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## GEMS 2021

This is truly my favourite part of the year. Every early spring, AVENS takes a moment out of our hectic schedule to pay tribute and honour our incredible teammates and our tireless volunteers.

***"You never have to be more than you are..."***

***You only need be ALL that you are"***

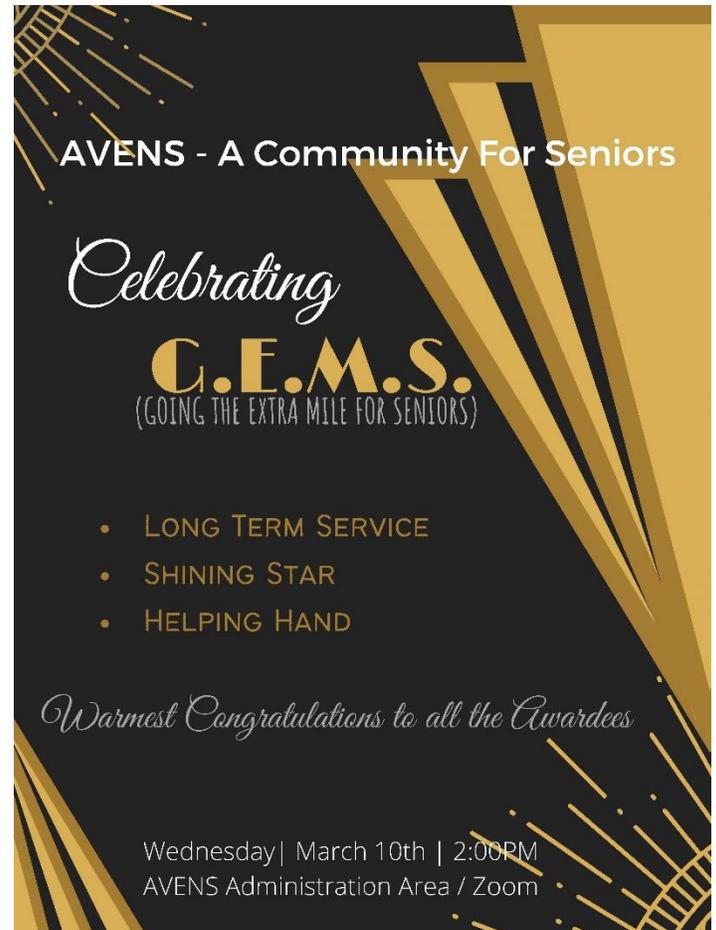
*Michelle A. Homme*

2020 did prove to be a very challenging year for many, yet our persistence and desire for excellence is what made AVENS shine brightly for the residents we care for and for the families that entrust us with their loved ones.

Nothing has pleased me more than the safety of our residents during this pandemic, but moreover, it was how our staff came together

during this crisis that truly defined our Vision and Mission at AVENS.

On Wednesday March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2020 we will take a moment to recognize a number of our staff and some volunteers for their outstanding achievement.



Going the Extra Mile for Seniors (GEMS) 2021 showcases several exciting tributes, starting with our GEMS Long Term Service Awards, followed with our GEMS Shining Star Awards, and capping it off with our GEMS Helping Hand Awards for our volunteers.

We take pride as we celebrate our employee's accomplishments and their commitment to excellence knowing that they have made a significant difference for seniors in the Northwest Territories.

## “Winner-Winner Chicken Dinner” Pay It Forward

Back on issue #99 November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020 I announced a great partnership with Food Banks Canada.

Food Banks Canada, a national charitable organization dedicated to helping Canadians living with food insecurity, reached out to AVENS.

Food Banks Canada had a broader mandate during this Covid pandemic and were expanding their program offering.

Apparently, Covid has had a negative impact on food production in Canada. With many of the restaurants at minimum capacity or closed, the national food producers have been at a surplus.

This surplus landed on our doorsteps throughout the winter months and we were very grateful to have been selected.

Our original allotment of over 5 pallets of assorted chicken and various fish offerings arrived. This represented approximately ~7500 lbs (3401 kg) of food or around \$22,000 of savings to AVENS.

We were then asked if we could take on more. We did the calculations and accepted even more chicken in later months of winter. However, with warmer weather on our doorstep and storage options starting to dwindle, it was imperative for us to find suitable recipients to take on our food surplus.

Luckily, we found a number of worthy NGO's causes that could take advantage of the generosity we received and we are proud to pay it forward.



(L to R) Food Rescue volunteer Dave Grundy, Food Rescue volunteer, Nicolas Rossouw and AVENS Director of Operations, Steven Nicholas

Our first donor was Food Rescue, then came the fine folks from the YWCA and finally a couple of cases of chicken went to Kim Doyle of the Yellowknife Seniors Society.



