



ANNUAL REPORT 2022

Life After Stroke

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Chairperson
Laavanya Dharmakulaseelan



Treasurer
Amanda Carnahan



Vice Chairperson
James Pyo



Secretary
Akila Tavarasa



Public Relations
Sajeevan Eswarakumar

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 (2021-2022)

VOLUNTEERS

Administration

Kathy Zhou
Coordinator

Kasthuri Packiyathan
Coordinator

Areeba Asghar
Grants Writer

Muhaimen Siddiqui
Coordinator

Chana Markus
Grant Researcher

Support Group

Julie Tomaino
Administrator

Marie Choi
Coordinator

Rachel Dinoff
Coordinator

Evita Argonza
Associate

Finance/Accounting

Jalaluddin Isa
Coordinator

Ala Ramahi
Coordinator

Marketing

Zoe Ong
Brand Marketing Coordinator

Rahul Desai
Brand Marketing Coordinator

James Naudi
Website Administrator

Vocational Rehabilitation

Ashvinie Sritharan
Specialist/Lead

Rabiya Sheikh
Support Volunteer

Ceronia Nives
Support Volunteer

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

Laavanya Dharmakulaseelan

Organization Overview

- Board of Directors: 5 volunteers including 2 survivors
- 28 active volunteers
- 44 active members
- 2 partners
- 2 sponsors

Online Presence

- 223 members in the LAS support group Facebook group
- 862 likes of LAS Facebook page
- 910 followers on LAS Facebook page
- 3036 Instagram followers

Financial Overview

- Accountant Consulting Fees: \$56.50
- Bank Fees: \$82.46
- Subscriptions & Services: \$1994.65
- SEO/Upwork Charges: \$3854.55
- Website: \$61.09
- Branding: \$118.93
- Social Media: \$4013.09

Ongoing Initiatives

- Support group: Hold monthly virtual meetings open to survivors across the world; advertised through LAS social media accounts and the LAS support group Facebook page (currently has 232 members)
- Webstore: Sells LAS apparel. Shirts currently unavailable due to manufacturer issues. 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.

Tasks Managed in Year 2

It was a great privilege to be Chair of Life After Stroke for the 2021-2022 term. Along the way, I have met amazing individuals who all had the same goals of creating a supportive environment for young brain injury survivors and raising awareness about stroke in the young. As my term as Chair, I was able to use my training as a neurology resident physician to put together educational and informative resources for Life After Stroke, in the form of blog posts and content articles in our newsletter. Some blog posts include benefits of support groups, awareness on stroke in the young (for World Stroke Day), and pediatric stroke awareness. These blog posts were also a good way to spread the word about our organization over social media. I was also involved in writing the program descriptions for our website for our support groups and vocational rehabilitation program, that can be accessed by everyone.

Our newsletters involve content articles, personal stories written by stroke survivors, and updates from Life After Stroke. Some content articles published in our newsletters in the past included COVID-19 pandemic and stroke care and stroke recovery in the lens of an occupational therapist. We released a stroke recovery series this past year. The first issue was on inpatient stroke rehabilitation. The second issue released in June 2022 focused on mental health and stroke. We have a growing database of subscribers to our newsletter. I was also involved in working on our application for charity status. Additionally, I shared volunteer opportunities with pre-medical students and members of the Tamil Association of Residents of Medical Students (TARMS), which is one of our partners. I also was a speaker at one of TARMS' talks.

Next Steps

- Remain on-board for helping with LAS Newsletter and LAS grants team
- Support as needed during the transition to enable seamless start of the next Board

VICE-CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

James Pyo

Role

The Vice Chairperson's role is to assist the Chairperson in fulfilling the organization's mission, vision, and mandate of LAS during the term.

Tasks Managed in Year 2

- As in the previous term, the Vice Chairperson managed a variety of tasks including the recruitment of incoming directors and volunteers; supporting the finance team while temporarily backfilling for the Treasurer and initiating the second annual Fitness Challenge fundraiser (to be held annually moving forward).
- The expectation is that the Vice Chairperson Role will remain consistent in the following terms.

