



ANNUAL REPORT 2021

Life After Stroke

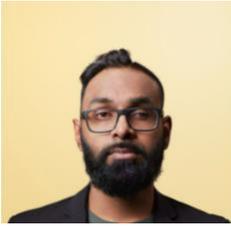
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BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Chairperson
Sajeevan Eswarakumar



Vice Chairperson
Dr. Prasaanthan
Gopee-Ramanan



Public Relations
Athanasious Nous



Treasurer
James Pyo



Secretary
Gina Srighanthan

Who We Are

Life After Stroke (LAS) is a Canadian non-profit organization that creates a positive and supportive environment to assist young brain injury survivors (YBIS) as they move forward with their lives. YBIS often face a tremendous uphill battle and adjustment period to find a new normal given their recent physical, mental, and psychological challenges.

Life After Stroke is a platform for young brain injury survivors to build relationships, exchange resources and support each other in overcoming obstacles in their journey to recovery.

Mission Statement

To provide a hub for Young Brain Injury Survivors (YBIS) that grants access to a network of other survivors, diverse support avenues, financial aid, YBIS information, and resources along the road to recovery.

- Encourage YBIS to move forward with their lives by offering access and guidance around necessary post-injury support and resources
- Facilitate and support connections among YBIS communities Canada-wide and internationally
- Create support for caregivers and family member designates to help work with YBIS to accomplish their personal goals
- Increase awareness about YBIS and address any associated stigma throughout Canada
- Inform families of fundraising opportunities that will help support and subsidize any external resources required to carry out a survivor's goals

OUR TEAM (2020-2021)

VOLUNTEERS

Administration

Brathis Rajamogan
Coordinator

Akila Tavarasa
Coordinator

Anna Hardie
Coordinator

Marketing

TJ Caluducan
Coordinator

Adithyan Ranjan
Coordinator

Adriana Sisto
Coordinator

Sajeevan Sujanthan
Brand Marketing Coordinator

Support Group

Julie Tomaino
Administrator

Marie Choi
Coordinator

Rachel Dinoff
Coordinator

Evita Argonza
Associate

Finance/Accounting

Vik Rallan
Coordinator

Karen Xu
Coordinator

Lynn Yue
Coordinator

Fundraising

David Lim
Coordinator

Kiera McWatt
Coordinator

Amanda Carnahan
Coordinator

General Support

Mario Bottoni

Lauren Pickel

Muhaimen Siddiqui

Elizabeth Colleran

Newsletter Editor-in Chief

Laavanya
Dharmakulaseelan

Grace Lee

PARTNERS



The Tamil Association of
Residents and Medical
Students (TARMS)



Ella Sofia
Retrain Your Brain

SPONSORS




Pacific Heartwood
Steve Leonardo



David Kolbasovsky

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

SAJEEVAN ESWARAKUMAR

Organization Overview

- Board of Directors: 5 volunteers including 2 survivors
- 11 volunteers onboarded in the first call for applicants
- An additional 6 volunteers in the second call
- 5 additional volunteers onboarded
- 15 active volunteers
- 3 members
- 2 partners
- 2 sponsors

Online Presence

- 116 Members on the LAS Facebook group
 - 562 Facebook Likes
- 2,836 Instagram Followers

Startup Overview

- Accountant consulting fees: \$734
- Lawyer on retainer: \$1000
 - Setup fees pending
- Copywriter: \$1000 per month
- Web hosting: \$355.61
- All costs covered by the Chairman and Vice Chairman

Ongoing Initiatives

- Support group: Hold monthly virtual meetings open to survivors across the world; advertised through LAS social media accounts, personal contacts and the LAS support group Facebook page (currently has 121 members)
- Fitness Challenge: fundraising initiative for LAS
- Webstore: Sells LAS apparel. Available sales channels are as follows:
 - Shopify website
 - LAS website
 - Instagram
 - Facebook
- Working towards applying for charity status

- Building an online presence (through content/regular posting & search engine optimization (SEO))
- Building processes & embedding controls through the creation of standard operating procedures and defined roles.

