

MOSS CLU8

MakeOurSchoolsSafe.org

STUDENT HANDBOOK

YOUR GUIDE TO STARTING A MOSS CLUB

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WELCOME TO THE MOSS CLUB

WE ARE SO GLAD YOU'RE HERE!

By starting a **Make Our Schools Safe (MOSS) Club** at your school, you are taking a powerful step toward creating a culture of **safety and inclusion** within your community.



Your **leadership, vision, and commitment to school safety** will be the driving force behind the success of your club.

Thank you for being a part of our mission!



WHAT IS A MOSS CLUB?



A **MOSS Club** is a student-led, faculty-supported group that meets 1–2 times per month to promote:

- School Safety
- Kindness & Inclusion
- Mental Health & Wellness

Clubs plan meaningful, student-driven activities that **foster a safer and more connected school community**. Your club will have the opportunity to fundraise for specific safety projects at your school, participate in fundraising events, promote Alyssa's Law, gain valuable leadership skills, and collaborate with like-minded students to support our mission.

"Your voice is your power."

- Lori Alhadeff, CEO & Co-Founder

You spend an average of **180 days a year** on your school campus — let's make each one count!

Make Our Schools Safe is a national 501(c)(3) nonprofit founded by Lori and Ilan Alhadeff in honor of their daughter Alyssa, whose life was taken during the tragedy at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School on February 14, 2018.

Our mission is to **empower students and staff to create and maintain a culture of safety and vigilance** in every school across America. Through education, advocacy, and leadership, the MOSS Club initiative helps schools become secure and supportive spaces where students actively shape their communities. By fostering a strong culture of safety, students build a sense of **belonging, responsibility, and empowerment** throughout the school.

PREPAREDNESS →

Knowing the threats and hazards schools face, planning and training for emergency responses, knowing and correcting vulnerabilities.

OBSERVATION →

Situational awareness and decision support.

WILLINGNESS →

Be ready to act: preparedness response training for students.

EDUCATION →

Knowledge of response protocols and drills.

RESPONSE →

Responding and recovering from threats and hazards as trained and planned for, building campus resiliency.

WHY STUDENT ENGAGEMENT IN SCHOOL SAFETY MATTERS

**MOSS
CLU8**



STUDENT LEADERSHIP MAKES A DIFFERENCE

- When students are part of school safety planning:
 - **76% feel safer**
 - **67% are more likely to participate in drills and protocols**

Source: EdWeek Research Center, 2023

- Clubs like MOSS that promote student involvement reduce disciplinary actions by 30% through peer-to-peer accountability and culture change.

Source: RAND Corporation, 2023

EMPOWERMENT LEADS TO ACTION

- Students involved in safety clubs or mental health advocacy are:
 - **3x more likely** to organize awareness events
 - **2x more likely** to check in on peers they're concerned about

Source: YouthTruth, 2023

- **Peer-led safety campaigns** result in **25–35% higher participation** in anonymous tip lines or safety surveys.

Source: Safe and Sound Schools, 2023

REPORTING & INTERVENTION

- **81% of school violence incidents** were **prevented or mitigated** because a student **spoke up** and reported warning signs.

Source: U.S. Secret Service, National Threat Assessment Center, 2021

- Schools with student-led safety teams saw a **40% increase** in early threat reporting compared to those without.

Source: National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO), 2022

PLANNING YOUR FIRST MOSS CLUB MEETING



Spread the Word

- Let your school know MOSS Club is here!
- Promote at Freshman Invasion & Open House.

Set the Date

- Pick a meeting time that works for most students.
- Plan to meet monthly (10 times per school year).

Use Your Club Gift Card

- Each club receives a gift card for snacks, water, pizza, and project supplies.

Prepare Your Meeting Content

- Organize what you want to cover.
- Present the MOSS PowerPoint to introduce the club and share the story behind Make Our Schools Safe.

Kick Things Off

- Introduce yourself to the group.
- Lead a mindfulness activity to set a positive tone.
- Elect/Introduce your club board members.
- Do a fun icebreaker to get to know each other.

Club Goals & Projects

- Discuss Alyssa's Law and how your club can support getting it passed nationally or statewide.
- Design your MOSS Club T-shirt!
See page 20 for details
- Start planning a school safety fundraiser.

Recognize Your Advisor

- Nominate your MOSS Club teacher sponsor for the
- Life Changer of the Year Award:
lifechangeroftheyearaward.com



LEAD THE CHANGE: THE 8-POINT SYSTEM

Every MOSS Club is encouraged to complete the following **key initiatives** throughout the school year:

PIN & PLEDGE

Host a pinning ceremony for your Executive Board and complete the official **MOSS Club Safety Pledge** (see your handbook).

