

# NEWSLETTER

## A welcome note by David Barnes

The arrival of spring offers a powerful reminder of renewal and forward momentum. While we navigate complex global challenges, our gratitude for the secure values of respect and human dignity in Canada reinforces our commitment to action.

At BMG, our strength lies in working together—our Strategic Operations team and our dedicated Associates. Our collective ability, rooted in a diversity of thought and shared common values, empowers us to lead positive change.

This year, we are accelerating high-impact initiatives:

- Supporting the transformation of human services.
- Advancing our thought leadership program and grant and funding services.
- Strengthening our community building capacity

We need to believe in the long game, not the quick wins. I am truly excited to be on this journey with our like-hearted team, and thank you for the courage and dedication you collectively put out into the world.

## Updates from BMG Consulting and Indigenous Services

As we came to the end of the fiscal year for the public and non-profit sectors, BMG Consulting and BMG Indigenous Services had a busy Q4. We submitted proposals across many domains, including strategic planning, community engagement, research, and evaluation, and have won a larger project to conduct a needs assessment for an Indigenous community in Northern Ontario. We completed some major projects as well that started earlier in 2025, including strategic planning work, a research project on Restorative Justice, and an economic modelling project. Throughout this period, we also continued to strengthen our practice management, which has been an ongoing effort throughout the year. This includes developing frameworks, refining our proposal process, developing BMG's value proposition, recruiting new associates based on market needs, and developing BMG-proprietary approaches and methodologies.

We have also had a continued focus on business development opportunities, from strategic partnerships (such as Emergency Management Group, with whom we partnered on a really interesting submission) to thought leadership (such a pitching ourselves as a panel speaker at a large Indigenous conference). We look forward to seeing what the rest of the year will bring and if you have thoughts or ideas on how we could further improve please let us know!



## Board Development Intensive Training

### Expanding the Tent: Bringing the Head, Heart, Mind, and Soul Back to Governance - New Program

If you step into almost any non-profit or public sector boardroom today, you will likely find a group of deeply committed, highly intelligent individuals who are also profoundly exhausted.

Modern boards are operating in an environment of unprecedented complexity. Facing urgent operational challenges, tightened budgets, and heightened public scrutiny, it is natural for leadership to retreat into what feels safest: rigid compliance, performative oversight, and pure risk management.

In short, we have learned to govern exclusively from **The Head**.

But in doing so, we commit a subtle, often invisible ethical error. We become so intensely focused on audits, liability, and technical fixes that the actual people we are there to serve—the clients, the recipients, the "vulnerable person"—slowly turn into data points on a financial spreadsheet.

They turn from people into problems to be managed.

Efficiency begins to come at the cost of the mission. When efficiency replaces empathy, we inevitably face "analysis paralysis." The challenges our communities face require leadership that can handle systemic complexity without losing its human touch.

### The "Empty Chair" Protocol

To address this sector-wide burnout, Barnes Management Group is proud to announce our new 3-Day Board Development Intensive: **The Head, Heart, Mind, and Soul of Governance**.

Designed specifically for the "Strategic Duo" (Board Chairs and CEOs/EDs) alongside their full boards, this immersive program provides a meaningful pathway out of clinical compliance. It is an invitation to build a holistic architecture of trust, generative thinking, and true moral stewardship.

