



Introducing...the AboutFace Constituency Committee!

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In the fall of 2012, AboutFace put together a Constituency Committee to help us improve our programs, and how to better serve our constituents. The committee is made up of 13 individuals ranging in age and location who volunteer their time for a conference call every couple of months to share their input and ideas with the AboutFace staff. Meet our 2013 Constituency Committee!

RANDY PIELSTICKER – Constituency Committee Chair



I am 35 years old and have a birthmark that covers the right side of my face. I have lived in many regions of Canada and travelled the world extensively. I have worked as an educator, teaching Outdoor Education, Natural Science and Geography at the intermediate, high school and college level. As an outdoor enthusiast I have guided expeditions on most continents either paddling or mountaineering, but cycling is my forte. From 2003-2009, I pedaled 85,000km crossing 32 countries. Currently I am living in Wales pursuing my MSc in Glaciology.

I have been involved with AboutFace since the late 90's and my role within the organization has been multifaceted, including; mentor, spokesperson, author, fundraiser, workshop facilitator and program director. In 2003 I proposed the idea for a teen wilderness retreat, and then rode my bike across Africa to raise the funds to launch the program. From 2009-2012, I was employed by AboutFace as Camp Director. I helped grow the program to operate in 6 provinces across Canada. With the success of the *Experiential Wilderness Based Programming* I launched the Adult Retreat and Leadership Expedition to expand the age demographic to our entire membership. I have found that the challenges endured and conquered in these programs build incredible bonds between our members and develop an enhanced self confidence that help the participants cope with living with a facial difference and achieve their full potential. I still remain involved with AboutFace as the Chair of the Constituency Committee.

DENNIS GARDIN



Dennis Gardin has been a burn survivor since the age of 14, when he was in a horrific motorcycle explosion which caused him to be in a coma for three weeks, hospitalized for eight months, and undergo numerous surgeries. Dennis has grown from the challenging life lessons along his journey of self discovery to become a successful businessman, professional speaker, ministrant, administrator, trainer, facilitator, consultant, and former television talk show host and radio personality. He has had the tremendous privilege of working with a variety of organizations in both private and non profit sectors and currently holds the position of Executive Director for the Georgia Firefighters Burn Foundation. Dennis' dream/mission is to inspire individuals to face their inner scars and self limiting beliefs to create an abundant, fulfilling life of purpose.

PATRYCJA DOMURAD



Patrycja Domurad was involved in a car accident at 14 years of age, where she broke most of the bones in her face and sustained the loss of her right eye. Her teen years were spent in and out of SickKids Hospital for reconstructive craniofacial and oculoplastic surgeries, her emotions on a rollercoaster from losing her 'identity' and dealing with a facial difference. Today, she has come out at the other end of this life-changing experience feeling truly blessed for what she has learned and she works daily on making eye patches vogue. Patrycja lives with the love of her life, Michael and their cat Monet. She loves to read, bake, write, play at being a photographer, and plan elaborate adventures for friends. She is presently studying and working towards living her dream of opening her own

Parisian Bakery in downtown Toronto. She has volunteered with AboutFace over the past year by facilitating some of the support workshop calls as well as helping out at events and fundraising.

SABINE HARMOUCHE



Sabine has been involved with AboutFace for well over 5 years. She started volunteering because she was ready to give back to others. She wanted to pass on a strong message of not being a victim of circumstance. Sabine was born with a cleft lip and it wasn't until her early 30's that she started accepting her difference and being at peace with it. Volunteering at Camp Trailblazers was a fantastic experience and eye opener for her, and she also volunteers by facilitating the adult support calls. She works at the Eaton centre for Sears Canada which is a new position for her.

JOHN BALOGH



It was an 11-year-old boy from Vietnam who helped John discover AboutFace. He was watching the CBC news when he saw Son Phenh, and his sponsors struggling to get him treatment for a significant vascular deformity. He got involved in Son's hunt for treatment, but more importantly, it was really the first time in his life that John had any direct relationship with another person with a facial difference. From Son, John got involved in the AboutFace's Camp Trailblazers in BC and has also had the honour of facilitating support calls for other adults with facial differences.

AMANDA LIZON



Amanda Lizon is 20 years old and was born with a bilateral cleft lip and palate. She has been involved with AboutFace for 7 years and has attended many events over the years. She has been to Trailblazers for 6 years as a camper and once as a volunteer. She loves Camp and loves to help recruit new campers each year! In her free time, Amanda loves sports, hanging out with friends, going up to her boat in the summer and smiling!!!

