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Director of Disability Services

Somerville welcomes Catherine Fairlie, Director of Disability Services, to the Somerville team.

Catherine is responsible for the management of staff and performance of Somerville's Disability Services suite of programs which include: Supported Living, Life Skills Development, Support Coordination and administrative functions.

Catherine has moved to Darwin from North Queensland and has extensive experience working in the Disability sector.

Catherine has spent the past two and a half years in North Queensland designing and implementing systems and delivering the roll out of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) for 675 participants between Bundaberg and Cairns.

Prior to this Catherine was based in Melbourne working with disability organisations to become NDIS ready.

Catherine has been busy meeting our Participants and staff and is looking forward to settling into the community.

Welcome Catherine.

Photo above: Debbie Bampton General Manager Community Services, Lawson Broad Somerville CEO welcoming Catherine Fairlie Somerville Director of Disability Services.
A Message from our CEO Lawson Broad

The beginning of 2019 has been one of exciting preparation for the year ahead as we look to implement a comprehensive overhaul of our existing ICT operating systems including finance, payroll, and client management.

While this may seem somewhat dry it is of real importance to ensure we are on the best footing possible to meet the ongoing demands of operating in a growing organisation and adapting to the requirements of the ever-changing regulatory environment within which we exist and ensuring we meet the very highest standards of quality and safety.

The Board of Somerville Community Services would like to acknowledge the ongoing support provided by the Northern Territory Government for the development of new Specialist Disability Accommodation in Katherine. This is great news for the people we support in Katherine, most of whom have been with us for many years and will benefit greatly from living in houses that include design features that will improve day to day living as well as being fantastic new homes. I can’t wait to update you on progress throughout the year.

After more than 20 years of service it was sad to farewell Bonnie Selly, a Somerville stalwart, who has been at the heart and soul of our disability services and will be missed dearly. Bonnie gave far more of herself than was ever asked and the relationships she had with colleagues and clients extended to real friendships that will last well beyond her retirement.

At the same time we are lucky to have Catherine Fairlie start with us as our new Director of Disability Services. Catherine comes with over 20 years experience working in disability and community services with roles spanning personal care work right the way through to senior executive positions with leading providers. She brings a detailed operational insight into every aspect of these services and has made a great contribution to our team in the couple of months she has been with us. It is wonderful to see the Somerville spirit continue to grow with new additions and the support of those that continue to be part of the Somerville family well after having left their official posts.

Thanks to all for your ongoing contributions to this great organisation.

Northern Territory Government Support

The Board of Somerville Community Services would like to acknowledge the ongoing support provided by the Northern Territory Government for our Christmas Appeal.

With the support provided we were able to purchase additional food items for hampers and toys for children. Many disadvantaged families were able to enjoy a Merry Christmas due to the support provided.

Thank you.

Vale – Ron Burridge, Somerville Ambassador

We were saddened to hear of the passing of Ron Burridge on 3 April, 2019. Ron was a committed and dear friend to Somerville and over many years assisted with fundraising and raising the profile of Somerville through his many networks.

Ron was born in Sydney on 31 August 1936. His parents Robert and Thelma Burridge had 6 children, 4 boys and 2 girls. After leaving school aged 15, Ron took up an apprenticeship as a Motor Mechanic and eventually he bought into a franchise with his father and together they managed a Mobile Service Station in Belmore in Sydney.

In 1960 Ron was an inaugural member of a Younger Set Group, which was established to support the St George Crippled Children’s School in Rockdale. Over the years they raised thousands of dollars by holding various fund raising events and activities. This group still have a monthly get together at the Oatley RSL Club and pass the hat around in support of the school.

Ron married Robyne in 1974 and before moving to Darwin in August 1980, he worked for the NSW Ambulance Service, maintaining their intensive care vehicles

In Darwin Ron had a variety of jobs including working for Darwin City Council in their repairs and maintenance workshop, Manager of the Shell Service Station in Casuarina, Trade Instructor at the Darwin Rehabilitation Centre and finally before retiring he worked in Occupational Health and Safety, with the NT Department of Health.

Ron has always shown a keen interest and dedication in helping others. He established a Branch of Technical Aid to The Disabled in the 80’s, and supported his wife Robyne in her various activities associated with the Disability Sector.

