

IAYMH Executive Committee Nominations 2020

Office bearer candidates

Pat McGorry, President



It has never been more important to focus on the needs and potential of young people as now as the world struggles to withstand and overcome the threat and ordeal of the COVID19 pandemic. The lives and futures of young people the world over were already threatened by their main health problem, mental ill health, but the social and economic impacts of the pandemic have added greatly to that threat and burden. We have laid some strong global foundations over the past decade since the IAYMH was established but now is the time to build on these, and place youth mental health at the forefront of global mental health reform. We need to awaken and harness the voice, the energy and ideas of young people themselves to transform our approach in the post-COVID world. I would greatly appreciate your support to continue as President to face this challenge and continue our progress.

Royanne Finola McGregor, Youth Vice President



I am 23 years old currently pursuing a psychology masters in University College Cork. I have a passion for youth mental health, early intervention and advocacy. I volunteer on the youth advisory panel for Jigsaw (National Centre for Youth Mental Health, Ireland). In June I was invited to attend a government meeting and advocate on behalf of young people. I attended the IAYMH 2019 with a bursary enabling me to present research and co-chair a session. It was amazing to connect with likeminded individuals from around the globe and learn from them. I would love the chance to volunteer my time and skills and have the chance to collaborate with individuals around the globe and help ensure the best for the mental health of our young people. I have experience advocating for young people, a passion for youth mental health, organisational skills, determination, collaboration abilities and I am a confident public-speaker.

Aaron Murphy, Youth Vice President/ Ordinary Member



My name is Aaron Murphy and I am an addiction specialist for the Peter Mcverry Trust in Dublin (Homeless organisation). I worked as a mental health worker in Sri Lanka for 6 months with a focus on youth before returning to the role of lead psychology officer for KeepAppy. I also spent 6 months working for Jigsaw the national centre for youth mental health in Ireland as well as volunteering with Jigsaw for a 4 year period (1 year on the board) I spent two years volunteering on a student support and crisis phone line as

well as coordinating a social club for adults with intellectual disabilities. I have not actively been involved in IAYMH since I attended the 2013 conference but I strongly believe that my fresh perspective, experience, passion for youth mental health and dedication would make me ideal for the 18-25 VP Role.

Nayma Bilal, Youth Vice President

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Nayma Bilal is a Medical Science (Pathology) student with a strong passion for youth mental health. Her background in health care, passion for mental health advocacy and immense leadership skills make her the perfect candidate for the Youth Vice President of the Executive Committee. Nayma is a highly motivated and committed professional with proven history of superior performance at individual, team and organisational levels. Her profound leadership skills are demonstrated through her roles as School Representative Council and Soccer Captain all throughout primary and high school, Science Faculty Board Student Representative at her university, member of the SWSLHD Youth Advisory Group Member and founder of a volunteering youth support group initiative. With the ability to multitask and prioritise workloads with little or no supervision, she is a very detail oriented professional looking to bring medical background and skills to improvement of mental health care of the youth demographic.

Jessica English, Youth Vice President/ Ordinary member

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My name is Jessica English (24 years old) and I am applying for re-election to the IAYMH Executive Committee. I am a passionate advocate who identifies as a young person with a lived experience of mental illness. I have been representing young people, and advocating in the mental health sector

for the last 10 years. During this time, I have had the privilege to represent young people on the IAYMH Executive and have been involved in the subcommittee revising the International Declaration for Youth Mental Health. In Australia, I am currently the youngest member of Mental Health Australia's National Register of Consumer and Carer Representatives and work at all levels of the mental health system to advocate for the needs and interests of young people.

I am interested in this role because I am passionate about improving the mental health and wellbeing of all young people, and want to continue the work that has been done by the IAYMH. The coming years following the start of the pandemic are going to be crucial for young people's mental health and wellbeing, and I feel that I can contribute effectively to this Executive Committee to advocate for international and local commitment to significant systemic change in the way we support, and empower youth people on a global scale.

Matthew Church, Youth Vice President



As a young person with lived mental health experience, I seek a position on the IAYMH Executive to bring a young perspective to the governance of the organisation.

I have governance experience as Treasurer of Youth Affairs Council Victoria (YACVic, Victoria's youth peak body), a Non-Executive Director of the Aaron Sansoni Group, and as a subcommittee member of the Young & Well CRC.

