



BoardVoice

Leadership. Collaboration. Community.

Board Voice Society of BC – AGM 2018 Nominees for the Board

Ernest Freeman, Fort St. John, BC
Home Board: Community Bridge

Growing up in Northern BC, I have seen major changes in how people manage their lives within the resource sector, myself included. I have recently retired from contracting with WorkBC, helping to find employment opportunities with specialized population groups that face disability related issues. I started on my social work degree over 20 years ago after two separate careers in the aviation and energy sectors. I was fascinated on how quality of life issues could have a dramatic impact on people's lives in regard to the economic implications of resource-based industries.

During my time at UNBC I also started training to work with the deaf community and spent two years in the Lower Mainland obtaining language skills to use American Sign Language with my clients. I continue to help connect people to the resources they require, and help to build strong communities. I'm on the board of Community Bridge, a non-profit organization that provides programs to build healthy families. Other boards that I continue to be engaged with include those that provide environmental education programs, and programs to help women overcome addictions, as well as issues with senior housing. Due to my past work in the energy sector, I also volunteer to assist the government in finding solutions to help build electric vehicle charging infrastructure in Northern British Columbia. Locally I also help design solar electric systems.

Due to the diverse skill set I have obtained over the years working in the North as well as personally navigating the health care and social systems put in place to help people in need (myself included, during a difficult time handling cancer treatment and recovery) I feel I may be an asset to Board Voice and the people we serve. I look forward to further discussions and dialogue.

Ajit Mehat, Surrey, BC
Home Board: BC Association of Community Response Networks

I have a long career in leadership in both the public and private sectors, with a record of formulating strategic directions, developing key policy initiatives, and building stakeholder consensus for innovation. I have a lifelong commitment to social justice issues, including approximately 15 years of experience with Human Rights Commissions at the provincial and federal levels. My personal life and my career are guided by a core belief that the foundation of our social bond is predicated on our commitment to address the needs and aspirations of marginalized individuals and communities. In this context, I have had the privilege of playing a leadership role at the national level on access to justice initiatives with the Department of Justice and elsewhere, in matters related to workplace health and safety.

I am the Founder and Principle Consultant of Ajit Mehat & Associates and, prior to this, held diverse leadership roles with the Department of Human Resources and Skills Development, the Workers Compensation Board of BC, the Department of Health, the Department of Canadian Heritage, and the Department of Secretary of State.

I would like to join the Board Voice Board of Directors because a vibrant Canada rests on three key pillars: a strong and energetic social services sector; an innovative and dynamic private sector; and, an impartial and trusted public sector. The Board Voice is a crucial institution advocating on behalf of social services boards and helping them to understand the changing environment in which they deliver valued services. Working in collaboration with others on the Board, I would welcome an opportunity to make a contribution to that endeavour.