

## NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT TO MEMBERS 2024 ANNUAL MEETING OF MEMBERS

MAY 8, 2024

Dear members of the Council of Canadians,

We are pleased to present this report to members from the Nominating Committee.

There are 9 of 12 Director-at-large positions to be elected for two-year terms in 2023/24. Nominations were opened on April 11, 2024, and by April 28, 2024 we had received a nomination form from 10 candidates.

Based on an assessment, we confirm there are 10 candidates who meet the eligibility requirements for a Director-at-large position on the Board of Directors.

One of the eligible candidates withdrew their candidacy on May 5, leaving 9 eligible candidates for 9 Director-at-large positions to be filled.

### ELIGIBLE CANDIDATES

John Cartwright  
Lily Chang  
Phil Dawes  
Sam Hammond  
Malcolm Lewis-Richmond  
Diwa Marcelino  
Bianca Mugenyi  
Aditya Rao  
Tara Seucharan

# DIVERSITY

Consistent with the Council’s commitment to diversity and inclusion, the nominating committee endeavors to ensure that the final list of candidates assessed to stand for election to the board shall be diverse and reflect the vision, mission and values of the Council.

Based on information provided by candidates and their self-identification, we can confirm that this final list of candidates is diverse and reflects the vision, mission and values of the Council.

We assess diversity based on five criteria; region, gender, age, indigenous, and equity-seeking group.

**Regions:**

- Region – ON-QC-NU = 7
- Region – Prairies-NT = 2
- Region – Atlantic = 0
- Region – Pacific-YT = 0

**Gender:**

- Female = 3
- Male = 6
- Non-binary = 0
- Prefer not to answer = 0

**Age:**

- 18 – 29 = 0
- 30 – 49 = 5
- 50 – 69 = 3
- 70 + = 1
- Prefer not to answer = 0

Indigenous person = 0

Member of an equity-seeking group = 7

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The Board of Directors comprises 16 positions, 12 being Directors-at-large selected by the members at the AMM or other means, and 4 regional representative directors chosen by chapter members.

Consistent with the elimination of slates of candidates as recommended by the Good Governance Task Force, the Nominating Committee is mandated to ensure each candidate for director-at-large positions on the Board of Directors has an equal opportunity to be known to potential voters.

## **QUALIFICATIONS**

To qualify to serve on the Board of Directors as a Director-at-large, candidates need to be a member of the Council of Canadians in good standing, and have the endorsement of five other members.

Membership is available only to Canadians and those who reside in Canada who support the vision, purpose, mission and principles of the Council. In addition, the Board requires a \$1 annual financial and/or in-kind contribution by each member.

## **NOMINATING COMMITTEE MANDATE**

The mandate of the Nominating Committee is described in the By-laws of June 2020. The committee undertakes three important activities: it promotes, receives, and assesses nominations for and from members to stand for election to director-at-large positions on the Board.

It then provides members a report with a list of eligible candidates to be circulated at least 21 days in advance of the election. The report includes the Nominating Committee's confirmation of eligibility and assessment of each candidate.

## **NOMINATING COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2023/24**

Nita Grass  
Marie Dolcetti-Koros  
Joey Hartman  
Steven Staples

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Canada Council for the Arts. (n.d). *Equity-seeking groups* [Web page]. <https://canadacouncil.ca/glossary/equity-seeking-groups>

The Council of Canadians. (2020) *By-Law No. 1*. <https://canadians.org/sites/default/files/governance/bylaws-councilofcanadians.pdf>

The Council of Canadians. (2020, February). *The good governance task force: Report and Recommendations*. <https://canadians.org/sites/default/files/2020-05/GoodGovernanceTaskForce-Feb182020-v2.1.pdf>

The Council of Canadians. (n.d.) *About us* [Web page]. <https://canadians.org/about>

## PERSONAL STATEMENTS

### **John Cartwright**

Toronto, Ontario

It is a great honour to serve as the Chairperson of the Council of Canadians and to be nominated for another term on the Board of Directors. The Council continues to evolve and adapt to the political realities of the day. These have been trying times as we come out of the pandemic and try to address people's genuine frustration over the affordability crisis. Pierre Poilievre has jumped in the polls as he skillfully focuses anger on Ottawa politicians instead of the corporate profiteers at the root cause of inflation. It will take arduous work to stop him from taking a majority of seats in the next Parliament, and we must be up to that challenge.

At the same time, we as Canadians have just won a real victory on pharmacare. It may not be all we want, but the three key principles – universal, single-payer and public – have been secured. Our Council members, supporters and staff have played a key role in helping to achieve that victory. Congratulations to everyone involved!