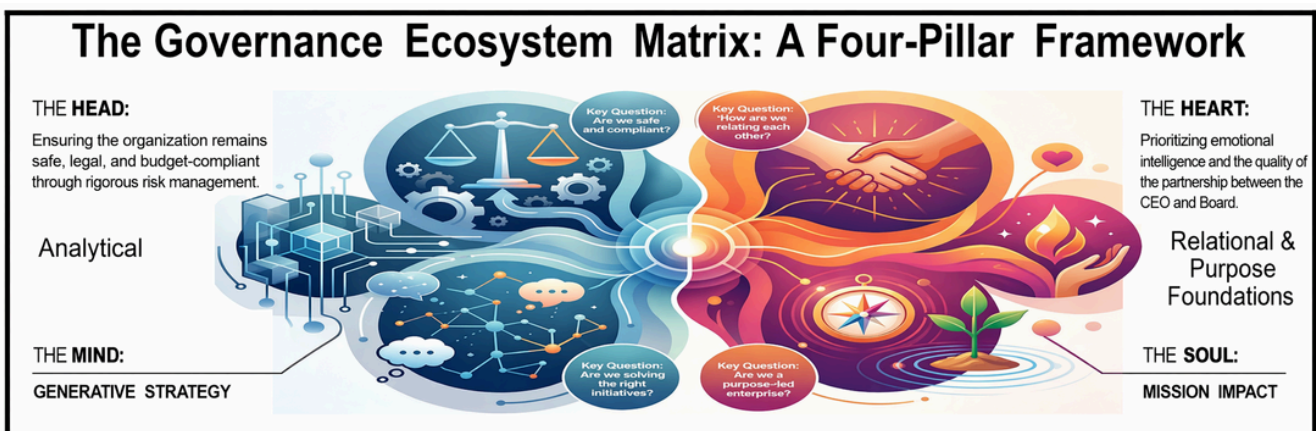
### The Architects Behind the Curriculum

This intensive was collaboratively designed by David Rivard, Dr. Hugh Drouin, and Malcolm Bernstein. By combining over four decades of their experiences navigating child welfare and social service agencies as both front-line social workers, Supervisors and CEOs/Executive Directors, they built this framework from the ground up. This is not a theoretical academic exercise; it is a battle-tested roadmap built to address the exact systemic gaps they have navigated firsthand.

### The Four Pillars of the 3-Day Intensive

The curriculum moves beyond theory, offering a rigorous progression over three days:

1. **Complexity & Governance (The Head & The Mind):** Shifting from pure risk management to generative oversight.
2. **Culture & Psychological Safety (The Heart):** Evaluating boardroom dynamics and healing the essential Board Chair/CEO partnership.
3. **Stewardship & Radical Kinship (The Soul & Synthesis):** Synthesis of the work through a practical "Stewardship Blueprint."



## Moving from Diagnosis to Action

This intensive is a vital intervention for organizations ready to step off the porch and walk down into the driveway of the communities they serve. Agencies that complete the program walk away with measurable 30-, 60-, and 90-day accountability milestones, a renewed, unified partnership between the Board and the CEO/Executive Director, and—most importantly—a framework for navigating systemic complexity by putting the client back in the room.

The times we are in require a soulful dimension of leadership just as much as a fiduciary one. We must ensure that our final decision can be justified to the one person who isn't actually present: The Absent Client. Are you ready to expand the tent?

To learn more about bringing the 3-Day Intensive to your organization, reach out to our team at [info@barnesmanagementgroup.com](mailto:info@barnesmanagementgroup.com) or call +1 416-800-2914 Ext. 101. Let's Build.

## Partner profile: Emergency Management Group (EMG)

Emergency Management Group (EMG) is a nationally recognized firm specializing in emergency management, crisis response, and community resilience, bringing nearly 30 years of experience supporting municipalities, provincial and federal agencies, Indigenous communities, and public safety organizations across Canada. Their team brings deep expertise in emergency planning, training for Emergency Operations Centre staff and first responders, and delivering practical, implementable solutions grounded in real-world conditions. EMG is known for bridging operational requirements with inclusive and culturally responsive approaches.



We recently partnered with EMG on a submission to supporting an Indigenous community, bringing together their emergency management expertise with our strengths in culturally grounded engagement and community-informed planning.

## Project Updates

### **BMG continues developing a remoteness methodology for health services delivery in remote communities**

BMG recently completed a research study for the Weeneebayko Area Health Authority (WAHA) which provides medical services to six remote and isolated coastal communities along the Ontario shores of James Bay and Hudson Bay. WAHA operates as the only integrated First Nation Regional Health Authority serving the health needs of approximately 12,000 residents in the six communities of: Moosonee, Moose Factory Island, Attawapiskat First Nation, Fort Albany First Nation, Weenusk First Nation (Peawanuck), and Kashechewan First Nation. As there is no year-round road access to these communities, air travel is the principal way people, goods, and services arrive to and from the communities.