Timeline

- November 2019: First meeting
- July 2020: Registered as a nonprofit
- November 2020: First volunteer call out
- December 2020: Web store launched
- January 2021: First partnership
- January 2021: First virtual support group meeting
- February 2021: First sponsorship

VICE-CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

DR. PRASAANTHAN GOPEE-RAMANAN

Role

- To assist the Chairperson in fulfilling the mission, vision, and mandate of LAS during the term
- To facilitate team collaboration, communication, and seamless functioning
- To support select projects with greater involvement as needed

Tasks Managed in Year 1

- Facilitating recruitment of initial round of volunteers through helping establish process and protocol for documentation of selection criteria, posting of roles, vetting of candidates, and review of applications
- Assisted with strategic early sponsor- and partnership outreach
- Helped secure Pacific Heartwood as Sponsor
- Helped secure Tamil Association of Residents and Medical Students (TARMS) as Partner
- Explored new avenues for sustainable ongoing Fundraising
- Liaised with Fundscrip to open account and set up ongoing means of garnering small volume funds
- Initiated LAS Newsletter and oversaw the creation of the Newsletter Guidelines, first edition, and building of team
 - Finalized Newsletter Operating Guidelines Document in January 2021
 - Inaugural edition released March 1, 2021, cycle of release 3x/year
 - 4-month time-cycle for next edition preparation
 - Currently 58 subscribers through WordPress
 - Migrate to MailChimp for 2nd edition

Next Steps

- Handover all of the above to the incoming Vice Chairperson
- Remain on-board for helping with LAS Newsletter
- Support as needed during the transition to enable seamless start of the next Board

SECRETARY REPORT

GINA SRIGHANTHAN

Team Overview

- 2 Administrative Coordinators
- 4 General Support Volunteers

Platform Overview

- Direct, monitor and support day-to-day administrative activities of the organization.

Ongoing Initiatives

- **Operating Documents & Document Control:** Oversee and coordinate the creation, processing and tracking of operating documents for the organization. This includes the standard operating procedures for each department, application forms, welcome packages, volunteer job descriptions, etc.
- **By-laws:** Ensure LAS operates in compliance with our by-laws
- **Member/Volunteer Application Processing & Onboarding:** Support the application and onboarding process of the organization for members, volunteers, partners and sponsors.
 - Over the past year we have onboarded 3 members, 22 volunteers (15 currently active), 2 partners and 2 sponsors.
- **Email Management & Communication:** Manage email communications and facilitate connections between prospective partnering organizations and the Chair/Vice-Chair
- **Board Meeting Preparation:** Organize board meetings including agenda preparation and minute taking
 - 5 board meetings organized and held this past year
- **Annual General Meeting (AGM) Preparation:** Organize and prepare for the Annual General Meeting
- **Bank Account Management:** Process payments as per the multi-step verification procedures set up for use of the LAS bank account
- **General Support Team:** Manage the general support volunteers
 - Over the past year, the general support volunteers have assisted with the LAS newsletter and with applications to various funding opportunities (including the Meighen Fund, Astra Zeneca and Air Canada)

PUBLIC RELATIONS REPORT

TOM NOUS

Team Overview

- 3 Marketing Coordinators
- 1 Copywriters

Platform Overview

- 2834 Instagram followers
- 116 Members on the LAS Facebook group
 - 562 Facebook Likes
- Website (www.lifeafterstroke.life)
- Shopify Account

Ongoing Initiatives

- Building social media campaigns to maintain awareness
- Building an online presence through search engine optimization (SEO)
 - LAS website is on the first page when the following is searched in Google:
 - " Life After Stroke Canada"
 - "Lifeafterstroke"
- Working to get on the first page for other keywords including "Life After Stroke"
- Monitoring copywriter deliverables including Instagram content and website updates

