



President's Report – ASI AGM, June 16, 2025

April 1, 2024 – March 31, 2025

### **Summary of the Past Year's events**

#### **Board of Directors**

This year, Wes Ladouceur stepped down from his as Vice President. We appreciate Wes' dedication over the years to ASI's mission. In addition, Maribeth DeMarco also stepped down from the board of directors.

Peggy O'Flaherty decided not to return to the board of directors but will continue to support our program and events in the community.

I joined the board as the President, and we welcomed two additional directors, Anna Ulicny and Sara Jacques.

#### **Staffing**

With the successful application to the Community Services Recovery Fund grant, ASI was able to hire, Sheena Bechard as the Fund Development Coordinator for the year. Her contract was extended until the fiscal year end to ease the transition into the fund developer role for Jillian.

#### **Fundraising**

We hosted our first charity pasta dinner in many years. The event was a 3<sup>rd</sup> party fundraiser hosted by the Moose Lodge and involved relatively little effort from the staff at ASI. The event was well attended and grossed over \$4200. This event is potentially scheduled to be an annual event in April to celebrate and kick-off Autism Awareness Month. We also hosted our first annual Autism Awareness Walk at the end of April 2024, further developing our relationship with St. Clair College and bringing in over \$1000.00 for the Summer Program. Lastly, we partnered with the Windsor Fastpitch Softball Hall of Fame for a golf tournament in late Sept 2024. This collaboration yielded over \$9,000 for ASI.

The annual Community of Champions Campaign was an overall success bringing in approximately \$28,000.

## **40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Bruce Awad Summer Program Celebration**

On July 25, 2024 the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Bruce Awad Summer Program Celebration occurred at the Ciociaro Club. This significant event allowed our program's namesake to share the story of ASI and express his gratitude for those that have contributed to the program's ongoing success over the years. The event was attended by over 90 people and while it was not intended as a fundraiser, we were able to make a little over \$3000 for the Summer Program.

### **Summer Program**

A full summer program was run in 2024, with 66 students accepted into the program. Recognition was given to all staff with 5 or more years with ASI during our annual open house. Allie Miner was the recipient of Alishia Liolli Leadership Award 2024.

I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the incredibly high return rate we have experienced in hiring the 2024 support workers and supervisors. Our skilled and knowledgeable support workers exemplify the type of dedication we can only hope for in our field.

Finally, the 2024 season was the first year that our Essex program had its own on-site director. Jeremy Orton proved to be a valuable asset as he took on the role of Assistant Director.

### **Financial**

Unfortunately, the federal wage subsidy we rely on for staffing was significantly reduced this year in Windsor and completely cut for our Essex program. Despite advocating to both our MPs, we were unable to secure additional funding. This led to an approximately \$90,000 shortfall from the projected budget. While we were able to offer a high-caliber and exciting summer experience to our clients in 2024 through our reserves, the reality is that we will be unable to sustain that long-term unless we re-examine our operations. The upcoming 2025 summer program will be a step towards a more sustainable program.

In closing, I, on behalf of the board want to thank our team for all their hard work throughout the year and for everything they do for ASI. I would also like to thank all the staff who worked the 2024 Summer Program. It is because of your expertise, dedication, and enthusiasm that we continue to have such a stellar reputation in our community. Thank you all!

A special thank you to the Board of Directors. It is a pleasure to work with all of you. It is so nice to see that everyone strives to do what is best for ASI and its students.

Thank you,

Cristina Pinke  
President, ASI