PRODUCE YOUR CLUB T-SHIRT

Design and print your club shirts! Be sure to include your club sponsor logo on the shirt.

See page 20 for more info!

PRINCIPAL MEETING

Meet with **school leadership** to identify safety projects, discuss needs, lockdown drills, and preparedness efforts.

PLAN A FUNDRAISER

Organize activities such as **Pickleball, Walk or Bike for Safety or Skate for Safety**. Work with local restaurants for a giveback night (local pizza or ice cream shops).

PARTICIPATE

Join the **Hour-A-Thon Phone Raiser** in February to raise awareness and support for school safety.

POST

Share your club's updates, meeting recaps, monthly messages, and MOSS initiatives on **social media**.

PROMOTE

Spread the message: **"See Something, Say Something."** Encourage others to join and refer other schools to start their own MOSS Clubs – incentives included!

PARTY

Celebrate your club's success with an end-of-year event and recognize your members' impact and plan for next year's board.

EXECUTIVE BOARD POSITIONS

PRESIDENT

Sets the vision for the MOSS club, call, and preside over all meetings and enforce observation of all club policies. Serves as point of contact for Sponsor Relations with help from the Secretary.

VICE-PRESIDENT

Assists the President in performance of duties and will succeed the President if they are unable to carry out their responsibilities. Manages class reps by grade level for the club.

All elections will take place in school by **paper or hand-raised ballot** under supervision of teacher sponsor. Each person running for each position will be given five minutes to speak on behalf of his or candidacy

DIRECTOR OF PR

Runs the club's social media accounts on Facebook and Instagram, and will respond to all messages on MOSS social media accounts.

SECRETARY

Manage attendance records and meeting minutes, coordinate event logistics with students and student activities, and support club membership development and retention.

TREASURER

Keeps accurate records of all funds received and expenses. Keeps track of items ordered via MOSS Amazon account.

SAMPLE CLUB AGENDA



3:00 PM

Welcome & Introduction by President

3:03 PM

Icebreaker Activity

3:10 PM

Explanation of the Mission and Vision of MOSS

3:15 PM

Peer-to-peer Discussion about a safety or school related question. Example questions:

- What is most important to you regarding safety at your school?
- How can we spread kindness and stop bullying on campus?
- What could we be doing to better secure our campus?
- How can we fundraise to support our new idea?
- What projects can we work on to safeguard our school?
- How can we advocate for Alyssa's Law?

3:25 PM

Community Service Project: Find a way club members can serve your community! Some ideas include:

- Hang posters with school safety tips and statistics around campus
- Paint kindness rocks and place them around the school
- Connect with a local elementary or middle school
- Fundraise for Stop the Bleed Kits
- Film a school safety PSA
- Leave notes of encouragement around school

3:40 PM

Mindfulness Activity: Before the meeting ends, guide the group in a mindfulness activity like a meditation or breathing exercise

3:45 PM

Wrap-Up & Time for Questions

Before your first club meeting, create a detailed agenda with timing as a guide. Have snacks and water available for those attending the meeting.

MENTAL FITNESS: BUILDING A STRONGER MIND FOR A SAFER SCHOOL



Mental fitness is all about taking care of your mind like you would your body. Just like your body needs rest, movement, and fuel, your mind needs support, balance, and healthy habits to stay strong. Whether you're dealing with stress, peer pressure, or big decisions, your mental well-being matters. At Make Our Schools Safe, we believe every student deserves to feel emotionally supported, understood, and empowered.

Mental health is just as important as physical health.

Let's Normalize Mental Health

Mental health isn't just about anxiety or depression. It's about how we think, feel, cope, and connect. It's okay to not feel okay sometimes. What matters is that you know you're not alone, and that help, tools, and support are always available. Let's remove the stigma and talk about it. These six pillars are essential building blocks for a healthy, strong, and grounded life. They help you understand yourself, build meaningful connections, stay confident, bounce back from setbacks, and find purpose along the way.

Our Mental Fitness Goals for Every Student:

Purpose and Vision

- Having a sense of purpose helps you stay motivated, focused, and hopeful about your future. It gives you direction and helps you make choices that align with your goals and values.

Identity and Self-Awareness

- Understanding who you are helps you make decisions that feel right for you. Self-awareness helps you recognize your emotions, triggers, and strengths.