(L to R) Food Supervisor, Lawrence Malaque, YWCA Support Worker, Maui Pare, YWCA Support Worker, Sharon Pearce-Michel and AVENS Director of Operations, Steven Nicholas

NGO's helping NGO's, it doesn't get any better than that! A huge shout out to our Food Services division for their logistics!

## Look Who Is New on Campus

AVENS is buzzing with new hires (many returnee's!). Let us take a moment to see who is new to our Team.

### Paula Porter



Paula applied to AVENS with the “the big hope of an opportunity in our family-like organization”. Originally from Jamaica (one of my favourite Caribbean Islands!), she spent some time in British Columbia before coming to Yellowknife.

Recently with Stanton Territorial Hospital we are proud that she is bringing over 13 years of nursing experience to our doorstep. Welcome aboard Paula!

### Rebecca Deak



Rebecca has mentioned that she has a true passion in working with the senior's population and is extremely happy to be with us at AVENS. Hailing from British Columbia, she is bringing over 10 years of nursing experience to AVENS. Recently from her casual experience from the Extended Care unit at Stanton Territorial Hospital we see Rebecca as huge asset to our team. Best of luck Rebecca and thank you for joining us!

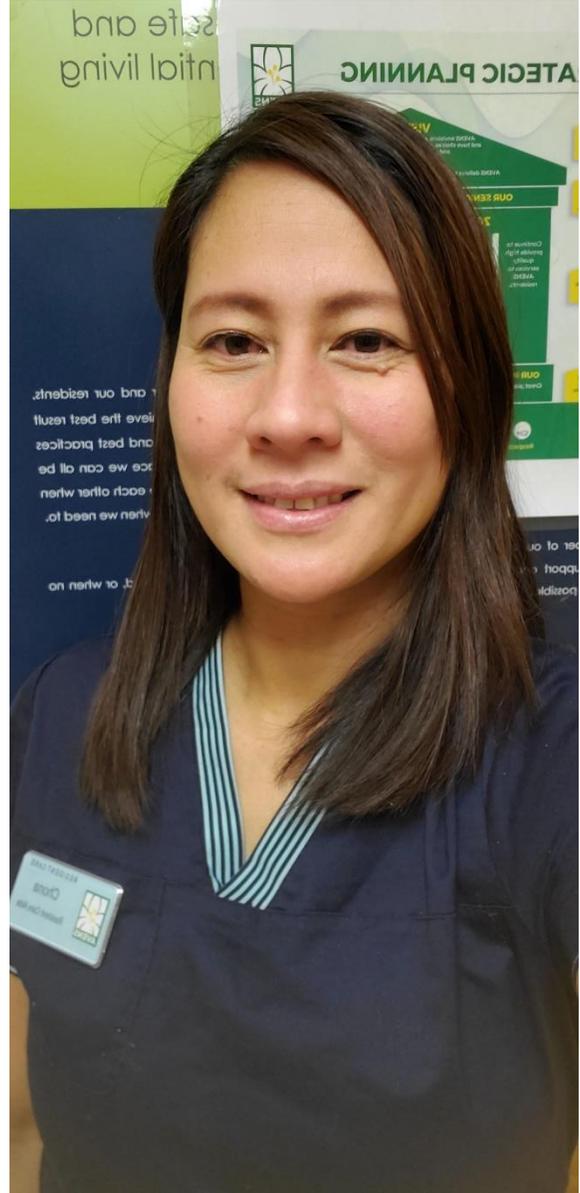
## Sesulelo (Sesu) Mubaya



Sesu, as she prefers to be called, is a returning Resident Care Aid to AVENS. She worked at AVENS back in 2010 for approximately one year. Originally from Zimbabwe, Sesu has been in Yellowknife for two years, by way of Manitoba. Although she has been an LPN for over 10 years, Sesu is also working on her Bachelor of Nursing designation. Interestingly, Sesu also has a Bachelor's of Arts in Law from the United Kingdom. This very talented and smart “young” lady is also a grandmother of two! WOW! We want to take a moment to congratulate Sesu on her incredible journey and we are very honoured to have her back at AVENS!



## Taleope (Chona) Asombrado



Another returnee to AVENS! (That's what I like to hear!). Chona, as she likes to be called, is a casual RCA who worked for AVENS from July 2010 to July 2012, while obtaining her certification in 2011 at Aurora College. While honing her skills at Stanton Territorial Hospital, as a relief nurses aid, she was able to acquire even more experience working in various departments. Welcome back Chona, best of luck!