Next Steps

- Handover all 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

Akila Tavarasa

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

Rahul Desai

Role: To promote and expand LAS on our social media platforms (Instagram and Facebook)

Instagram Report (As of June 15th, 2022)

- Posts: 3218
- Followers: 3033
- Accounts Engaged: 99
- Accounts Reached: 1164

Facebook Report (As of June 15th, 2022)

- Page Likes: 56
- Page Views: 25
- Post Reach: 292
- Post Engagement: 37
- Page Followers: 57

LinkedIn (As of June 15th, 2022)

- Search Appearance: 28 (Last 7 days)
- Unique Visitors: 12
- Followers: 11
- Post Impressions: 265
- Custom Button Clicks: 2

Marketing Coordinators: 1

Copywriters: 0

Actions Taken:

- Working with all stakeholders to improve existing initiatives
 - Virtual Support Group
 - Website SEO
- Spearheading new initiatives
 - Monday Motivational Quotes
 - National Stroke Month Awareness - “Did You Know” campaign

Next Steps

- Expanding to MailChimp
- Instagram Takeover
- Finalizing the brochure

TREASURER REPORT

James Pyo

Team Overview

- 2 Fundraising Coordinators
- 2 Financial/Accounting Coordinators

Functional Overview

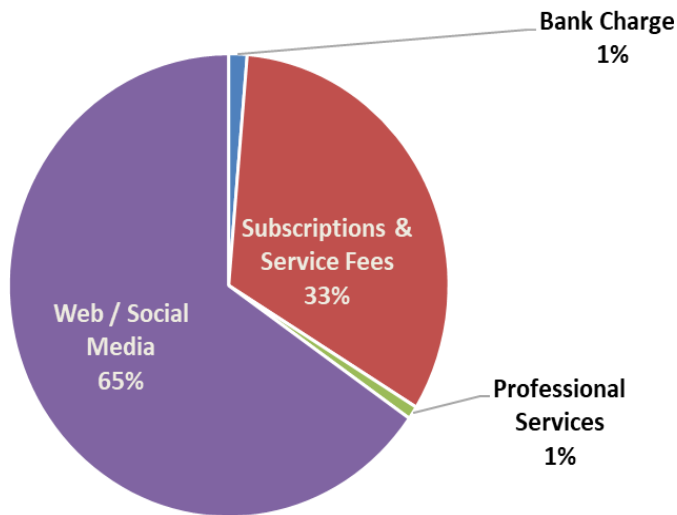
The Treasurer and financial/Accounting Coordinators are responsible for tracking, monitoring, and reviewing expenses and revenues to ensure the financial health and sustainability of LAS. Fundraising Coordinators assist the Treasurer in initiating and leading various fundraising initiatives.

Initiatives Moving Forward

The fundraising component of this team will initiate the virtual fitness challenge fundraiser on an annual basis as well as consider pursuing post-pandemic fundraising ideas when possible. The Financial/Accounting Coordinators will continue to monitor, track and record LAS financing to in compliance with reporting requirements for charity status.

Breakdown of Expenses

Life After Stroke 2021 Expenditures



| Description | Amount | Percentage |
|------------------------------|-------------------|------------|
| Bank Charges | \$82.46 | 1.3% |
| Subscriptions & Service Fees | \$1,994.65 | 32.5% |
| Professional Services | \$56.50 | 0.9% |
| Web / Social Media | \$4,013.09 | 65.3% |
| Total | \$6,146.70 | |

ELECTION OF NEW BOARD OF DIRECTORS



CHAIRWOMAN

Akila Tavarasa is the Chair of Life After Stroke where she has served on the Board of Directors since 2021.

After joining the organization in February 2021, Akila acted as a liaison between the Board and external stakeholders. During her first term on the Board of Directors, Akila has led several of Life After Stroke's projects to achieve key milestones including coordinating its first Annual General Meeting, establishing a Grants Council, and restructuring the organization's Support Group program.