Throughout this time the Council has been a steady voice reflecting the best values of Canadians from across our country. As we shape our Strategic Plan the focus must be on political impact – for people, planet and democracy – and a plan for transition and renewal. How do we recruit the next generation of activists to our ranks, at a time when traditional forms of organizing are in flux? How do we ensure the Council's message is being heard in communities across the country, including places where we have many supporters but no chapter? And how can our membership and fundraising efforts truly reflect the population of Canada in 2024 and beyond?

There is no doubt that a vibrant, healthy Council of Canadians is essential to the struggle for a more equitable and sustainable world. We see the need to challenge corporate power that distorts the economy and political decision-making. And continue our core mission of defending the commons – our public services, assets and programs as well as the natural world around us.

The Council is seen as a trusted convenor. We have been bringing together organizations and people from all walks of life to reject the politics of division and offer a vision of building a better world together.

I am dedicated to helping rebuild the strength of our Council in every region and grow the Council's presence in communities large and small. I know from my own experience that we can also engage Canada's many diverse communities in our work and our growth. As we undertake this journey for a more just world, we will make the path by walking together.

In Solidarity,  
John Cartwright

**Lily Chang**

Toronto, Ontario

I am pleased to submit my application to serve on the Board of the Council of Canadians for another term. The Mission and Vision of the Council directly aligns with the interests of the labour movement and goes hand in hand with my over 30 years of work with my union, the Canadian Union of Public Employees as well as my current position as Secretary-Treasurer for the Canadian Labour Congress.

CLC staff and labour movement activists are Council of Canadians members, supporters and activists. For years, in networks and coalitions, the CLC has pursued shared objectives and overlapping values alongside the Council of Canadians. In its own work, the CLC routinely draws on and reinforces Council of Canadians research, policy ideas, political messaging and energies. In my current term on the Board, I have worked to deepen these ties and strengthen our organizational partnership.

I understand that grassroots organizing is a way to empower people, using collective action to effect social and political change. In the labour movement, we know we are stronger together.

As an Executive Officer for CUPE Local 79, I advocated for and amplified the voices of our members, highlighting the valuable public services they provide. As an Executive Board member of the Toronto and York Region Labour Council, I collaborated with public and private sector unions, community organizations and the student movement to protect these public services as well as champion public education and public healthcare. As a Trustee for the United Way of Greater Toronto, I worked with corporate, labour, government and community partners to tackle local poverty and improve the economic and social conditions for those being left behind.

As Secretary-Treasurer of the Canadian Labour Congress, I continue to work with other activists pushing for: universal, single-payer pharmacare; good sustainable jobs that supports workers and builds stronger communities; and accessible, well-funded public services. I am privileged to use my voice and position to help dismantle systems of oppression such as racism and colonization.

I have enjoyed contributing to the work of the Council of Canadians and look forward to another term on the Board.

**Phil Dawes**

Brockville, Ontario

In joining the Board of Directors, I would like to assist the vision of the Council of Canadians to advocate for a society built on democracy, justice and care for each other. Canada is at a critical point, and I want to do what I can to help our beautiful country address the significant challenges ahead.

As someone who retired several years ago from a career in school board administration, I am familiar with the advantages that can accrue from organizational operations that are aligned with strategic planning processes.

I am a certified planner, particularly concerned about the climate crisis, and working independently to assist climate adaptation action through support for community schools: [www.phildawes.ca](http://www.phildawes.ca)

I am a member of the Ottawa Chapter. Over the past several years I have met many skillful and passionate people with a common desire to make things better. The Council of Canadians has a rich tapestry of success happening across the spectra of unique local chapters. We can share and build on this momentum together to make an even bigger and effective national impact.

## **Sam Hammond**

Hay River, Northwest Territories

I am honoured to be nominated to serve as a Director-at-large on the Board of Directors for the Council of Canadians.

I offer the Board, the Chapters, and Council members, more than three decades of local, national, and international leadership experience. I bring an unwavering commitment to defend and strengthen democracy and democratic principles, a passion for promoting diversity and challenging inequities, and a inherent obligation to fight for fundamental human rights while fostering respect and dignity for all.

I was first elected to the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) Provincial Executive in 2003; served as vice-president (2004-07); first vice-president (2007-09); and served six terms as ETFO president (2009-21). From 2021-23 I continued my leadership journey as president of the Canadian Teachers' Federation where I represented 385,000 educators nationally and internationally.

I have worked on several municipal, provincial, and federal progressive campaigns and elections. I've served numerous terms on the Canadian Council of the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC), the Executive Board of the Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL), the Board of Directors for the Labour College of Canada, the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) Board of Directors, and the Ontario Teachers' Federation (OTF) Executive and Board of Governors.