TREASURER REPORT

JAMES PYO

Team Overview

- 2 Fundraising Coordinators
- 2 Financial/Accounting Coordinators

Platform Overview

- Established foundation for fundraising and financial monitoring/tracking.
- Necessary processes to gain and maintain charity status are now set
- Established template, foundation and baseline for future fundraisers.
- Fundraised \$6,174 net proceeds to date from inaugural fitness challenge.
 - Campaign website: <http://lasfitnesschallenge.raisely.com>
- Effectively utilized tools such as Quickbooks, Raisely and Dext.

Ongoing Initiatives

- Tracking, monitoring and reviewing expenses and revenues, to assess the financial health of LAS;
- Fulfil financial reporting requirements once LAS gains charity status
- Initiating and overseeing further fundraising campaigns to build on first year's successes and lessons learned.
- Consider future (post-pandemic) fundraising ideas

REVENUE BREAKDOWN

| Category | Amount |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| Merchandise Sales ¹ | \$422.25 |
| Fundraising ² | \$5,586.39 |
| TOTAL | \$6,008.64 |

Notes:

¹Includes cost of goods sold

²Net proceeds including fees and all expenses; subject to change

FUNDRAISING INITIATIVES

FITNESS CHALLENGE EARNINGS

UPDATED JUNE 17, 2021

| | | |
|--|-------------|--------------------------|
| PayPal | \$ 4,888.08 | |
| Raisely fees | \$ 143.00 | <u>\$4,745.08</u> |
| Stripe | \$ 1,041.31 | |
| Raisely fees | \$14.32 | \$ \$1,041.31 |
| Total on hand | | <u>\$5,786.39</u> |
| Rewards ¹ | \$200.00 | |
| Net Proceeds | | <u>\$5,586.39</u> |
| Campaign Total (Raisely ²) | \$6,424.00 | |
| Deductions | \$637.61 | |
| Gateway fees ³ | \$207.09 | |
| Total fees | \$364.41 | |
| Unaccounted | \$273.20 | |

REWARDS BREAKDOWN

| REWARD | UNIT COST ⁴ | QUANTITY | TOTAL |
|----------------------|------------------------|----------|--------------|
| Gift Card | \$20.00 | 3 | \$60.00 |
| LAS Shirt | \$28 | 5 | \$140 |
| TOTAL REWARDS | | | \$200 |

NOTES

¹Fees donated to hosting platform; not an expense

²Total donations excluding fees.

³Processing fees charged by Paypal & Stripe.

⁴Composed of \$15 for product + \$13 shipping; sources: Chop Shop invoice 4/1/2021; shipping cost of past Shopify purchases.

MARCH 2020 – MARCH 2021 EXPENDITURE BREAKDOWN

| Category | Amount | Percentage |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|------------|
| Accounting | \$650.00 | 7% |
| Advertising/Promo | \$7,707.80 | 80% |
| Bank Charges | \$107.64 | 1% |
| General Admin | \$147.67 | 2% |
| Shopify Subscriptions & Shipping | \$193.32 | 2% |
| Subscription & Service Fees | \$852.43 | 9% |
| Total | \$9,658.86 | |

Notes

¹Includes advisory services and review of financial statements

²Includes copywriter, WordPress, and domain

³Includes monthly fee, security registration fees, overdraft interest, and refunds

⁴Includes teleconferencing, boxes, extra plates for branding iron

⁵Includes PayPal fees

⁶Shopify, Zoom, Google

ELECTION OF NEW BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Returning Directors



Sajeevan Eswarakumar

“Leave everything a little bit better than you found it.”

Sajeevan Eswarakumar, more commonly known as Saj, is the chairman and founder of Life After Stroke. Saj originally started Life After Stroke as a personal blog to share his road to recovery after surviving a stroke in 2012. What emerged from this experience was a deep passion for serving the stroke community and helping other survivors like himself share their own stories.

