



Media Release

Passionate volunteers congregate in Saskatoon for annual CPF-SK Chapter Planning Meeting and AGM

September 12, 2014 – A strong representation of chapter volunteers from across the province assembled in Saskatoon on September 5 and 6 for the Canadian Parents for French – Saskatchewan’s (CPF-SK) Chapter Planning Meeting and Annual General Meeting (AGM).

Impassioned representatives from La Ronge, Lloydminster, Meadow Lake, Prince Albert, Regina, Saskatoon, Swift Current, Wawota and Yorkton were warmly welcomed by the CPF-SK staff and Board of Directors at the Volunteer Appreciation Dinner on Friday, September 5. The celebratory meal took place at Aroma Restaurant at the Radisson Hotel. Two or three members from nearly every community were in attendance. The high turnout provided a vibrant tone for the weekend’s proceedings, many opportunities for volunteer engagement, and the sharing of personal stories.

A fruitful day of learning sessions on Saturday, September 6, started off with a tête-à-tête about chapter goals, accomplishments and challenges. Érica Potié, Program Officer from Canadian Heritage, spoke about the Department’s relationship with CPF-SK and the various funding options available to nonprofits promoting linguistic duality. Kent Smith-Windsor, Executive Director of the Greater Saskatoon Chamber of Commerce, spoke candidly about the great value that volunteerism adds to the business sector in the city and province. In the afternoon, Sheena Greer, from the Saskatoon-based communications firm Colludo, presented volunteers with a primer on fundraising practices and encouraged thoughtful discussion.

At the AGM, the 2014-2015 Budget and 2013-2014 Audited Financial Statements were presented in detail, and the slate for the CPF-SK Board of Directors was ratified. This year’s Board includes President Eric Bolay; Vice-President Bonnie Morgan; Secretary/Treasurer Alex Sokalski; Director Monique Myers; newly elected Directors Janet Loseth and Marie-Anne Corrigan, and; Youth Advisory Director Erika Dowling.

The 2014-2015 *Volunteer of the Year Award* was presented to a humble Alex Sokalski. Karen Pozniak, CPF-SK Executive Director, was delighted to present him with this award, and glowingly outlined his many accomplishments. In his Executive role on the Board, he has given financial oversight. As part of the Media Committee, he has made himself available for interviews in both official languages, and has lent his expertise in the French language by providing translation. As well, Sokalski sits on the *Advisory Committee to the Institut français* and the *Deputy Minister’s Working Group on Post-Secondary French Language Education*, and has been a judge for *Concours d’art oratoire* for a number of years.

"As you can see, Alex's contribution to the running of CPF-SK is simply enormous," Pozniak said in her comments. "His rich professional and personal life experience, as well as his counsel on governance and leadership best practice are invaluable to the Branch Board of Directors and to CPF-SK as a whole."

The delegates agreed to hold a President's Reception at next year's Chapter Planning Meeting on September 11, 2015. More details will be revealed on sk.cpf.ca in the future.

Canadian Parents for French (CPF) is the national network of volunteers who value French as an integral part of Canada and are dedicated to the promotion, creation and support of effective French-Second-Language (FSL) learning opportunities for youth in Canada.

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