As well as a young voice, I bring commercial and strategic experience leading organisations from COO and general management positions in the private and NFP sectors.

It would be a privilege to be a part of steering this incredible organisation and increasing its diversity, vibrancy and positioning as a global leader in youth mental health advocacy and research.

Serena Lee, Youth Vice President



As a psychology and counselling graduate, and an advocate for mental health and human rights through social innovation, I aspire to provide the means for individuals to see the good in themselves and empower them to overcome all odds. I stand with youth, women and the marginalized in lifting each other up and shaping a supportive space where talents are recognised and flourish.

I am currently involved in research in behavioural health, with areas of interest including clinical, educational and business psychology with accumulated

experience in research/academia, international NGOs and corporate settings. I firmly believe in the idea “By youth for youth” as a Youth Ambassador for the Hong Kong Youth Summit 2020, against mental health stigma and providing psychoeducation on resilience. Internationally, I presented at the APA Convention 2020 on Freedom from Fear during such socially turbulent and unprecedented times. With the role as a vice president, I emphasize inclusivity and diversity in making meaningful connections.

Daniel Nixon, Youth Vice President/ Ordinary Member



Dan is a Youth Peer Engagement Coordinator with Foundry and graduated from the University of British Columbia in Political Science. Dan’s experience working in youth mental health includes work with BC Children’s Hospital, jack.org and Government of British Columbia. While Dan is an experienced facilitator and speaker with more than 15,000 in person interactions over his journey, he recognizes one of the most powerful tools available is a smile. Dan’s ability to bring his perspective of mental health as a queer person

growing up in a rural community combined with his experience working with nonprofits will shape his work within the IAYMH.

Dan looks forward to the opportunity of increasing the engagement work being done by the IAYMH by leveraging his privilege and previous experiences to empower youth voices and perspectives into every action by the association.

Oluwaferanmi Omitoyin, Youth Vice President



Oluwaferanmi is a medical professional in training and has been exposed to months of training in psychiatry and has attended trainings by some of the most prominent mental health advocacy groups in Nigeria including Mentally Aware Nigeria. He is very passionate about mental health advocacy especially

amongst his peers, the youths and is a member of the foremost mental health advocacy group in his community.

He has been involved in organising awareness outreaches on mental health to over two thousand people so far. He also actively advocates on social media and has facilitated numerous webinars on mental health on various platforms including the YouthLead by USAID with a membership base of over ten thousand people.

At the age of twenty-two, Oluwaferanmi is an experienced student leader who is both passionate about mental health and has the ability to coordinate and organise large groups of people and events.

Apophia Pearl Akiiza, Youth Vice President



PEARL APOPHIA, Ugandan aged 23, hardworking, self-motivated, resilient, passionate on serving, inspiring and empowering other youth. Apparently am girl child activist, empowering and inspiring orphans and vulnerable children under USAID, PROJECT: Better Outcomes for Children and youth in North and Eastern Uganda.

I want to be a vice president so that I address the cause of mental health among youth in Africa and beyond. If at all am given a chance, positive impact will be visible.

Aleksa Matić, Youth Vice President



My name is Aleksa Matić and I am coming from Banja Luka (Republic of Srpska, Bosnia and Herzegovina). I have been involved in the work of the Association since the IAYMH conference in Dublin in 2017, and in the very same year I became a member of IAYMH Youth Executive Member. By profession, I am a Sociologist who is employed at the Institute for Youth and Community Development in the youth programs development. I advocate for

greater accessibility of mental health services to young people in rural areas. In my eight years of work in the non-governmental and civil sectors, I have focused primarily on combating the stigmatization of people with mental health issues. As a country where almost 50% of the population lives in rural areas, Bosnia and Herzegovina faces the problem of lack of adequate health care for young people, ie. young people do not have access to resources. My job is based on improving the conditions of young people, with a focus on rural areas.

Zaynab Sohawon, Youth Vice President/ Ordinary Member



I am a young person aged 19 with lived experience of Psychosis and Emotionally Unstable Personality Disorder. I was an inpatient in psychiatric intensive care and forensic secure services for 4 years after being in community psychiatric services for 4 years. I had experienced adverse childhood experiences and trauma from before the age of 11. Whilst in

hospital, I was subject to restrictive practice such as forced injection and severe restraint lasting hours.

