

Happy New Year SARP Members!

My name is Francis Cashin and I am currently the Chair of S.A.R.P.'s Board. I wanted to send along well wishes to you and your family and introduce myself as I am a "come from away". I was born and raised in rural Nova Scotia in a small fishing village along the eastern shore. I grew up watching the fishing boats come and go, heading down to the wharf to buy fresh lobster and, as I got older, was employed unloading the fishing boats, mainly shrimp, snow crab and flounder. I now live in Saskatoon with my wife Meghan and our two boys John and Blair. I work as a Recreation Therapist with Saskatchewan Health Authority. My wife, Meghan is also a recreation professional and is originally from Yorkton, SK. We met in Halifax, NS while doing clinical practicums for our respective recreation therapy programs.

We moved to Saskatoon about 7 years ago and I was astonished at the beauty of this province. Although I held a stereotypical few of Saskatchewan (where you watch your dog run away for days), I was not anticipating the amazing boreal forest of the north, where we spend a lot of our summers. I quickly found out that everyone had a "lake" that they go to, and many people had similar experiences growing up in rural Saskatchewan as I did in rural Nova Scotia. I am convinced that Fishermen and Farmers are both cut from the same cloth. Although, I do not pretend to be an expert in either, there are similarities to the hard work during the season and the hard work prepping during the off season.

I have had the fortune of growing up participating in a wide variety of activities, from playing trombone in a school band, to water skiing out on the Mira, to sailing on the open Atlantic Ocean. I also played competitive badminton and soccer. Although, I had to hitch hike to many of my soccer games an hour and a half away. These experiences have shaped who I have become, the skills that I developed and the sense of importance to my identity.

I am honored to be a part of the recreation profession, helping to instill the same values and importance of recreation, as I experienced, to others. I value being a part of this organization and belonging to a group of professionals that hold these same values. I am thankful for the hard work that TJ and his staff, and the board members have accomplished and I am honored to be your chair this year. If we haven't met, I would enjoy getting to know you. I look forward to having a conversation, share a story, debate philosophy or enjoy a cold drink with whomever I can. I look forward to advocating for this great profession and its professionals, who do amazing work, every day.

Respectfully,

Francis Cashin

Chair