In 2002 Ron was awarded his Anniversary of National Service 1951-1972 Medal, which was presented to him by the then Administrator of the Northern Territory, His Honour John Anistomatis AO.

Ron together with his wife Robyne, a notable advocate within the disability sector, were appointed as Somerville’s inaugural Ambassadors in 2015.

Ron will be sadly missed by all past and present staff and Board members of Somerville. We extend our deepest sympathy to Robyne and Ron’s family on his passing.
Somerville Christmas Appeal Thank You

Somerville would like to thank the many individuals, schools, businesses, corporations and government for their generous donations of food and gifts in support of the Somerville Christmas appeal.

Due to the generosity of so many we were able to provide gifts to 380 children and over 140 food hampers to families, the elderly and people staying in shelters over Christmas in the Darwin & Katherine communities.

We extend a warm thank you to the following people and organisations:

- The Essington School
- INPEX Ichthys Project ESS Larrakia, Manigurr-Ma Village, Compass Group Pty Ltd
- East Arm Civil
- Kate Worden Electoral office
- Paspaley Pearling Company Staff
- Palmerston Uniting Church congregation
- Darwin Memorial Uniting Church congregation
- Territory Child Care Group

Anonymous donors

We again received many donations from individuals and families who gave generously to our appeal and wished to remain anonymous. Collectively you all made a significant difference to many children and families. Your contribution and generosity has positively impacted the life of someone in need.

Thank you from the Somerville Team

Photo: The Territory Child Care Group donated two large hampers & bags of gifts.

Christmas Raffle Winners

Thank you to those people who purchased tickets in Somerville’s Christmas Raffle.

The first prize of a $500 Gift Voucher from The GoodGuys was won by D O’Connor.

The second prize of a 32” HD LED LCD TV was won by Cathy Spurr.

Coincidentally Cathy had grown up at 147 Lee Point Road (now Somerville’s Administration office) when the property was the Manse for the Casuarina Uniting Church. Cathy took the opportunity to tour the Administration complex when she collected her prize and shared some childhood memories.

Photo: Cathy Spurr & Mark Teakle collecting their prize.

A successful Christmas gift wrapping fundraiser

Our annual Christmas gift-wrapping service at Casuarina Square and the Palmerston and Gateway Shopping Centres was a great success. We could not have achieved this without the support of over 190 volunteers who gave their time freely to wrap thousands of presents in the lead up to Christmas.

Many of our volunteers have been supporting our gift-wrapping stalls for many years and include students, corporate groups, Somerville board members and staff as well as many individuals who are happy to give their time for a good cause.

We would also like to thank the management and staff at the shopping centres who allowed us to undertake this fundraising event on their premises.

Thank you also to the many shoppers who generously supported our wrapping stalls.

Coordinating this fundraiser is no easy task and we would like to thank Daphne Read AO, Carolyn Cendo, Adelaide Do Santos and Jane Crawford for managing this important event.

We look forward to seeing everyone again for Christmas 2019.

2018 Target and UnitingCare Australia Christmas Appeal

Somerville would like to thank all those people who donated to the 2018 Target and UnitingCare Australia Christmas Appeal at Target stores in Palmerston and Katherine.

Somerville distributed the gifts which were gratefully appreciated by individuals and families and brought smiles to many faces.

Photo: City of Palmerston Mayor Athina Pascoe-Belle, Somerville CEO Lawson Broad with Target Palmerston store manager.
Advanced Gambling Training

Somerville recently hosted a one day Advanced Gambling Training for Financial Counsellors and Support Workers from throughout the Northern Territory.

The training was a collaboration between the SAFCA (South Australian Financial Counselling Association) and the AISR (Australian Institute of Social Relations).

Financial Counsellors from H&K Training, Anglicare NT, CatholicCare NT, Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankuntjatjara (APY) Lands and support workers from Somerville Supported Community Accommodation Program attended the training.

The one-day program aimed to further develop participant skills in working with clients who have gambling problems or are affected by problem gambling.