I am now a Lived Experience Practitioner with. I am a published author of “Miscellaneous Memoirs of the Mad” and Diana Award recipient for my youth mental health activism work.

I believe I can improve recovery outcomes for young people experiencing mental distress. I want to reduce the global burden of mental ill health by advocating for service user voice and. Treating mental health in young people is achieving early prevention and intervention of deteriorating mental illness.

Gaia Brignone, Vice President/ Ordinary Member



Having suffered from mental health issues from a young age, I am aware of the urgent need to redesign, reform, and invest in youth mental health – the starting point of all mental health. Changing the existing narrative and inspiring future leaders to embrace mental health is my life’s mission. I am itching to see and be a part of the change and by focusing on early prevention and

intervention we create multiplier effects that will benefit both individuals and society at large.

As an associate at NM Impact, I focus primarily on youth mental health, drawing experience from my own journey and working collaboratively with others to create a youth strategy addressing early prevention and intervention. I’m an extremely determined individual, with a creative and flexible mind, a strong sense of initiative, and the ability to connect and work with others, both as a leader and as a team member.

Kenneth Roy V. Aranas, Vice President



As the Vice Chairperson for Education and Research of the Youth for Mental Health Coalition, Inc., Kenneth’s contribution to uplifting the mental health situation in the Philippines has been memorial. He used his knowledge and expertise to provide significant learning mechanisms that contributed to the success of the projects of the organization that specifically highlights public education and awareness--- exhibiting public service as self-fulfillment and a grandeur that will ripple positive change in the society.

Doing volunteer work is not as easy as how others may perceive, but he managed to continue his volunteership to provide inspiration to many---a deed that not everyone can commit on. Mental Health is a sensitive issue in the Phiippines, but he persevered in ensuring that Filipinos will have the opportunity to understand them-selves and their mental well-being.

Stephanie Vasiliou, Vice President



Residing in Toronto, Stephanie is the Head of Global Impact for batyr Australia Limited. Stephanie first held counselling roles in Canada before moving to Australia for 7 years. Stephanie was the third employee of batyr and played an instrumental role in leading the growth of the organisation. As leaders in preventative education and safe lived-experience storytelling, Stephanie developed and scaled a comprehensive speaker training program while collaborating with organisations internationally. Progressing to Head of Programs, Stephanie led the team in delivering peer-to-peer programs, reaching over 250,000 young people face-to-face. Driving innovative ways to amplify the voices of young people has led to Stephanie's expert input in various steering committees. Stephanie's leadership has involved stepping in for batyr's CEO when required, speaking to media and working collaboratively with the Board, leadership team and young people. Stephanie's passion and skill would make her an excellent VP, adding significantly to the Executive team.

Gina Dimitropoulos, Vice President



Dr. Gina Dimitropoulos is passionate about engaging youth and providing youth focused treatments to provide better mental health outcomes. She is an Associate Professor at the Faculty of Social Work, and cross-appointed with the Departments of Psychiatry and Pediatrics at the University of Calgary. She is a Full Member of the Mathison Centre for Mental Health Research and Education, the Hotchkiss Brain Institute, the Alberta Children's Hospital Research Institute, and the O'Brien Centre for Public Health. She is a Canadian leader, leading multi-site site studies in youth and emerging adults with mental health concerns, chronic health conditions and trauma. She brings a wealth of expertise in implementation science, health service research, youth and family engagement and clinical

trials. She is currently conducting treatment trials on interventions such as eMH (e-Mental Health), peer support and patient navigation for youth transitioning to adulthood and across the continuum of adult mental health services. Her research also focuses on understanding risk and resiliency factors associated with child maltreatment and intimate partner violence. She has over 20 years of experience in social work practice and research.

Joseph Anyanwu, Vice President

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My name is Joseph Anyanwu. I am a Nigerian, residing at Port Harcourt, Nigeria. I am simple, God fearing, caring talented, understanding, trustworthy, intelligent and kind hearted human being.

I am the Founder of Boma Nigeria. Boma is a global network made up of local partners, delivering education, innovation and impact for a more intelligent and intentional future.