Self-Love and Confidence

- Believing in your worth is the foundation of mental strength. Confidence grows when you treat yourself with kindness and recognize your value.

Healthy Relationships

- Good relationships make life feel safer and more meaningful. Learning how to set boundaries and communicate helps you build trust and connection.

Emotional Regulation

- Being able to manage your emotions helps you feel more in control. It allows you to respond and not react when things get overwhelming.

Resilience

- Resilience is your ability to bounce back when things don't go your way. It's about learning from challenges and staying strong, even when it's hard.



Submitted by **STACEY STEINBAUM**

Licensed Clinical Social Worker



Regulate
of your
physical
health



Relax with
breathing
exercises



Regulate
your
sleep



Share with
those
you trust



Practice
positive
self-talk



Set
Goals



For you:

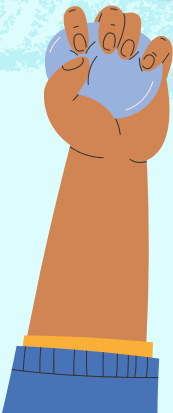
Mental Fitness Activities

For the club:



Do a
screen-
free
challenge

Make
DIY
stress balls



Create an
anonymous
gratitude
jar



Institute
buddy
checks



SERVICE PROJECT IDEAS



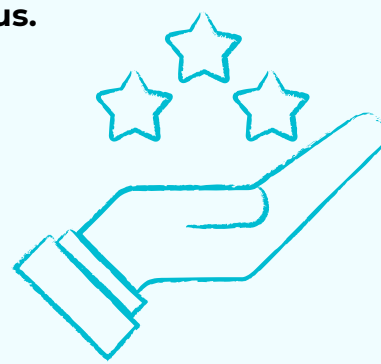
- Promote the idea of **community, leadership, mentoring,** and safety by adopting a local elementary or middle school. High school MOSS club members can visit these schools to discuss safety drills and safety education with the young students. Work with the Safety Patrol teams.
- Organize a **Stop the Bleed Training Day** at your school. Contact the local Fire Department to inquire about setting up a group training in your area.
- Bring in a **Guest Speaker** to speak to your club. The local Sheriff, State Senator or Representative, or even a highly regarded mental health specialist, or a yoga instructor can provide an insightful experience.
- **Lobby and advocate for Alyssa's Law** – All documents for Alyssa's Law are provided.
- Arrange for club students to be **interviewed by the school newspaper staff.** Listening to meaningful thoughts and feelings of your peers can be quite inspiring and motivating! Arrange features with **local news outlets & publications in the area.**
- **Plant a Memorial Garden** in honor of those lives lost at MSD on February 14, 2018.
- Create a **Rock Garden** with painted rocks from club members that have positive and encouraging notes on them.
- **Distribute a survey,** with administration approval, to identify pressing safety concerns on campus.

NEED INSPIRATION?

Hear Jayla's story...



We planted this Magnolia Tree in honor of Mrs. Alhadeff's unwavering dedication to the MOSS Club. This tree represents the strength and roots she's helped us grow, as students, as a club, and as a community. As it grows taller and stronger, it will stand as a living symbol of the mission behind MOSS: to strengthen school safety initiatives and create a future where every student feels protected, empowered, and supported.



PROJECT CALENDAR



Fall



- Set goals, calendars, and agendas for the school year.
- Prepare materials for club fair, freshman invasion, orientation, and back-to-school nights.
- Get to Know your SRO! Identify your School Resource Officers and thank them with a goody bag and thank you notes. Invite officers to attend your next meeting.
- Plan your club fundraiser (SIP FOR SAFETY, SKATE FOR SAFETY, work with local restaurants for giveback nights).
- Outreach: Invite others to join the club and your efforts.
- Distribute bracelets and stickers. Make sure no one sits alone and include all!
- Organize a Stop the Bleed Training Day. Contact the local Fire Department to inquire about setting up a group training in your area.

Winter



- Prepare for HOUR-A-THON in February (National).
- Honor the 17 victims of the tragedy at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School on Feb 14, 2018.
- Conduct Mental Health exercises.
- Hang posters with School Safety tips and resources. Promote "SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING".
- Identify speakers to come to a club event for motivation, safety presentations and mindfulness activities. Guest speakers could include the local sheriff, state senator or representative, a highly regarded mental health specialist or yoga instructor.