Throughout my lifetime I've been very fortunate to have worked with a myriad of amazing individuals, numerous grassroots organizations, unions, and Non-profit organizations to advance equity in publicly funded public education, in the labour movement, and beyond. We fought hard everyday, and continue to fight, to move society forward by addressing white privilege, confronting racism in all its forms and implementing strategies to combat anti-black racism. Together we have worked tirelessly to address colonialism and fought for reconciliation in partnership with Indigenous communities and stood up to homophobia and transphobia alongside 2SLGBTQ+ communities.

I'm a recipient of the Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee medal, the Toronto Pflag Ally Award, the Hamilton-Wentworth Elementary Teachers' Local Leadership Award, an ETFO Honorary Life Membership, and the recipient of the CTF Special Recognition Award.

For some time, I have watched closely the critical work of the Canadian Council and Chapter activists across the country. The Council has spearheaded vital campaigns on Fair Trade, Public Pharmacare, safe, clean, accessible public water for everyone, to list but a few, while working to empower people to fight for the values we all believe in and against corporate privatization and greed.

I am extremely excited and prepared to join the Council as a member of the Board. I look forward to using my experience, my knowledge, and my deep-rooted passion and commitment to people, the planet, and democracy, as a Council Board member to continue the fight. Together we must continue to strengthen the Council and ensure that the Council's Strategic Plan, Build Back Power 2023, is fully and successfully implemented.

I am so very grateful to my nominators and I'm ready to take on the challenges in front of us together and without hesitation.



**Malcolm Lewis-Richmond**

Hull Québec

I'm a labour relations and public affairs professional, passionate about unions, citizen movements and equity, diversity and inclusion. I wish to bring my understanding of political, non-profit, and union mobilization campaigns to the Board to maximize the Council of Canadians' successes. Combining my labour movement knowledge, my capacity to build bridges, and my attention to detail, I believe I can bring added value to Board decisions, especially with regards to engagement and advocacy campaigns.

I'm excited about the Council's mission and mandate, and want to support revenue-generating initiatives and fundraising that ensure the continued health and vitality of the organization. My experience on Boards is multi-faceted, having been founding President of Youth4Youth Québec, President of IAMAW Local Lodge 3011, an executive member of a federal political party, and a member of the Board of a provincial employment nonprofit in Québec. I hope to use my experience on the Council's Board as one to learn and grow, and also contribute to the organization's continued success.

**Diwa Marcelino**

Treaty 1 Territory, Winnipeg, Manitoba

I am a first generation Filipino migrant working, living and raising a young family on Treaty One Territory in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

For over a decade I have been a community organizer with Migrante Manitoba, a grassroots organization advancing the rights and welfare of Filipino migrants while struggling for democracy, justice & peace in the Philippines.

I also hold board and leadership roles with Healthcare For All Manitoba, KAIROS and Community Solidarity Manitoba- the latter being an organization spearheaded in part by the Council of Canadians as a response to the rise of the far right. I have also served as a board director with the College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Manitoba and as vice president of St. Stephen's-Broadway Foundation- a charity connected to the United Church of Canada.

As a Council of Canadians board member for the past four years I have been proud of the ongoing work our organization has undertaken fighting for clean water, a just transition, public pharmacare and our recent demands for a permanent ceasefire in Gaza. This work builds upon the rich legacy of our organization's advocacy and action for the past four decades.

If given another opportunity to serve on the board, I will continue to work with our chapter activists, organizers, campaigners and leadership to advance our goals in advocacy, education, organizing and safeguarding and strengthening our democracy.

## **Bianca Mugenyi**

Montreal, Quebec

It's been a pleasure to serve on the board for the past two years, after having long admired the CoC's work and strong presence of its chapters. I'm proud of its achievements past and present. I hold the Council in high regard for strengthening social movements across the country and want to continue to advance the mission of this important organization.

I'm a long-time community organizer, author and journalist based in Montreal. I direct the Canadian Foreign Policy Institute, which informs people about the country's diplomatic, aid, intelligence & military policies abroad.

I'm the former co-Executive Director of The Leap and helped launch the Leap Manifesto in 2015, which brought the vision of a just transition away from fossil fuels to millions living in Canada.

I am able to contribute to visioning, strategic planning, outreach and programming due to previous roles including participation on various boards, as well as roles on governance, finance, HR and policy committees. As an organizational steward I am interested in supporting staff and broadening public interest in CoC's work.

I have an intersectional approach to activism and would continue to make links between the various social justice issues championed by the Council. I bring a spirit of internationalism, which is needed more than ever to work together across borders to meet the overlapping global challenges of inequity, climate change, militarism and colonial violence.