<http://bomacircles.org/>. Boma Circles host weekly or monthly gatherings to identify promising innovations, passionate entrepreneurs, and actionable ideas — uniting all three to scale environmental solutions and work towards meeting the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.

I am the Regional Director of EduSTEM Global Initiative . Carry out STEM projects in Nigeria and helping children develop knowledge in STEM Education. (<https://www.edusteminitiative.org/global-team.html>)

I am a Professional in communication with experience managing projects with tasks. My background in brand strategy, visual design, and account management made me outstanding. Am fueled by passion for understanding the nuance of cross-cultural advertising.

I am mature, positive and hardworking individual, who always strives to achieve the highest standard possible at any given task. As a marketer at Abukem (<http://abukem.org/>), I demonstrates the ability to work under intense pressure, sell products and services to customers from all backgrounds, handle customers complaints and when they arose.

I have always been an achiever; be it academics or professional life or sports or any other field in my life. I believe in success through hard work & dedication.

One thing I have always known I'd like to do with my life is to carry out SDGs goals. As one of the IIX global impact leader is important to me because, essentially making a difference in people's lifes is the most important aspect of a future career to me, than any other.

I have always been interested in, especially working with children and families. Helping people overcome obstacles and difficulties and making the most of themselves have their rights is a very rewarding yet challenging area.

I believe that everyone deserves to have a good quality of life and decent work opportunity; I coach, Think, mentor, inspire, motivate and love making differences and creating long lasting legacy for humanitarian gesture around the world.

Alisa Simon, Vice President



As Kids Help Phone’s Chief Youth Officer, Alisa Simon has led the organization’s transformational journey to introduce new e-mental health solutions to young people in Canada. Beginning with Canada’s first national 24/7 mental health texting support service, Alisa’s leadership has maximized accessibility for youth in remote and rural communities as

this service does not require a texter to have a data plan or WIFI. This new service option has continued to save lives and support over 300,000 young people impacted by mental health challenges. Adding to this vital service, through Alisa’s leadership, Kids Help Phone also introduce a first-of-its-kind data platform sharing up-to-date information about the state of youth mental health in Canada – called Kids Help Phone Insights. Alisa’s leadership has changed the landscape for youth seeking mental health and well-being support – from their platform preferences to informing policy and change, Alisa’s passion to support the young people in Canada is unwavering.

Swapna Verma, Vice President/ Ordinary Member



As the Program Director of the Singapore Early Psychosis Intervention Programme (EPIP) for more than 10 years I ensured that EPIP was at the forefront of patient care, research and training. EPIP has won many prestigious awards including the WHO award for research in health promotion and the inaugural National Medical Excellence Team award. In 2009, my team and I launched CHAT, as a national youth assessment and outreach programme.

Recently CHAT was awarded grant to develop Integrated Youth Teams with the aim to better integrate health and social care for youth mental health. We have also leveraged on technology with services like “web-CHAT” and “CHAT-line”, a peer-led text-based 24hour support. Young people are actively engaged as “CHAT Ambassadors” to help ensure CHAT stays youth-friendly and relevant. I have been closely involved in the activities of IAYMH since it was first established and have been a member of the Scientific Committee of IAYMH conferences held in 2015 and 2017. We have shared our innovative model of care and best practices with

colleagues from other Asian countries like India and Hong Kong and hope to build an Asian network to create change in the way we think about and deliver youth mental health services.

Barbara Dooley, Vice President



I am passionate about youth mental health research which impacts policy and practice. I have held the role of Vice-President since 2017 working with other members of the Executive to promote youth mental health globally through the activities of IAYMH, in particular the conference. I chaired the Programme Committee for the 4th IAYMH Conference, Dublin 2017 and served on the committee of four others. I have been involved in large scale national studies estimating prevalence of psychological problems in young people. In 2012 I co-authored the My World Survey report; the first national study of youth mental health in Ireland, aged 12-25 years (N >14,000). In 2019 I led the second national study; My World Survey 2 (<http://myworldsurvey.ie/>) with young people central to all stages of the study. In 2013 I co-founded the UCD Youth Mental Health Lab, established to promote research in youth mental health. At present I am leading on the development of a national student mental health database (https://www.tcd.ie/Student_Counselling/3set/index.php.)

