
150 Profiles: Amanda Mayer

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As we mark the 150th anniversary of confederation, The Philanthropist is profiling Canadians from across the non-profit sector and putting a face to 150 individuals who work or volunteer in Canada's social sector.

Name: Amanda Mayer

Current role in the sector: Communications & Governance Director at the Lawson Foundation

Years working and/or volunteering in the non-profit sector: 15 years.



What was your first job in the sector or a defining moment?

My first job in the sector was with the Centre of Excellence for Early Childhood Development (CEECD), where I managed conferences and coordinated pieces of the Encyclopedia on Early Childhood Development. At the time, I had not realized that I was actually working in the “sector” or that there was even a “sector”, but that position opened my eyes to a whole new world. One where I grew passionate about children and youth and one that aligned so well with my own values. And here I am, 15 years later, still working in the “sector” and even a graduate of Carleton University’s Masters in Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership program.

Describe your desk/workspace.

When it comes to workspace, I really do have the best of both worlds. I get to work from my home office nestled in Cantley, Québec but also get to go into a collaborative office space in Toronto, known as Foundation House. Each space lends itself to a different environment that works best for certain tasks. For example, when I need a quiet space to focus on writing, my home office is best suited for this. But when I need to be inspired or get input or feedback, Foundation House is the place to be where I can connect with not only the Lawson Foundation colleagues, but also peers from the other organizations that share the space with us.

What are you reading or following that has expanded your understanding of the non-profit sector?

I am a big fan of the [Stanford Social Innovation Review](#)—especially the blogs that share opinions and perspectives on doing good, better and highlight different points of views on established practice. Another favourite resource of mine is the MPNL (Masters in Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership) Facebook page. Students & graduates of the program share resources they come across on the non-profit sector. It’s a great way to keep connected with peers across the country and keep on top of emerging trends, challenges and opportunities in the sector.

What do you think our sector needs to be thinking about?

I'm really excited about new approaches to philanthropy and working differently to drive change—including exploring and experimenting with more nimble and responsive ways of doing our work. Coming together at Foundation House with other grantmakers has opened my eyes to the power of doing things together, pooling our resources and thinking differently about how we engage in philanthropy.

Do you know someone we should profile as part of this series? Email us at philanthropistprofiles@gmail.com