

The nominating committee and the board of directors recommend the following Slate of Nominees to join RisingOaks' Board of Directors for a 2-year term, 2025 to 2027. In doing so, the following core leadership values were considered:

1. **Mission driven:** values align with RisingOaks' Mission, values, beliefs and guiding principles.
2. **Governance:** understands the difference between the work of management and the board; is able to think strategically and assist in setting direction for the organization.
3. **Knowledge and judgement:** understands child care in their role as a parent or advocate for quality child care; has the ability to appropriately question data and information presented to the board for its deliberations.
4. **Engagement & participation:** will be diligently prepared for meetings and actively engaged in board discussions.
5. **Communication & Teamwork:** respects confidentiality; will contribute meaningfully and knowledgeable to board discussions, providing valuable input and advice to management.

In addition, the Board of Directors considered the following:

Competencies

- Advocacy/Government Relations
- Financial Management
- Recruitment
- Risk Management
- Strategic Thinking

Expertise

- Accounting designation
- Human Resources designation
- Legal experience
- Governance experience
- Government Relations experience

Perspectives

- Black
- Indigenous
- People of Colour
- Gender
- Lived or work experience in DEI and anti-racism work

Through a rigorous application, competency assessment and interview process, the nominating committee determined that the following individuals were eligible to stand for election, or re-election, to RisingOaks' Board of Directors. This Slate of Nominees was approved by the Board of Directors on March 4, 2025 and is now proposed to the membership for an official election to fill five (5) director positions.

BOARD RECOMMENDED SLATE OF NOMINEES

Christiana Alkiviades, CPA		Christiana is a Chartered Professional Accountant working in the higher education sector. In her current role she leads initiatives that enhance operational efficiency, as well as overseeing accounting functions and the university's capital asset portfolio. Before joining the U of W in 2017, Christiana worked at Nestle where she played an important role in Total Performance Management initiatives, leading efforts to track operational efficiencies. Christiana is eager to use her combination of financial expertise and strategic leadership in her role as a director. She is passionate about assisting RisingOaks with creating accessible and equitable opportunities for children and their parents. Christiana previously had children in care with RisingOaks Early Learning.
Centre:	n/a	
Occupation	Corporate Accounting Manager, University of Waterloo	
Prior Board Experience	RisingOaks Early Learning – Governance committee (2 years) – Finance & Audit committee (3 years)	
Jessica Ronzio, MSW/RSW		Jessica has a degree in social work and is passionate about building relationships and supporting members of the community. Jessica has worked on bridging the gap between government legislation and frontline work through program development, implementation, and evaluation. Working for several years in child protection services led to her passion for children & their connection to the community. Currently Jessica operates her own psychotherapy practice called Reclaim and Rise Counselling. Jessica has two daughters, one who attends RisingOaks Early Learning Oak Creek.
Centre:	Oak Creek	
Occupation	Psychotherapist, Reclaim and Rise Counselling	
Prior Board Experience	RisingOaks Early Learning Board of Directors – Director (4 years) – Vice-Chair (1 year) – Secretary (2 years) – Governance committee (2 years) – Nominating committee (2 years)	

Katherine Walsh, MBA		Katherine has an MBA from Wilfrid Laurier University and has held leadership roles in Operations and Program Delivery at BlackBerry, Sun Life and OTIP. Her passion is coaching people and being a part of their development. In her various roles she has focused on the tools, systems and processes to enable a group to continuously improve. At OTIP Katherine currently leads the delivery of a strategic transformation to connect the dots between where the organization wants to go and how it wants to get there. Katherine has a daughter who graduated from the pre-school room at RisingOaks Early Learning St Matthew.
Centre:	St. Matthew	
Occupation	Director, Program Delivery, Ontario Teachers Insurance Plan (OTIP)	
Prior Board Experience	RisingOaks Early Learning Board of Directors – Director (2 years) – Nominating committee (2 years)	
Necia Martins, EdD, MBA		Necia holds an MBA from Laurier along with a B. Science and Doctorate in Educational Leadership from Western University. As a senior leader in Enrolment Services for 9 years, Necia is accountable for continuous improvement, service center, financial aid, scholarships, financial literacy and student accounts. Necia has served as co-chair of the RisingOaks diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging (DEIB) committee and is passionate about bringing this knowledge to the board. She is looking forward to supporting the organization as a director to continue the growth and critical foundation that produces an exceptional experience for children. Necia has two children at RisingOaks Early Learning John Sweeney.
Centre:	John Sweeney	
Occupation	Associate Registrar, Student Finance & Client Services, Wilfred Laurier University	
Prior Board Experience	RisingOaks Early Learning – Governance committee (4 years) St. Mary's General Hospital Board – Human & Culture Development committee (5 years)	
Robert MacDonald, MBA		Robert has spent the past three decades consulting organizations on how to best adopt disruptive technologies. Along the way, Robert obtained a Bachelor of Science (BSc) and a Master of Business Administration (MBA), specializing in Entrepreneurial Management. He has also earned advanced certifications from Harvard and Wharton. He strives for excellence in his work through professional development and nurturing relationships. Robert has three children, including one that previously attended RisingOaks Early Learning.
Centre:	n/a	
Occupation	Director, Technology, Digital Insights & Risk Management, FTI Consulting	
Prior Board Experience	RisingOaks Early Learning Board of Directors – Director (3 years) – Governance committee (2 years) – Nominating committee (1 year)	

Notice to Members

The Slate includes five (5) nominees to fill five (5) vacancies. As a result, members will be asked to approve the Slate, thus electing all five directors, with one motion.

The newly elected directors will join the following directors, who are now completing their second year of their current term, to form RisingOaks Early Learning Ontario's 2025-2026 Board of Directors:

Director	Occupation	Centre, if applicable
Alex Zhou, B. Math	Senior Manager, Data & Analytics Strategy, BMO	
Alisha Michiels, CHRP	HR Manager, eHealth Centre of Excellence	n/a
Bernard Crawford, B. Comm, PMP	Project Management Professional	St. Nicholas
Christel Wu, BA, MA	Director, High Risk Capital Markets Clients, RBC	Saint John Paul
Cindy Ofunne, MBA, PMP, CSM	Founding Director, PEC PM Experts Inc.; Project Manager, Arnprior Regional Health	n/a
Julia Bloom, B. Science, PMP	Principal Consultant, Bloom Innovation Consulting; Professor, School of Business, Conestoga Collage	n/a