



## Letter from the Chair

September is a time for new beginnings. The excitement of change and the prospect of growth that come with the start of every new school year have always been an inspiring time for me. Starting from when my children were young, beginning in their school years, I have always taken the time to engage myself in initiatives that expanded my own personal learning and skills. As I have moved through life's stages, it has been essential for me to remember to continue learning, growing, and discovering who I am and what I have to offer. It is easy to get caught up in the pursuit of the present. Remaining open to learning and exploring different facets of yourself through new content and experiences helps to open ourselves to new possibilities and hone our capacity to take on new challenges.

It is with the same desire and enthusiasm that we at the State of Kindness Scholarship Fund have been working to build holistic and meaningful program opportunities for our Ambassadors in the months ahead. Through the relationships we as a team have forged within the community, we are proud to be able to offer occasions for learning through this academic term that meet the goals of our mission to serve our Ambassadors. In their pursuits for academic excellence, as well as their personal pursuits for success in life beyond the classroom.

Working alongside many experienced professionals and engaging with them on how they are actively working to build more effective workplaces is our starting point to offering programming content that focuses on skills that empower students with knowledge to lead with a strength of character and the skillset that employers are looking for. In keeping with this mission, we are once again excited to commence another successful year, filled with new faces, new partnerships and new initiatives.

This issue features our latest Graduates, new Ambassadors, and new Board members. We are thrilled to welcome them to their stations as mentors, representatives and supporters of the growing State of Kindness network.

*Carla Liberta*

**Carla Liberta**  
Executive Director & Chair

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# Congratulations Graduates



**Krystell Fienco**  
A proud graduate of the University of Miami School of Law, Krystell earned her Juris Doctor (J.D.) and began her journey in the legal field.



**Joshua Johnson**  
A graduate of the University of Waterloo, Joshua Johnson earned his Bachelor of Computer Science and developed a strong passion for innovation and technology.

# Welcome New Ambassadors



**Kabir Nijjer**  
Western University  
Financial Economics



**Azka Siddiqui**  
University of Waterloo  
Computer Science



**Emily Robillard**  
McMaster University  
Biomedical Engineering

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# Welcoming New Board of Director Member, Jagneet Malhotra!

Jag is the CEO of Mansha Plan and serves as Chairman of the Mansha Plan Foundation. He has been an instrumental supporter of the Scholarship Fund - always offering his time, kindness, and advocacy. Many of our initiatives have come to life thanks to Jag's dedication and generosity, and we are truly honoured to have him join our team.



## In-Person Meet and Mingle

In August we hosted our annual in person event with a twist. This year exciting change saw the coming together of the State of Kindness community at the first Meet and Mingle event, graciously hosted at the Mansha Financial offices located in downtown Toronto. Donors, Board Members, Guest Speakers, Mentors and our incredible student Ambassadors all came together for an afternoon of meaningful conversations, shared experiences, and authentic networking opportunities between the next generation of changemakers and those who help to make their journeys possible.

A big thank you to our event sponsors for making this incredible event such a magical experience for all



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# Mindful Leader Program

This year State of Kindness Ambassadors will participate in the Mindful Leader Program. Through a four-part workshop series focused on training young leaders to develop their emotional intelligence and practice skillful mental habits that will help to increase their own emotional awareness and mindfulness understanding.

Hosted by Janey Piroli and Colin De France.

Partnering with Janey and Colin to bring this knowledge to our students meets our goal to prepare young people with the foundations of success so that they may develop and grow their skills as they move through life into positions of leadership within their workplace and community.

Through their training, students will learn:

- Understand and experience why emotional intelligence matters and its benefits to yourself and others
- Understand emotional intelligence consists of a series of skills that are trainable
- Learn mindfulness practices, communication and mindful listening skills that can help you support others and build healthy teams and organizational dynamics
- Learn resilience practices that promote wellbeing and the ability to rebound from the stresses of work and life.

## Highlights from Session #1

- **Focused Attention**
  - Think of attention as a mental muscle - one that strengthens with consistent practice
  - Shift your mindset toward kindness, both toward yourself and others
  - Incorporate mindful breathing to anchor your focus in the present moment
  - Remember: it's normal for the mind to wander. Each time it returns, you've completed a mental "rep"
- **Gratitude**
  - Practice noticing the good - even in small, everyday moments
  - Challenge and break the cycle of negativity bias by intentionally focusing on what's going well
- **Home Practice**
  - **Build your mindfulness muscle:** Begin with 1 minute of mindful breathing each day - Add 1 minute each week until you reach 12 minutes daily
  - **Cultivate gratitude:** Keep a gratitude journal to record moments, people, or things you're thankful for
  - **Share your practice:** Partner with someone to exchange experiences and engage in mindful listening

### Connect with Janey Piroli and Colin DeFrance

- [https://www.linkedin.com/in/janey\\_piroli/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/janey_piroli/)
- <https://www.linkedin.com/in/colin-de-france-68345423/>