During the new term, Akila looks forward to leading the growth of Life After Stroke's network and resources. Future endeavours include acquiring grants to support LAS' members through the mode of services and scholarships. Additionally, Akila holds a bachelor's degree in Political Science and Sociology from the University of Toronto and continues to apply her knowledge while serving in the Public Sector. In her free time, she enjoys discovering new food spots in the city.

VICE-CHAIR

Anjali Gupta is a Sr. Manager, Global Risk Management at Scotiabank. In her current role at Scotiabank, Anjali leads Canadian and International Strategic Provisions Projects for Retail Credit Risk Products. Anjali holds an MBA from Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto. A professional engineer, Anjali is a passionate advocate of women's causes and healthcare. She believes with the grit, perseverance, and a reliable support system; any challenges can be overcome.

Anjali is also Circles Lead for Lean In – Toronto, wherein she manages and supports circles for like-minded professional women in their leadership journey. In the past, Anjali was also a mentor at the Girls in tech Toronto.



Anjali lives in Toronto with her husband and two toddlers. When not working, Anjali can be seen enjoying the outdoors with her family. Her other interests include reading, tuning into Podcasts, and exploring fun baking recipes for her family.



TREASURER

Ala Ramahi is an Associate Portfolio Manager for a Toronto-based investment firm where he helps wealthy families and non-profit organizations grow and protect their wealth. He joined the board of LAS in July of 2022 as the Treasurer. In his role, Ala is responsible for maintaining the finances of the organization as well as working with the Chair and Vice-Chair to develop budgeting plans and fundraising initiatives.

Outside of work and leisure, Ala is passionate about giving back to society through various charitable efforts. After learning about Saj's story and the support that LAS provides young stroke survivors, Ala became inspired to join the organization using his expertise in finance and accounting.

In his spare time, Ala enjoys seeing friends and family, travel and an active lifestyle. He has a Bachelor of Arts (Economics) from the University of Waterloo and is a CFA Charter holder.

SECRETARY

Kasthuri Packiyathan is an undergraduate from the University of Toronto with a double major in English and Women & Gender Studies. Kasthuri also has completed her Bachelor of Professional Studies degree the University of Niagara and is Ontario Licenced Teacher. After teaching elementary for three years and suffering a stroke and other medical complications, Kasthuri has fought hard and has made a great come back. She recently completed her Medical Office Assistant diploma while being home recovering to keep her mind engaged as much as her body with her recovery. Kasthuri also recently self-published her first poetry book on Amazon entitled "Butterfly Wings" which is a poetic expression of her journey; it includes poetry describing love, pain and learning to believe again.

Kasthuri joined Life After Stroke in January of 2022 as administrative assistant and working towards becoming the Secretary in June. Kasthuri's personal survivor story is what inspired her to join the organization and to her administration skills to use while sharing her story. She wants to inspire others and help Life After Stroke reach new height in the coming year.



PUBLIC RELATIONS



Rahul Desai is an undergraduate, Health Science student at the University of Waterloo. Rahul is an aspiring physician who has a passion for improving the lives of others. He advocates for better access to care and for reducing inequalities that exist in the healthcare system.

Furthermore, Rahul is involved in learning the different aspects of care through his co-ops and volunteering experience at University Health Network, Sunnybrook Health Science Center and Scarborough Health Network. Besides his passion for learning and helping others, Rahul loves connecting with nature by visiting trails, parks and open spaces throughout the city, province and country.

Rahul joined Life After Stroke in early August 2021, as a social media coordinator. Rahul was inspired by the dedication of the organization and its members, in providing unprecedented support to young brain injury survivors. Furthermore, through his work on social media, he has learned to reach a larger audience and bring awareness of the programs and support LAS provides. He is proud to be the youngest board member as Director of Public Relations and strives to expand LAS's online footprint.



Life After Stroke
Supporting Stroke Survivors

 <https://lifeafterstroke.life/>

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

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