The program outcomes included:

- increased knowledge of problem gambling, and understanding of its impact on those who gamble and their families,
- information and tools needed to identify and support people with gambling problems,
- strategies to explore concerns about gambling and to prompt clients to take appropriate action,
- increased knowledge of community supports and services that are available to people with gambling problems.

One of the adverse effects of gambling is extreme financial difficulties. Financial Counsellors provide an assessment and strategies to assist people to achieve outcomes that minimise the effects of their situation. They can also refer onto other support services.

If you or someone you know is experiencing financial difficulties you can speak to a Financial Counsellor by calling 1800 007 007 National Debt Helpline.
Darwin Harbour Cruise

As an end of year celebration Somerville’s Disability Services hosted a harbour cruise aboard the Charles Darwin.

Somerville staff, people we support in our Disability Services programs and their family members enjoyed an evening cruise on Darwin Harbour watching the sunset.

For many of the guests it was their first harbour cruise, however any initial nerves were soon forgotten as they enjoyed the experience. It was a great way for families to enjoy an evening together and to get to know the Somerville staff in a social environment. Everyone aboard agreed “it was the best night ever”.

Photo: Jack (R) with his mum, Sharon Knight.

Photo: The people we support in our Disability Services program and Somerville staff enjoyed the evening on the harbour.

Music Therapy for Marie

Marie has been living in Somerville’s Supported Accommodation program for over 20 years. She is a talented musician in her own right and is very passionate about music.

Marie has a particular affection for classical music and the soothing sensation it can bring to her entire body.

We all understand the unique impact music has on each of us. It can alter our mood, it can provide vivid memory recall of both positive and negative experiences. Many of us rarely think about the holistic benefits of music on our own wellbeing. However, research is clear on the positive benefits of music therapy for people with autism in mediating their social behaviours, attention span, communication, anxiety and body awareness.

Marie’s mother has been advocating for music therapy for her for many years. Excitingly now, through Marie’s NDIS (National Disability Insurance Scheme) Plan she has two hours of music therapy every week and the staff who support Marie are receiving training so they can assist Marie to access and use music purposefully.

To find out more about Music Therapy visit the Australian Music Therapy Association website: https://www.austmta.org.au/
In July 2018 Somerville received a grant from the City of Darwin to deliver the Welcoming & Inclusive City Friendship Arts Program. The program is designed and implemented in a way to create a safe space for people with disabilities to be creative. Its purpose is to raise the profile of artists with disabilities. It is a positive example of people working together in inclusive and creative ways to enable people with profound disabilities to undertake valued roles within their home communities.

A similar program had previously been run with Artist Janie Andrews with a group of Aboriginal participants which had created artworks that directly related to their connection to country: their Dreamings, family totems that are so important to them; the hunting and gathering of bush foods etc. Some of the participants had been accomplished artists in their own right prior to attaining a disability.

The small group worked collaboratively with principal artist, Janie Andrews and several support staff, to develop small to medium scale art works which were then combined to create a larger piece. The mosaic below adorns the entrance to Somerville Community Centre at Palmerston.

The theme of connection to country and family continued throughout this program. Participants focused on mastering the different mediums of painting and mosaic. Small pieces were developed by individuals and small group projects for small to medium scale art works.

Through this program we saw participants with significant physical and cognitive disabilities actively communicating their connection to community through art. They demonstrated a relish and joy in creating their art at each session. Given the right support to create art of a high quality for public spaces, all participants have succeeded in sharing their worlds with the general public at large, whilst gaining a sense of pride and self-worth in community.

The hope is that the program can continue and the existing members are able to continue to collaborate to develop new works that can be located in community spaces e.g. government or council buildings/spaces, business or corporate office spaces. If you are interested in supporting this program and these artists please contact Michelle McColm at Somerville.
Staff Acknowledged for Years of Service

We recently took the opportunity to acknowledge Somerville staff from across the organisation for their years of service.

Certificates were presented for 3, 5, 10, 15 and 20 years of service to staff in Darwin and Katherine. To our dedicated employees - we salute you.

Vale - Jason Lantjin

Sadly Jason Lantjin passed away at home on 23rd February 2019. Affectionately known as Jas he had been living in Somerville’s Supported Accommodation for just over 10 years. Jas came into our care as a happy 10 year old boy with the most beautiful smile.