Maura Weir, Vice President/ Ordinary member



Throughout my career and education youth mental health has been my passion. While studying Sociology in my undergraduate in Ireland the focus was youth development and participation. I then researched youth health programs for a Master's and landed at the University of Melbourne to study Youth Health and Education Management. My education continued at the Doctorate level in Boston, Massachusetts where I completed my PsyD. My work experience has allowed me to witness youth mental health policy and systems in Ireland, Australia and the US. I strive to advocate for and engage with young people and parents to ensure their voice is heard. My international schooling and experience makes me an ideal candidate to sit on the committee and work collaboratively with organizations to improve the health and wellbeing of young people. I enjoy my research and keep up to date with evidence-informed practices that will promote youth mental health.

Srividya Iyer, Vice President/ Ordinary member



To the IAYMH Executive, I bring the experience and expertise of a researcher and psychologist who focuses on ensuring that young people have timely access to appropriate, youth-friendly mental healthcare and enjoy well-being and social participation. I have had the privilege of working with youths, families, communities, clinicians, researchers, funders and policymakers across the globe. I lead a network of 250+ diverse stakeholders that is transforming mental healthcare for urban, rural, Indigenous, post-secondary and homeless youths across Canada. I contribute to several youth-focused services, research and capacity-building efforts, including in India, where I was born. I would help translate IAYMH's bold vision into services, research and advocacy action. Cherishing the connections I benefit from, I will facilitate collaboration and deepen partnerships with young people within IAYMH's global community. The pandemic has highlighted the need for global, inclusive dialogue and efforts on youth mental health — something I am passionately committed to.

Han Duong, Youth Vice President/ Secretary/Treasurer/ Ordinary Member

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I'm Han, an eager and aspiring young leader who seeks to provide a voice for many of my misunderstood peers. Having recently completed a Bachelor of Science majoring in Psychology at the University of Melbourne, and now completing a Juris Doctor at Monash University, I believe I can bring a sense of sensitivity as well as professionalism to the table. Over the years, I have worked with many youth-focussed organisations, including Headspace and Orygen. Through these experiences, I have learned of the many significant and very real challenges that young people face.

I appreciate the changes that have already been made, but I also know that there is much more to be done because we live in a society that is constantly evolving. Young people have a right to enjoy all that life has to offer. This should be at the forefront of all decision-making for young people.

Kerryn Pennell, Secretary/Treasurer/ Ordinary Member



For 27+ years Kerryn has worked to design & advocate for solutions to improve youth mental health. She has done this through a myriad of clinical and leadership roles;

As a Founding Member of the IEPA, she served as Treasurer & Secretary for 9 years, oversaw the growth of the organisation from establishment

to one with thousands of members from across the world and was a driving force behind it's successful Conferences.

As a Founding Member & Treasurer of the (IAYMH) she has ensured the financial sustainability of the organisation and worked to ensure its growth. She has been committed to partnering with young people in prosecuting the IAYMH agenda. She has led the evolution of the IAYMH's highly regarded Conferences. She has a strong understanding of the Victorian Government legislation the IAYMH operates under. She is currently Director of Strategy and Policy, at Orygen.

Kerryn brings significant skills in governance, financial management, youth participation, partnership development, policy, advocacy, strategy and global development and is an experienced and skilled Executive & Board Member who has contributed to numerous national/ international Committees /Boards.

Most importantly Kerryn is passionate about ensuring all young people enjoy good mental health and wellbeing.

Jo Fitzsimons, Secretary/Treasurer/ Ordinary member



I have worked at Orygen for over 10 years across many areas of our work including research, national and international stakeholder engagement, youth engagement and I've recently started as the Network and Partnership Lead in Orygen's newest team – Orygen Global.

I am passionate about making a difference to the lives of young people around the world. I truly believe there is power in communities to drive the change that our sector still very much needs.

In nominating for a position on the IAYMH Executive, I want to play a part in continuing to unite the global youth mental health community to make sustainable and real transformation for young people everywhere.

I have experience in working within incorporated associations (the rules under which IAYMH operates), as well as extensive experience in project management, financial planning and budgeting, event and conference management, stakeholder engagement and communications.

Thank you for considering me as a new IAYMH Executive member.