It is widely acknowledged that providing services in remote communities is more expensive than in non-remote ones. To ensure funding to remote northern communities reflects the high costs of living and the extraordinary costs of providing services in those communities, funding adjustments often take the form of formulas based on degrees of remoteness or a combination of direct grants and agency-specific funding to cover the high costs of northern operations. BMG's previous work on developing the remoteness quotient for NAN was the basis for increased funding for equitable Indigenous child welfare services and it is against this backdrop of the evolving relationship between remoteness methodologies and public funding, that the BMG's report for WAHA provides a funding adjustment that reflects the remoteness of the communities it serves. The study is the basis for WAHA to move beyond describing itself as "isolated" by empirically quantifying geographic remoteness and linking it to measurable units of health care.

## Aron Theatre Co-op Strategic Planning – Campbellford, Ontario

On March 29, 2026, the Aron Theatre Co-operative Board of Directors, along with community partners and facilitators from BMG, gathered at the theatre for a planning session. Their mission is clear: Help the theatre thrive even if many prefer to stay home to stream entertainment. The community agrees. Their small town Campbellford community would be far for the worse without its movie theatre. If all the well-wishers were also buying tickets and popcorn, the theatre wouldn't have much to worry about. It has state-of-the-art projection and sound, great events, special screenings, music nights, and a partnership with the Aron Indigenous Circle. It even has a green roof. This 80 year old theatre is a landmark, and in partnership with the local Community Foundation, is on solid financial ground. But the question remains: How do we get 'bums in seats'?

BMG was asked to facilitate this session in connection to BMG's Diverse Supplier Certification with the Canadian Queer Chamber of Commerce. It is a privilege to be connected to such a unique cultural organization as the Aron Theatre. It's as close as we might ever get to "working in the movies". David Buwalda facilitated the session along with our MSW Placement student Darlene Forbes. They found it good fun to work with the movie-loving Aron Theatre board. For every strategic question or dilemma, there is a scene in a movie you can refer to. Can't get consensus: 12 Angry Men. Got a nasty obstacle: Jaws.

Through the day's brainstorming, discussion, and goal-setting a plan emerged. It isn't groundbreaking. It focuses on good governance and succession planning, developing a marketing strategy, and diversifying programming. It is a sensible plan, backed in full by the board members and staff. That is what a volunteer run organization needs most: focus. Many people will tell you how to get "bums in seats". But it takes a unified team to make it happen. Good luck, Aron Theatre and thanks for letting us be of service.



Aron Theatre Co-op Strategic Planning Participants - Campbellford, Ontario on March 29th

## BMG Facilitates Toronto's 2026 Budget Engagement

In an effort to bridge the gap between City Hall and the community, Barnes Management Group (BMG) facilitated Toronto's 2026 pre-budget consultations. Partnering closely with the City Manager's Office and the Mayor, BMG led six high-impact sessions in late 2025, four in-person and two virtual, that reached nearly 1,000 residents. Facilitated by David Barnes and David Buwalda, and with a team of over 50 volunteers, the engagement was a success. Meaningful engagement was achieved.



A significant challenge lay in the city's request to make the virtual sessions mirror the energy and depth of the in-person events. BMG's technical and design teams rose to the occasion, creating a seamless digital experience that allowed for the same level of meaningful dialogue found in community centers, ultimately strengthening BMG's reputation as a leader in large-scale social development and equity-focused facilitation.

These public insights became the backbone of the final 2026 budget, which Council officially passed on February 10, 2026. By gathering raw community feedback before the fiscal strategy was set, BMG's facilitation helped the Mayor and city staff pivot toward a strategy that prioritized affordability while maintaining service stability. The project concluded with BMG summarizing vital data for the city's leadership in the public consultation briefing note:

(<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2026/bu/bgrd/backgroundfile-261172.pdf>)

## BMG Indigenous Services

### New Series: During the coming months, we will conduct a deep dive into the social determinants of Indigenous Health in Canada

We start today with a brief introduction.