Over the years he experienced episodes of ill-health but generally bounced back and remained healthy. Over the past 12 months his health had deteriorated, with a number of hospitalisations. Jas will be missed by all at Somerville and Jas and his family are in our thoughts and prayers. Rest in Peace.

Somerville recently farewelled Bonnie Solly Director of Disability Services.

Bonnie joined Somerville in 1998 as a frontline support worker and in 2000 was appointed Manager Disability Services with joint responsibility for the management of staff and performance of Disability Services in Darwin and Katherine. In 2017 Bonnie was appointed Director of Disability Services.

Bonnie was well known in the Northern Territory and her extensive experience helped shape our service to be a leader in the disability sector in the NT. Bonnie will be missed by all at Somerville but her legacy will live on.

We wish Bonnie all the best in her retirement.

Somerville Hosts A Free Cinema Event in Katherine

Over the 2018/2019 Christmas school holidays, Somerville’s Katherine Family and Youth services hosted a number of free cinema days.

The event targeted Katherine youth and their families giving them the opportunity to participate in social activities that they may not be able to afford over the school holidays.

The movies shown were:
- Goosebumps 2: Haunted Halloween [PG]
- Venom [PG]
- The Grinch 2018 [PG]
- The Nutcracker and the Four Realms [NR]
- Teen Titans GO! To the Movies [PG]
- Fantastic Beasts: The Crimes of Grindelwald [NR]
- Spider-man: Into the Spider-Verse [PG]
- Ralph Breaks the Internet [PG]
- Bumblebee [M]
- Aquaman [M]
- Mary Poppins Returns [PG]
- How to Train your Dragon 3: The Hidden World [PG]

Bumblebee was the most popular movie shown for the entire event and surpassed the number of people who attended the Grinch screening. Initially the movie was only going to be screened in one theatre, however a second theatre was opened due to the demand from the cinema goers. A total of 475 people attended this session.

The school holiday free cinema event ran successfully with a total of 2591 individuals attending giving an average of 216 people attending each movie.

Attendees gave feedback throughout the event with the majority of attendees asking when Somerville will be holding the event again with special requests for specific movies.

Due to the demand and positive feedback we have been successful in securing funding to enable us to offer this event again in 2019.

Photo: This regular event is made possible with funding provided by the Department of Chief Ministers.

Certificates of Service Presentation Darwin

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<td>10</td>
<td>Anita Baskota, Meg Khanal, Jannie Bacus</td>
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<td>Edna Grainger</td>
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Certificates of Service Presentation Katherine

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<td>Ginalyn Celis</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Geraldine Brennan, Elizabeth Goodwin, Kevin Haddock</td>
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Photo: Jannie Bacus, Meg Khanal, Pellagia Mukandi, Lawson Broad (Somerville CEO), Sunita Bhandari, Edna Grainger, Anita Baskota & Durga Banjade.

Farewell Bonnie

Bonnie Solly at her farewell which was attended by many Somerville staff and people we support in our Disability Services programs.

Photo: Bonnie Solly at her farewell which was attended by many Somerville staff and people we support in our Disability Services programs.
I first met Ron at the 1986 Synod and I was captivated by him, as you would all expect. Who was this impressive Minister, what was his story? He seemed to be special and was certainly well noticed and created a degree of wonder.

He was a born Minister dedicated to self-reflection and thinking about better ways of operating. His experience was rich and fascinating. He and wife Jo were bold and happy to travel and give new challenges a go even when they were vastly remote. The Reverend Steve Orme’s Eulogy outlines Ron’s impressive career wonderfully.

As a twenty year old in 1955, Ron started studying part time for the Presbyterian ministry in Melbourne. But he was also involved in an experimental store front ministry exploring alternative styles of Christian ministry in inner Melbourne. Ordained in 1963, his exit appointment was to the Mildura District Parish based at Merbein.

In 1966, he was recruited by the Australian Inland Mission (AIM) of the Presbyterian Church to a New Patrol ministry in the Pilbara, West Australia. He and Jo were based in Carnarvon with ministry to the construction camps for the developing iron ore mines. An outbreak of infectious hepatitis in the area hospitalised Ron and necessitated his return, with Jo and two young sons, to Melbourne for specialist treatment. While under medical supervision, he acted as an intern at St Andrews Mount Gambier.

