



Management Team Biographies

Cindy Adams, Executive Director

Cindy's unwavering commitment to science and education – and to Scientists in School – has been behind the organization's evolution from a local grassroots initiative of the Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) to the mid-size science enrichment outreach charity it is today. First joining Scientists in School as a classroom workshop presenter in early 1993, Cindy quickly assumed responsibility (initially on a volunteer basis) for managing all aspects of Scientists in School's business, ranging from presenter recruitment and training to program development and from book-keeping and administration to fundraising and public awareness. Her role as Executive Director was formalized when Scientists in School incorporated as a non-profit organization in 1999, though she continued to present workshops until about 2006.

Today, with the support of her strong staff team, Cindy has overall accountability to ensure that the goals and programs of Scientists in School are effectively planned, resourced, implemented and measured in accordance with Board Policy and in alignment with Scientists in School's mission, vision, core values and strategic plan. Prior to joining Scientists in School, Cindy spent 12 years as a research scientist at the University of Toronto, where she had also earned her M.Sc. (Applied Ecology) and B.Sc. (Biology). While at U of T, Cindy worked on a wide variety of pollution ecology research projects, many related to forest decline, air pollution, and the evolution of heavy metal tolerance in select plant species.

Cindy currently sits on the board of The Science Teacher's Association of Ontario. Cindy is a past president of the CFUW Ajax-Pickering and served many years as an active member of its executive. She is also a recipient of a YWCA Durham "Women of Distinction Award" in recognition of her leadership in science promotion and community involvement. An avid nature enthusiast, Cindy can't remember a time growing up when she didn't have insects, tadpoles and other 'creepy crawlies' somewhere in her house. Her passion for nature continues today as Cindy seizes every opportunity she can to grab her binoculars and head out birding to nearby ravines or her favourite birding hotspot, Point Pelee.

Lynn Boyd, Director, Programs and Operational Effectiveness

Lynn first joined Scientists in School as a classroom presenter in 1998 and assumed a "Team Leader" role two years later with responsibility for ensuring the effective delivery of a variety of Scientists in School workshops. In 2002, Lynn became Scientists in School's Director of Programs. In this capacity, Lynn is accountable for overseeing workshop development and improvement, program quality assurance and presenter training, and classroom safety.

Spending 20+ years at the University of Toronto, Lynn brings solid background in research science to Scientists in School. She holds a Ph.D. (Organic Chemistry) and an Honours B.Sc. (Physical Sciences), both from U of T. A self-proclaimed "science geek", Lynn is also an avid dog trainer and puts physics to the test through agility competitions. She also enjoys running and biking.

Michelle Butler, Regional Manager, South Central Ontario Region

Michelle began her career with Scientists in School as one of the original presenters in the South Central Ontario region in 2007. In 2009, she began to move out of the classroom as she took on a larger role in Scientists in School as a Regional Coordinator. Michelle began her current position as Regional Manager in 2014, exactly seven years after she began as a Scientists in School presenter.

Michelle holds a BA from Trent University. In her current role, Michelle encourages and provides leadership to a team of highly skilled Scientists in School presenters, while continuing to build and foster relationships with educators, principals, science consultants at the board level, and ensuring continued quality customer service. Outside of Scientists in School Michelle loves to read, participate in various outdoor activities, manage three children and spend time with her extended family.

George Chau, Director of Finance and Administration

George assumed the position of Scientists in School's Director of Finance and Administration in mid-2008. In this role, he oversees all aspects of Scientists in School's financial accounting (including budgeting, reporting, and audit), inventory and purchasing, information technology and general administration.

George has diverse background in financial management and accounting gained over his 30+ year career. From 1985-1992, he gained experience in internal auditing and accounting in both the retail and mining industries. He then shifted his focus to the non-profit sector, working with aboriginal service agencies and educational organizations, as well as the Anglican Church. George has a B.A. (Economics) from York University and a MBA from the University of Western Ontario. When he's not crunching numbers for Scientists in School, George connects science to his world through his passion for cooking and carpentry. Scientists in School's "Kitchen Chemistry" and "Structures: Stable and Strong" workshops have been particularly helpful!

Wendy Ellert, Regional Manager, Southern Alberta

Wendy joined Scientists in School in October 2009 as Program Coordinator for the new Southern Alberta Branch in Lethbridge. She took on the title of Regional Manager for Southern Alberta in 2014, with a leading role in the Calgary expansion. She provides leadership to Lethbridge and Calgary presenters, and connects with School Boards and Principals across Southern Alberta.

Wendy brings skills learned from a long career as a Medical Laboratory Technologist, as a preceptor to students in Transfusion Medicine and Histopathology. In addition, she was an active participant in her three son's schools, and church. Wendy and her husband enjoy days off at their cabin near Waterton Lakes National Park, where they hike, kayak, and take wildlife photos.

Laura Lemay, Manager, Human Resources and Executive Assistant to the Executive Director

Laura joined Scientists in School in April 2008 as Executive Assistant, providing administrative support to the Executive Director and the Board of Directors and coordinating human resources activities. In the fall of 2009, she assumed the position of Human Resources Manager while continuing her role as Executive Assistant. As Human Resources Manager, Laura develops policies, manages staff recruitment, compensation, training and development; provides counseling and advice to staff and management on HR issues; and coordinates Scientists in School's performance management system.

Laura brings to Scientists in School many years of management experience in the Human Resources field, much of it gained with a large financial institution, where her responsibilities have included policies and procedures;

pensions and benefits; compensation and counseling. She holds a B.A. (Commerce) from the University of Toronto.

Amy Schindler, Director of Fund Development & Communications

Amy joined Scientists in School in 2013 as the Director of Fund Development & Communications. In her role, she develops and stewards key relationships, manages a portfolio of existing and prospective donors, collaboratively plans and implements strategic opportunities for engagement and fund development, and oversees all Scientists in School communication initiatives and materials.

Amy brings a rich background in fundraising and marketing, working as a Senior Development Officer for University of Toronto Schools, Manager of Special Events and Marketing for Frontier College, and Program Coordinator for The Heart and Stroke Foundation's Jump Rope & Hoops for Heart program. She received a BA Hons from University of Guelph and a diploma in Corporate Communications from Centennial College. With two young children at home, Amy spends much of her spare time making snacks, answering questions, reading bedtime stories and exploring the 'world' around their home.

Karen Wesener, Regional Manager, East Central Ontario

Karen first discovered Scientists in School as a parent volunteer and then started with the organization in 2009 as a presenter. She enjoyed presenting for both Kindergarten and Grade 8 classes. She became a Team Leader in 2013, with a focus on physics, engineering and math topics. She then started as Regional Manager in 2018. Karen always loved science class, which led her to pursue Civil Engineering at the University of Toronto. She graduated with a B.A.Sc. in 1993 and a M.Eng in 1995, with a focus on transportation. She worked for a consulting engineering firm that specialized in traffic reviews for new developments and obtained her Professional Engineer designation. She then worked for CN in their Revenue Management department, using her logic and mathematical skills to look for trends in their invoicing. Karen also enjoys running for pleasure and hanging out with her family and cats.