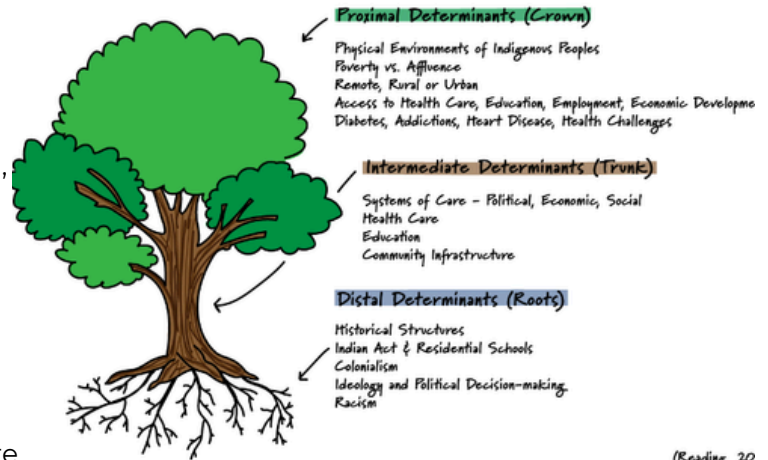
What is It? The social determinants of Indigenous health in Canada refers to the conditions that shape the health and well-being of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples and are rooted in the historical dismantling of Indigenous culture, language and lands and ongoing systemic racism.

Background: The historical loss of culture, language, ceremony, and ways of knowing through colonialism, and on-going systemic inequities, has led to poorer health outcomes than non-Indigenous Canadians.

This includes:

- Lower incomes and employment
- Higher costs of living
- Educational barriers
- Inadequate housing
- Food insecurity (particularly in remote areas)
- Limited access to culturally appropriate healthcare

### Structural Determinants of Indigenous Peoples' Health



Racism and discrimination in institutions further exacerbate these challenges and may deter individuals from seeking care.

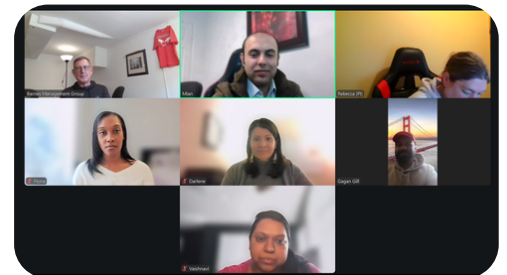
**What Can We Do?** Addressing Indigenous health inequities requires meaningful progress toward self-determination, cultural and linguistic restoration. Indigenous leaders and Indigenous health care professionals have long called for systemic change, including eradicating anti-Indigenous racism, supporting sovereignty, and addressing the social determinants contributing to ill health. Dealing with the structural precursors that contribute to poor health and delivering culturally safe care, along with increased Indigenous representation in health professions and equitable funding for community-led health strategies, are necessary.

Watch for the future segments with in-depth coverage of the first key determinants of Indigenous Health.

Please visit the BMG Indigenous Services website to learn more at [www.bmgindigenousservices.com](http://www.bmgindigenousservices.com) and if you have any specific questions, please email us at [info@barnesmanagementgroup.com](mailto:info@barnesmanagementgroup.com).

### Pathways to caring communities

We had the privilege of hosting MSW placement students from the University of Windsor, who have now successfully concluded their placements with us. Throughout their time with us, the students led a thoughtful and impactful environmental scan, exploring service gaps within settlement and nonprofit sectors supporting newcomers.



Their research offered valuable insights into current challenges and opportunities for improvement, helping to inform more responsive and inclusive approaches to service delivery. Beyond their contributions, it was a truly enriching journey marked by collaboration, learning, and shared purpose.

# INSIDE-OUT CHANGE: CREATING THE CONDITIONS FOR INCLUSIVE PERFORMANCE

Moving beyond conversation toward practical strategies that strengthen inclusive workplaces across Ontario.



**Date:** June 24<sup>th</sup>, 2026  
**Time:** 9:30 AM - 12:30 PM

This event is offered free of charge

Location details will be sent after your RSVP is received

To RSVP, you may scan the QR code or use the link below

[bit.ly/bmgconference](https://bit.ly/bmgconference)



34% of Ontario's population identifies as a visible minority.

**This makes Ontario one of the most diverse regions in Canada.**

Inclusion improves engagement, innovation, and performance.