Spring



- Create a Rock Garden for your school. Paint kindness rocks with positive messages and place around school.
- Arrange for club students to be interviewed by the school newspaper and local news outlets to talk about the MOSS club experience and highlight your achievements.
- Connect with 8th graders and help prepare them for high school next year. Recruit new members! Volunteer at middle and elementary schools and encourage mini MOSS Clubs.
- Celebrate ALYSSA on LIVE FOR ALYSSA DAY on MAY 1.
- Apply for MOSS Club Scholarships and receive graduation cords (Seniors Only).
- Make preparations for the next school year by electing new MOSS Board Club Officers.

MOSS CLUBS IN ACTION: SAFETY PROJECTS



Donations & Grants

Make Our Schools Safe has **donated substantial funds** to support safety initiatives at schools across the nation.

[See real impact here](#)

MOSS SCHOOL SAFETY PROJECT SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS:

Each school year, **MOSS Clubs can apply for funding** to support a student-led school safety project. To be considered for funding, your MOSS Club must prepare a **detailed project submission** including the following:

PLEASE SEND YOUR SAFETY
PROJECT SUBMISSION TO:

Allison Cohen at
allison@makeourschoolssafe.org



TO SUBMIT, INCLUDE:

1. Basic Info

- Student name, School name and advisor

2. Project Title

- A clear, descriptive title.

3. Project Summary

- 2–3 sentences explaining what your project is and how it improves school safety.

4. Goals

- What will your safety project help to achieve and how does it make an impact at your school?

5. Budget Estimate

- List of items/services with estimated costs and total.

6. Funding Sources

- (e.g., MOSS Club, PTA, donation, grant)

7. Timeline

- Project start and end dates.

8. Approvals

- Principal and advisor sign-off

9. Optional Attachments

- Quotes, photos, flyers, data, or letters of support.

NEED INSPIRATION?



Here's a real example

Pascack Hills NJ – Ashley Schwartz

A MOSS Club member at Pascack Hills designed and led the implementation of a security initiative tailored to her school's needs. Projects like Ashley's are leading the way for safer learning environments across the country.

The Pascack Hills MOSS Club spearheaded a meaningful and effective window safety initiative in our school cafeteria: an area particularly exposed and vulnerable to external visibility. By installing perforated vinyl on the windows, we enhanced privacy and security. The material used allows students inside to see out while preventing visibility from the outside in. Beyond its practical benefits, the project also boosted school spirit through a thoughtfully designed visual. We hope this initiative serves as a model for other MOSS Clubs nationwide, demonstrating how physical security and school identity are crucial aspects of MOSS' mission!

MOSS CLUB PLEDGE



As a student committed to a safe and secure learning environment,
I pledge to be a leader in creating a culture of safety in my school.

I will be a Security-Minded Thinker.

- I will take safety seriously and encourage the use of trusted safety apps that allow anonymous reporting of concerns, helping every student and teacher stay informed and prepared.

I will stay alert and aware.

- I understand that safety is everyone's responsibility. I will observe my surroundings and speak up if I see something unusual, unsafe, or concerning.
See Something, Say Something.

I will take an active role in school safety.

- I will help identify safety concerns by creating and promoting tools like surveys (with school approval), and I will help lead positive changes based on student and teacher feedback.
- Find the School Safety Funding Form [HERE](#)

I will promote the use of safety apps.

- I will make sure every student and teacher is aware of safety apps available in our area—like SaferWatch—and encourage their use to report threats anonymously and stay informed.

I will help assess school safety concerns.

- I will work with my peers and administrators to design and share safety surveys that help us better understand the needs of our school community.

I will advocate for inclusive safety plans.

- I will help ensure that students with developmental differences or learning disabilities are included in all safety protocols and supported in emergency situations.

I will respect and improve school safety protocols.

- I will participate in drills, support emergency procedures, and encourage my peers to do the same. I will think creatively and share ideas to make our school safer for everyone.

I will foster a collaborative spirit.

- I believe in working together. I will build respectful relationships with fellow students, teachers, and staff to create a school that is not only safe, but also welcoming and inclusive.

Together, we will Make Our Schools Safe.

MOSS Club Name: _____

Student Name: _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

To Submit: Please send to allison@makeourschoolssafe.org

WHAT IS ALYSSA'S LAW?



All MOSS Clubs will take an active role in advocating for ALYSSA'S LAW.

Alyssa's Law is a school safety law named in honor of **Alyssa Alhadeff**, daughter of Lori and Ilan Alhadeff, a 14-year-old student who was tragically killed in the 2018 shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. The purpose of the law is to **improve emergency response times during life-threatening situations**, by requiring schools to have **silent panic alarms** that are directly connected to law enforcement.

NEED INSPIRATION?

Hear Elijah's story...

