoyed talking to everyone. I was interviewed once by Andrew Schultz at Global TV during Brain Injury Awareness Week. I have also volunteered once when there was an event for brain injury awareness at Eau Claire and continue to volunteer for SABIS fundraising at the casinos.

I have been singing with a community choir for 40 years. I have been on the volunteer board for many years and am the Engagements Coordinator for the choir to sing at seniors residences throughout Calgary.

I also am an abstract amateur artist. I was one of 24 artists that were a part of a project titled "A Meaningful Life". We were asked to make an art piece that represented our individual meaningful life. In my case, it was music so I made the abstract version of notes, a drum and a piano. There was a reception to unveil the sculpture that combined all of our pieces and I was asked to say a few words on behalf of the artists. The sculpture is now housed at the Alberta Legislature in Edmonton.

Below is a photograph of Christine, one of our Service Coordinators, holding up a replica of the sculpture that Aeliot contributed to.



**Thank you to Aeliot, and all of our program participants/clients, their supporters, our supporters, our system partners, our funders, our volunteers, our board, and our community at large.**

**We look forward to another year of *making life easier for brain injury survivors and their supporters.***