On top of building a community for Young Brain Injury Survivors (YBIS), Saj has established a career working in the railroad industry since 2009. Currently, he is a Workblock Planning Officer for Metrolinx, while also serving as a patient partner with the University Health Network in Toronto, Canada. Not afraid to rock a fresh pair of sneakers or “shred the gnar” with his snowboard, Saj is also a self-proclaimed proud Canadian explorer who has filled his life full of food, coffee and photography.

Over the past year and a half, Saj has overseen the implementation of numerous LAS initiatives (including the release of an ongoing Fundscrip fundraising campaign, the inaugural LAS Newsletter and LAS Survivor’s Support Group Meetings), supported the Director of Public Relations in building a marketing team, supported numerous volunteers in establishing their roles and building a base foundation, set up various systems of internal processing and management to ensure the organization operates as per documented SOP processes, liaised with multiple organizations to increase awareness of LAS and build relationships, contributed as planner and participant of the LAS Fitness Challenge, and helped lay the foundation for applying for charitable status.



James Pyo

“I’m still standing” -Scarface

James is an urban planner with a Master of Environmental Studies (MES) from York University. He has always enjoyed riding his bike, playing guitar, and walking his beloved dog Digsy. He joined the stroke survivor community after a slo-pitch accident unexpectedly led to a brain bleed with stroke-like symptoms. Yet, he has chosen to continue pushing forward in his life by getting married and planning to start a family with his wife, Jessica. He also serves on the TTC Advisory Committee on Accessible Transit (ACAT). Over the past year, James has spearheaded LAS’ inaugural fitness challenge fundraiser

New Directors



Dr. Laavanya Dharmakulaseelan

Dr. Laavanya Dharmakulaseelan is a neurology resident physician at the University of Toronto. Laavanya is an aspiring stroke neurologist who has a passion for advocating for patients with neurological disease, both within and outside of a clinical setting. She has been heavily involved in research in stroke and sleep disorders. Laavanya is a proud dog mom to her morkie, Theo, loves trying new food in the Greater Toronto Area, and has a small obsession with bubble tea.

Laavanya joined LAS with the purpose of engaging with young brain injury survivors to learn more about their personal obstacles and to find ways to support their recovery. She initially served as a liaison between LAS and the Tamil Association of Residents and Medical Students (TARMS) and most recently was the Editor-in-Chief for the LAS newsletter.

Akila Tavarasa



Akila Tavarasa is a recent graduate of the University of Toronto, where she completed her Bachelor's degree in Political Science and Sociology. She is passionate about supporting young stroke survivors as she has witnessed firsthand the impact of a brain injury on one's life.

Akila joined Life After Stroke's team in February 2021, where she has provided administrative support throughout the organization. In this role, she acts as a liaison between the board of directors, monitors communications through email and supports the management of records. Akila has contributed to recent milestones for LAS by coordinating its first Annual General Meeting. She continues to look forward to the growth and success of the community and is excited to support the organization from a board level.

Amanda Carnahan

"Live for Each second, without hesitation" - Elton John



Amanda is an Executive Assistant with 20+ years of administrative, office manager and legal experience. For her part time job, she acts as the Chair of the Parents Association for her children's dance school, managing and overseeing fundraisers. She joined the young stroke survivor community at the age of 38 after suffering an acute ischemic stroke caused from an unknown heart defect. This life altering event caused Amanda to take a look at her life and readjust her priorities without fear. Amanda participated as a fundraising coordinator in the inaugural Life After Stroke Fitness Challenge and was the highest fundraiser.

In her spare time, she enjoys camping with her husband, two children and FOUR dogs, and mastering yoga! And she is a die-hard Elton John fan.



Life After Stroke
Supporting Stroke Survivors

 <https://lifeafterstroke.life/>

 <https://www.facebook.com/justsaj/>

 [@lifeafterstroke](https://www.instagram.com/lifeafterstroke)