In 1968, he returned to the AIM and the Esperance Patrol in south east WA, where he again engaged in experimental ministry with land and mining developments on that remote edge of the continent.

In 1970, the family moved to Perth and for 8 months Ron ran a Pilot Project in Urban Mission out of a cluster of shops adjacent to the Perth city Railway station car park. At the end of the project, Ron was called to minister with the “Melting Pot” coffee shop and neighbourhood house in Nedlands. He was commissioned as “Minister-in-Community” with St Paul’s Nedlands. For his work, he received a Perth Citizen of their Year award in 1972.

During this time, Ron encountered the phrase “Conversations at the edge of the Raft” from a book by Denham Grierson. To me, this is a poignant image for Ron’s ministry.

In 1974, the family returned to North West Victoria. Ron worked in the Mallee Regional Parish, based in Ouyen, preparing Methodist and Presbyterian congregations in the region for union. In 1976, they moved to Mount Beauty in the North East of Victoria. Again Ron was Minister-in-Community as Industrial Chaplain with the Hydro Electric Scheme and tourism ministry in the snow resorts in the area.

Late in 1979, Ron was approached by the Northern Synod to engage in a new form of ministry with Nightstuff Uniting Church. He accepted the challenge and came to establish a Neighbourhood House at the church. The church became a hub of community activities. Playgroups began. A drop-in hub for homeless youth was established. The op shop started.

Worship in the round was introduced. The music group “Krygma” came into being, developing its own repertoire of contemporary Christian music. Ron was also involved with Prison chaplaincy and Nungalinya College. He joined the Board of Somerville Community Services in 1980 and was honorary Chaplain.

From 1984, he was “without settlement” (as the Uniting Church designates) but continued as Minister-in-Community working with NT Government in Drug Addict rehabilitation and as Ecumenical Chaplain for the Port of Darwin. He also continued as honorary Chaplain with Somerville. His work with the Port of Darwin led to his appointment as Director of Stella Maris Community Services on the invitation of the Roman Catholic Bishop working with the seafarers particularly from the prawn fishing fleets.

He remained engaged with the Synod as Chair of the Board of Church and Community.

In 1990, he was employed full time as Agency Chaplain and Minister-in-Community with Somerville Community Services. In 1996, the position became a placement in the Northern Synod. While in that position, from 1992 to 1994, he served as Moderator of the Northern Synod. Ron retired with Somerville, until his retirement in 2005.

I joined the Board of Somerville in 1989. As a new Board member Ron always made me feel welcome asking how my family was (he seemed to know them without having met them), how St Philips was going and talking footy. He could equally be led into a discussion regarding social justice. I quickly recognised his passion for truth and social justice even early on in the piece.

There was never any equivocation in Ron, he knew deep down what Christ had said and he said it. So what a wonderous bonus when he eventually became Chaplain of Somerville as a member of staff (and his appointment was indeed a stroke of genius by CEO Graeme Bull). He was relentlessly dedicated to the care of a large staff and to its many, many clients and he was indeed a pillar of this community. However his dedication was far from dour and everyone rejoiced in his great sense of humour. He had a good joke or a good story and at Christmas time I recall his booming voice singing HO… (bloody) HO…. (bloody) HO which rang through the building.

Ron had a way of colourfully cutting to the Christian chaste and as such spent two years as a very successful Moderator and indeed in this position occasionally wore long pants. During this time he was always a highly valued member of the St Philips College Board where I valued his undying support, encouragement and wisdom.

His colourful statements will remain in my mind for ever. We should be with those “on the edge of the raft”. The word “renewal” was prominent in his statements and in his blessings. He firmly believed that something special happens when we break bread together and most of us remember his monumental graces. But whilst his language and his thoughts exuded great character, these were always about helping someone else. Time for Ron was therefore to be used for someone else. No 9 – 5 but just working tirelessly for those in need, sitting long hours with those sick or dying, reducing fear, providing calm – pushing himself near to exhaustion.

Time for Ron was an opportunity to listen, to get into the right rive with people. He was not hurried but made sure that the people he listened to felt they were heard by someone who truly cared.