## What Participants Will Experience



### Engaging Conversations

- Dialogue across sectors and lived experiences
- Exploration of real workplace challenges
- Opportunities to share perspectives



### Keynote Speaker

- Insights from a leader advancing inclusive workplaces
- Lessons from real organizational change



### Collaborative Learning

- Cross-sector knowledge exchange
- Case examples of inclusive leadership

## Participants will leave with:

- Leadership dialogue for advancing equity in their organizations
- Collective reflection for supporting inclusive leadership and team dynamics
- Shared insights on building conditions for equitable decision-making
- Connections with leaders across sectors

**KEY TAKEAWAYS**  
TO APPLY IMMEDIATELY IN THE WORKPLACE

## ★ WHO'S PART OF THE CONVERSATION

- ★ Social service organizations
- ★ Business leaders and HR professionals
- ★ Government and public sector leaders
- ★ Community organizations
- ★ Researchers and educators
- ★ Emerging leaders interested in equity and inclusion

**INCLUSIVE WORKPLACES REQUIRE COLLABORATION ACROSS SECTORS.**

Inclusive organizations do not emerge by chance. They are built through intentional leadership, supportive systems, and a commitment to equity in action.

**This begins with leadership!**

Light refreshments will be served

## Introducing BMG's Funding and Grant Writing Services



# FUNDING & GRANT WRITING SERVICES

Empowering communities and organizations through funding and partnerships

Barnes Management Group (BMG) is launching a new professional service line, Funding & Grant Writing Services, designed to help nonprofits, Indigenous organizations, and for-profit organizations identify, apply for, and secure grants that support their strategic goals.

BMG's Funding & Grant Writing Services is not just a new offering; it's a strategic extension of our mission of equity and system transformation through capacity building, securing resources, and driving impact.

### ***BMG's competitive advantage***

- Established reputation in consulting, Indigenous relations, and community engagement
- Integrated financial and operational expertise
- Access to networks across government, foundations, and industry
- Customized and tailored to client needs
- Expert grant writers

### **💡 Key Details on service model**

1. Grant Prospect Research
2. Full Grant Writing
3. Grant Review & Editing
4. Capacity Building
5. Indigenous Community Funding Support

info@barnesmanagementgroup.com  
www.barnesmanagementgroup.com

### Associates Corner

I am honoured to share a significant milestone in my ongoing community engagement with the AIDS Committee of Durham Region (ACDR). Over the past year, I have been deeply involved in supporting the organization’s financial strengthening efforts, working closely with leadership to enhance financial governance, improve accountability frameworks, and contribute to long-term sustainability planning. This work has included providing strategic insight into budgeting processes, financial oversight practices, and risk management—ensuring that the organization is well-positioned to continue delivering critical services to the community. Through this collaboration, I have developed a strong appreciation for the breadth and impact of ACDR’s work, particularly in supporting individuals and communities affected by HIV/AIDS through education, outreach, and compassionate care. Their commitment to dignity, inclusion, and holistic support closely reflects the principles that guide Barnes Management Group’s Caring Communities philosophy.



**Dino DiMarco**

In recognition of my contributions, I have been invited to join the Board of Directors as a Financial Advisor and subject matter expert. In this role, I continue to provide guidance on financial governance, contribute to strategic discussions, and support the organization in aligning its financial practices with its mission-driven objectives. It has been especially rewarding to see how thoughtful financial stewardship can directly enhance service delivery and community impact. This experience has also provided a meaningful opportunity to actively embody and extend BMG’s Caring Communities approach in practice. The alignment between ACDR’s grassroots, client-centered work and BMG’s emphasis on sustainable, inclusive, and community-focused solutions has been both clear and rational. I have intentionally brought BMG’s frameworks and values into my advisory work, helping to reinforce systems that support not only operational effectiveness but also equity and compassion in service delivery.

As I continue in this role, I remain committed to identifying and cultivating opportunities to further promote Barnes Management Group’s work and philosophy. Whether through governance, strategic advisory, or community partnerships, I see this as an important avenue to both contribute meaningfully at the local level and amplify BMG’s impact in advancing strong, caring, and resilient communities.

### Associate Meeting

We were pleased to host our BMG Associates Meeting on April 20, 2025, with an excellent turnout of associates and trainers. The session highlighted key organizational priorities, including strengthening delivery and operational excellence, advancing associate capacity building, expanding thought leadership, and progressing our Center of Learning and Excellence. We also shared updates on grant writing services, communications and impact strategy, and the continued growth of our Indigenous services. Thank you to everyone who joined and contributed to a collaborative and forward-looking discussion as we continue to drive meaningful impact together



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