ANDREW CLANCY



Andrew is originally from Toronto, and currently lives in Peterborough attending Trent University. He is 23 years old, born with a Unilateral Cleft Lip and Palate which he has had about 8 different surgeries to correct it over the years. In the early years of learning and trying to understand his facial difference, there was much conflict with other kids. Understanding your own facial difference at a young age AND being able to properly explain it, appeared impossible. However as many years passed, the knowledge would grow, depression faded, and confidence increased. In 2009, a girl reached out to Andrew - demanding that he devote his positive energy to something called 'AboutFace.' Andrew is now an extremely dedicated member of this organization, contributing all the possible support to new and younger faces.

After several years of being on the Camp Staff, the fundraisers, and all the other crazy days, he has officially declared the successful future of AboutFace to be a new life adventure.

KARIYM JOACHIM



Kariym was born with Treacher Collins and has been a member of AboutFace since he was very young. In recent years he has become more involved, volunteering for our events and programs. He held the position of Co-Chair of the Family Centered Care Advisory Council at Sick Kids hospital for several years. Currently he is completing his Masters Degree in London, Ontario.

CALEB SHEEHAN



Caleb is in his fourth year at McMaster University, and was born with a cleft lip and palate. He has been a member of AboutFace since 2005 when I attended he attended Camp Trailblazers. Ever since, he has been an active participant, going to camp a few more times (including as a leader) and taking part in as many events as possible. Caleb also attended the Leadership Expedition last summer, which was a great new program. As a part of this organization, Caleb has overcome many obstacles, made many new friends, and has had many wonderful experiences. He feels it's now time to give back,

and the Constituency Committee is the perfect way to do it.

ELIZABETH ROSS



Elisabeth was Executive Director of the National Ovarian Cancer Association from 1997 - 2006 before initiating a merger with Canada's only other national ovarian cancer organization, based in Vancouver, BC. In 2007, in recognition of her change leadership, Elisabeth was appointed CEO of the new Ovarian Cancer Canada. Elisabeth began her career as volunteer founder, then Executive Director of AboutFace International, a support and information network for individuals with facial differences. After 10 years, she moved on to the position of Regional Director of the Neonatal Follow-up Program for the tri-hospital partnership of Hospital for Sick Children, Mount Sinai and North York General Hospital. While she entered the non-profit sector driven by passion for a cause, she has

developed expertise in program development, public awareness, and fundraising. Born in Montreal, Elisabeth holds an Honours undergraduate degree in Psychology from Bishop's University, Diploma in Voluntary Sector Management for York University, and a Masters of Science in Health Administration from the University of Toronto. Elisabeth has been honoured with several awards including WXN's Canada's Most Powerful Women: Top 100 Award (honoured on two occasions), the Order of Ontario, Parent/Patient Leadership Award from the Cleft Palate Foundation, the Harold Livergant Award and the Robert Wood Johnson Award, both of the latter from the Department of Health Administration, University of Toronto. Ovarian Cancer Canada was recently awarded the Presidential Medal from the Society of Gynecological Oncology for exceptional contribution to the field of gynecological oncology. It is the first time the Society has ever awarded an organization this top honour.

DAVID ROCHE



David was born with his facial difference but never talked about it until he got on stage at age 44 and it became the basis for a performing/speaking/writing career with which he has supported himself for almost 20 years. Now he finds, at long last, that he wants to reach out more to others with facial difference. He thinks it has taken him a whole lifetime to realize this. David is glad that AboutFace exists, and has been a supporter since it's early days.

LISA SOOLEY



Lisa Sooley is an AboutFace Community Rep for Newfoundland and Labrador. She is a full time nurse in the ICU department at our local children's hospital. She is also a wife, and mommy to two wonderful little boys (Kyle 5 yrs and Tyler 31/2yrs). Lisa became involved with AboutFace 5 years ago when my oldest son (Kyle) was born with Bilateral Cleft Lip and Palate, and a nurse at the Janeway Hospital introduced her to the organization. She looked into it, and quickly became a community rep. Since then she has been working hard to provide the people of Newfoundland and Labrador with the programs and services offered by AboutFace. She hosts a parent and baby playgroup, as well as organizes an annual AboutFace picnic held each spring. She also is a Camp Trailblazers volunteer in Newfoundland. Lisa works with the craniofacial department of the children's hospital to make AboutFace more known, and she has represented AboutFace at dental conferences. She is very excited to be a part of the Constituency Committee.