



## **MEMBER BIOGRAPHIES**

Accessibility Advisory Council – November 2023

## John Graham, Chairperson

John is the Retail Council of Canada's Director of Government Relations (Prairie Region), and he works extensively with retailers and the broader community in support of accessibility issues. John gained an early appreciation for accessibility barriers as a youth, watching his father introduce and expand handi-van service throughout rural Manitoba on behalf of the Province. This exposure continues through family experience. As a director of a number of community and business boards, John has gained an appreciation for the importance of diversity of perspective. John is married, and through the power of adoption, enjoys the energy of their two children.

## Josh Watt, Vice-Chairperson (Vice Chair)

Josh is the executive director for the Manitoba School Board Association. He was the former Senior Policy Advisor to the Deputy Minister of Education and Training. Josh holds a BA in Law and Political Science from Carleton University, a Masters of Public Administration from the University of Winnipeg and a Masters of Education from the University of Manitoba. He has also completed a master level certification in peace support operations through the UN Institute for Training and Research.

## Kristine Cowley

Kristine is an Assistant Professor in the Rady Faculty of Health Sciences at the University of Manitoba. She is a current and former member of several boards and committees relating to physical accessibility, including the Standard Development Committee for the Design of Public Spaces. During her tenure as the Executive Director of the Canadian Paraplegic Association (Manitoba, Inc.) (now Spinal Cord Injury Manitoba) from 1995 – 1998, she was a Member of the Board of Directors of the Canadian Institute for Barrier Free Design at the University of Manitoba (1996 – 1998). She was a member of the Editorial Committee that produced "Access: A guide to accessible design for designers, builders, facility owners and managers."

## Scott Jocelyn

Scott became President and CEO of the Manitoba Hotel Association (MHA) in January 2016. A major component of Scott's role is bringing forward the issues and concerns of hotel operators to legislators, educators, media and the general public. Before joining the MHA, Scott was Executive Director of the Manitoba Restaurant and Food Services Association for nine years.

## Shawna Joynt

Shawna identifies as hard of hearing and Indigenous. She is a single mom of four boys. Shawna is currently on several boards and her passion is to help remove barriers for Deaf/Hard of Hearing and Indigenous people. Shawna acts as National Indigenous Director of Canadian Association for the Deaf (CAD/ASC); President of the Manitoba Deaf Association (MDA); Director on the Board of the Canadian Deaf Sports Association (CDSA); and Vice-President of the Manitoba Deaf Sports Association (MDSA). Shawna believes we all will work together and make sure everyone has equal rights –with time and work, we will get to that point!

## Dianna Scarth

Dianna was the Executive Director of the Manitoba Human Rights Commission from 1996 until September 2012 and also served on the executive of the Canadian Association of Statutory Human Rights Agencies. From 2012 to 2016, Dianna was employed at the University of Winnipeg, initially as a Visiting Professor and later as its Human Rights and Diversity Officer. Dianna’s educational background is in law and social work; she obtained Master of Social Work and Bachelor of Laws degrees from the University of Manitoba. In 2018, she was appointed for 3 years as a part time Commissioner with the Canadian Human Rights Commission.

## Ray Schirle

Ray was acclaimed for a second term as Mayor for the Town of Beausejour. Ray has a passion for the good of the community, positive growth and accountability. He is a committed volunteer who serves on numerous committees, devoting time to the community and the Eastern Region. Married 24 years with two children, Ray is a self-starter and self-made, getting into business at the young age of 18 while taking Business Administration and Accounting at Red River Community College. Ray’s business involvement is varied between retail, manufacturing, development, and running a seasonal campground.

## Laurel Repski

(Ind.) Laurel is a consultant and former vice president of HR, Sustainability and audit with the University of Winnipeg. She is a member of the HR Management Association of Manitoba, treasurer of the HR Administrators for Universities in Western Canada and former chair for the Manitoba Children’s Museum Board of Directors and Manitoba Theatre for Young People. Laurel holds a certificate in Human Resource Management from the University of Manitoba.