I believe Ron’s ancestor was a blacksmith in Stawell, Victoria having originally come from Scandinavia. Maybe this link made Ron determined not only to live on the edge of the raft with those in real need, but to help hammer out a way forward for people who were hurting, and those people – and indeed all of us – benefited from his masterful, meaningful short statements.

I believe the powerful Somerville motto “the courage to be…” emanated from Ron.

Ron faced many challenges and tragedies in his rich life. In 2015 his dear wife Jo passed away. In 1984 his eldest son Stephen was killed on a motorbike in Darwin. He was only 20.

During the 1990s Ron faced open heart surgery in Melbourne. He had other major physical challenges all of which he dealt with, with strength and good humour.

Though Ron is physically gone, he was very dear to us all, he was a great leader, friend and a person we highly respected. His example will live on in our memories and he will therefore continue to make the world a better place. Ron we miss you but may you now rest in your well-earned peace.

Chris Tudor AM President Somerville Community Services Board

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**Vale - Ron Brandt**

Sadly on the 8th January 2019 Ron Brandt passed away. Ron was a Life Member of the Somerville Board serving between 1980 to 2012.

In 1990, Ron was employed full time as Agency Chaplain and Minister-in-Community with Somerville Community Services until his retirement in 2005. After his retirement Ron was a welcome visitor at Somerville and would drop in for morning tea with the staff.

The following is Ron’s Eulogy which was given by Chris Tudor AM, Somerville President at Ron’s funeral.

You could not get anyone more charismatic than Ron Brandt. His strong athletic frame, emphasised by shorts, basketball boots and Indian style shirts and the preferred bum bag which he enjoyed wearing. Ron was indeed an individual and will remain in our memories as unique and striking. His impressive frame with his bald head and magnificent beard came to life with a bass voice that would echo down the corridors of Somerville and into the neighbouring car park. At the end of the project, Ron created a degree of wonder.

His example will live on in our memories and will continue to make the world a better place. Ron we miss you but may you now rest in your well-earned peace.

Chris Tudor AM President Somerville Community Services Board
Hi folks, Joanne Flanagan here. I commenced working with Somerville in August 2018 as the Coordinator of Assets and Procurement.

I am Territorian born and raised and a proud Larrakia Woman.

Growing up in Darwin was great fun. Getting from A to B was either foot falcon or if lucky enough to have a bike, you could ride or get a dinky.

The best part of the day was going for a walk along the Stuart Highway, (where Holden is now) after dinner, pushing the babies in the pram.

Weekends were spent fishing, shooting (if you were a boy) or swimming, and not in a pool. Usually a road side stream or where the road had washed out and you were left with a hole in the road. The 13 mile was very popular with our family.

Christmas and public holidays were spent together, grandparents, uncles, aunts and cousins, playing cricket, badminton, softball, etc. – not in the back yard, but on the road in a dead end street.

My husband Darren and I went to the same school but we did not become a couple until a few years after completing year 12. We have 3 wonderful, generous and loving children; Liam (23), Callum (20) and Shannyn (19) of whom we are very proud.

In my spare time, I love reading, spending time with my family, doing puzzles of all sorts (3D, jigsaw, word, numbers, etc.), playing card games and board games.

Family gatherings are full on and joyful. I bring the house and everyone else brings the food. My cousins are fond of saying I am the only Chinaman in Darwin who can’t cook.

Family is incredibly important and encompass more than those related to you by blood.

My personal mantra is: I can, I will, I do. This along with my attributes of being reliable, honest, creative, loyal, determined, cautious and accountable shape my approach to life on both a personal and work level.

My background is in libraries where I hold both a diploma and BA in Library and Information Services. I have worked in both the public and private sector, in education, health and retail.

Over the years I have developed a passion for Work Health and Safety and firmly believe that Safety is Everyone’s Responsibility. I hold a Certificate IV in Work Health and Safety.

I work best with clear direction and won’t ask anyone I work with to do something I am not prepared to do myself.

I enjoy the type of work I do and know that my role is to support those working in Somerville Community Services programs and homes caring for our participants and families.

Joanne Flanagan
Coordinator of Assets and Procurement