The work I've done over the years overlaps with the goals and priorities of the Council and I'm drawn to the council as I am first and foremost an organiser.

In my position at the Concordia University's Centre for Gender Advocacy , for instance, I organized hundreds of events & oversaw campaigns on topics of sexual assault awareness, reproductive justice, & the intersections between race and gender. I co-founded Missing Justice (Justice for Missing & Murdered Indigenous women in Quebec) in 2009 which worked alongside Indigenous women, calling for their rights & safety to be respected and prioritized. In 2013, Concordia University opened a sexual assault centre. This victory was the first of its kind at a Quebec University and resulted from a two-year, multi-pronged pressure campaign I initiated and worked on with a large team of volunteers. I've also been active in bringing attention to Canada's role in various parts of the world, from Haiti to Palestine. To facilitate social action, I've prioritized education and love the work CoC does on this front.

My family fled Uganda's civil war during my infancy. Since then, I've lived in Canada, Swaziland, Kenya, England, South Africa and Uganda. These experiences have exposed me to many ways of interacting with diverse groups of people. This together with my identity as a Black woman adds valuable perspective to the board.

I revel in the successes of social movements and would work to advance the progressive goals of the Council.

**Aditya Rao**

Ottawa, ON

It is a privilege to be putting my name forward for the Council of Canadians board. I remember first hearing about the Council of Canadians as a university student in Alberta. Maude Barlow's books were on the bookshelves of the Alberta Public Interest Research Group, where I first got involved in social justice organizing on campus.

The Council of Canadians were always around. One year, when the University of Alberta decided to award the CEO of Nestle an honorary doctorate the same year that he was in talks with the Alberta government to fast-track water privatization, the Council of Canadians helped organize the protests against that utterly immoral decision taken by the university. I have counted myself as a supporter of this important organization since those protests over a decade ago.

Today, I am proud to continue my work as an organizer and a union activist. I currently serve as an assistant to the national president of Canada's largest union, where I have spent half a decade working on public policy issues ranging from the privatization agenda of the Canada Infrastructure Bank – where I had the fortune to collaborate with Council staff – to the rights of migrant workers. I have held senior roles in the research and human rights departments of the union, and have also worked for the union in New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island.

I am a lawyer with a focus on human rights law. I completed my law articles at Amnesty International, where I supported litigation at various bodies, including at the Supreme Court of Canada and United Nations treaty bodies. Along with colleagues in New Brunswick, I am a founding board member of the Madhu Verma Migrant Justice Centre which operates a legal clinic that supports migrant workers and people with precarious immigration status.

If elected to serve on the board of the Council of Canadians, I will do my utmost to ensure that the organization remains well-resourced to take on corporate power and continue building the grassroots movement we need to usher in transformative change.

I submit this expression of interest with deepest gratitude to my nominators.

## **Tara Seucharan**

Toronto, Ontario

I am wholeheartedly committed to continuing my journey with the Council of Canadians Board of Directors.

The past two years have been a profound learning experience, providing me with invaluable insights into the Council's organizational dynamics, strengths, and areas for growth. My deep-rooted commitment to the Council, nurtured over 15 years as a chapter activist, fuels my enthusiasm to contribute even more profoundly.

I'm genuinely thrilled to serve as the facilitator of the Council's Governance Committee. This committee, established in response to recommendations from the Good Governance Task Force (2020) and the Chapter Task Force (2021), is a testament to our collective dedication to fostering inclusivity, transparency, and trust within our organization. And while we've made strides in the last year with the integration of new Conflict Resolution bylaws, I strongly believe we must embed this ethos deeper into our organizational culture.

My journey as a community-builder has taught me the power of solidarity and collaboration. From grassroots movements like Occupy Toronto to advocating with the Toronto Climate Action Network, I've witnessed the transformative impact of collective action. My experiences have sharpened my ability to navigate diverse viewpoints and foster constructive dialogue, even amidst the most emotionally charged circumstances, such as those within the community mutual aid group, CareMongering TO during the Covid-19 lockdown.

As Greenpeace Canada's Fossil Banks campaigner, I am driven by an unwavering sense of duty to amplify the voices of those most affected by the climate crisis. My work demands authentic allyship with Indigenous communities like the Wet'suwet'en, and marginalized groups across the planet, who are disproportionately bearing the brunt of environmental injustices.

As a woman of color, I bring a deeply personal perspective to my advocacy work. I'm genuinely committed to centering the Council's ongoing evolution and renewal in every facet of our endeavours. With humility and pragmatism, I'm dedicated to contributing my skills, experience, and unwavering enthusiasm to the Council of Canadians.

I sincerely hope my application to rejoin the Board of Directors will be considered with the same sincerity and passion that drives my commitment to our shared goals.

