

# Arden McGregor

Executive Director and  
Psychological Associate

By Dayna Danson Hons. B.A.



Arden McGregor fondly remembers the moment that sparked what would become her lifelong interest in vocational rehabilitation. “When I was a teenager,” Arden

explains, “I became qualified as a swim instructor and spent countless hours at the pool. One of my most special memories is of “Anne,” a ten-year-old girl with cerebral palsy. Arden remembers Anne’s longing to learn how to dive. “She had so many challenges in her young life that it would have been easy to write her dream off, and encourage her to work on skills that would be “beneficial” for her, but diving was her dream. Every moment I could, I helped her. It took almost a year of effort, but in the end, she did it! I will never forget the way her whole face exploded out of the water with the joy she felt having successfully completed her first dive. Her exhilaration is forever imprinted on my mind. The thrill I got from being part of her joyful accomplishment changed me.” Despite this rewarding experience occurring many years prior to Arden choosing rehabilitation as her career path, she says she knew at that moment that whatever she would be doing, she would dedicate her life to helping others achieve what was most important to them.

Staying true to her promise, several years later Arden attended York University in her hometown of Toronto, where she studied psychology and then subsequently

earned her M.A. in psychology from the University of Toronto. In her third year of undergrad study, Arden had a placement in the rehab department at Humber Memorial Hospital in Toronto where she had a chance to work first hand with individuals struggling to regain their lives after serious injuries and illnesses. “I was excited to be able to come alongside people who were struggling, and encourage, support and guide them along,” Arden says. After receiving her Masters in Psychology, Arden moved to London, ON and began working at Parkwood Hospital’s regional rehabilitation program where she worked with people who had brain injuries, chronic pain and spinal cord injury. While there, Parkwood was awarded ministry funding to start a Brain Injury Outreach Program, something which Arden was excited to be a part of developing. As a founding member of the program, Arden had the opportunity to shape how the program evolved and how it was carried out.

Over the past 20 years working in rehab, Arden says she has grown tremendously. In 2003, when Arden started her own company called Brainworks, she was given the opportunity to advance herself even further by working with a team of like-minded professionals who “always strive for clinical excellence.” At Brainworks, Arden and her team of 40 employees provide client-centered multi-disciplinary rehabilitation services throughout Southwestern & South Central Ontario as well as in the Muskoka region. Arden notes that the success she sees in her clients is what keeps her motivated. “Seeing people achieve goals, resume function, take ownership of their health—for me that is what keeps me going.”

As far as the future of her career goes, Arden hopes to be doing exactly what she’s spent her entire career doing thus far: helping individuals and families impacted by injury and/or trauma achieve their goals and dreams. She notes, however, that the marketplace is changing, and that “funding sources are limiting funds and increasing expectations. Our profession as a whole needs to rise to meet these challenges head on—through client advocacy, finding creative funding solutions and tightening up of our own work to ensure that our practices are effective and efficient.” Right now, Arden’s team is working on taking the knowledge and skills they’ve learned over the years and turning it into an array of creative therapy resources for individuals who have sustained injuries, their families, and their therapists. That way, they are constantly reinventing themselves. “Continuous improvement is what I see for the future of our profession. Keeping ahead of the expectations will allow us to thrive, not just survive,” Arden emphasizes. ☺

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