My name is Elijah Falkenstein from Staples High School, CT. When I first heard Alyssa's story, I felt an obligation to step in.

Every time I turned on the television, I saw more stories of students like Alyssa who were shot and sometimes killed in the very place meant to be their safe space: school. So going into my freshman year, I brought in my good friend Zander Bauer to start and run a Make Our Schools Safe (MOSS) club with me, the first chapter in Connecticut. As we built the club at our school to promote safety and awareness, we knew that students across the country weren't fortunate enough to have

the same protections. We were inspired to take action, beginning with our own state. I interned for my district's state senator, Ceci Maher. I saw an opportunity and introduced her to Alyssa's Law, hoping it could be a path into the legislature. With the help of Lori and Ilan, and after several meetings with the senator, we formally introduced Alyssa's Law to the Connecticut General Assembly. A similar bill had failed in the past, but this time, something was different: students like Zander and me had a seat at the table. Through advocacy, public testimony, appearing on the news, and much more, we raised awareness and built support for the bill. In the end, Alyssa's Law passed unanimously in both the House and Senate.

I hope my story shows that no matter your age or where you live, your voice can lead to real change.

How can YOU take action?



Contact your lawmakers!

- **Reach out to your state legislators** and ask them to support or introduce Alyssa's Law in your state if it hasn't passed yet.
- If you live in a state where the law already exists, urge lawmakers to fund proper implementation and enforcement. Reach out to pass Alyssa's Law on a federal level.

Sample message/email:

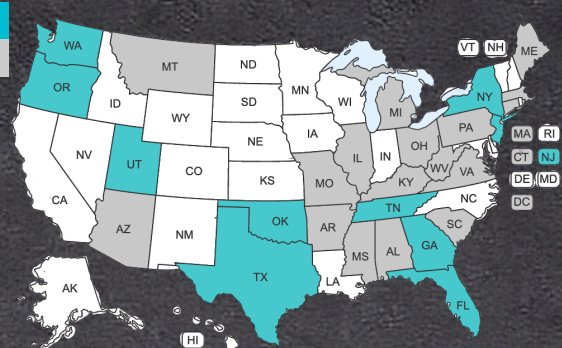
"As a member of the Make Our Schools Safe movement, I urge you to support Alyssa's Law to improve school safety and ensure faster emergency response times. Panic alarms connected to law enforcement can save lives." **TIME = LIFE**

Go to the Make Our Schools Safe website and click on the teal button - **TAKE ACTION NOW!**

PASSED
IN PROGRESS

www.makeourschoolssafe.org/take-action-now/

From there, you can send emails, upload a video and post on your socials!



SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES



Follow Us on:

Instagram



@makeourschoolssafe
@moss_connect_hq

Twitter



@makeschoolssafe8

Facebook



@makeourschoolssafe

Social Media Toolkit

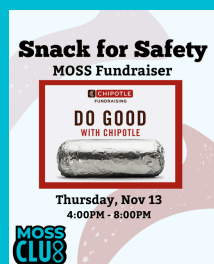
Every MOSS Club should create their own **INSTAGRAM PAGE** to post events and initiatives. Be sure to follow and Tag Make our Schools Safe and Moss Connect, HQ, the hub for all MOSS CLUBS nationwide.

You can also create a REMIND account to **connect with members, spread awareness, and share information.**

Make sure you have students and staff members' permission when posting photos of them.

Please make sure to tag both MOSS accounts in **ALL** Instagram posts and use **#makeourschoolssafe**

Sample Posts:



STUDENT & TEACHER TESTIMONIALS



"Being a part of the MOSS club has meant everything to me because I know that whatever we do will make a **positive impact in the world**. It also means so much to be able to fight for an issue that I am passionate about."

-Luke, 18

"I will take the leadership and perseverance skills I learned from my MOSS club to college. I have learned to push through the struggles and never give up, no matter how hard it gets. **This mentality is crucial to have in college.**"

- Stephanie, 17

"Working on safety initiatives has **deepened my empathy for my peers and the challenges they face**. It's made me more compassionate and driven to create a supportive and secure environment for everyone."

"...understand how my voice plays a role for the **greater good**."

"...even the smallest groups of people can have the **biggest voices for change**."

"...connected me with a **broader group** of students, teachers, parents & orgs."

"Being the club sponsor means I am giving students the opportunity to make a difference and have an impact on their own lives and the lives of their peers. Mentoring the students, while they take leadership roles and complete successful projects, **builds their confidence, and helps them acquire skills beyond academics.**"

- Teacher at J.P. Taravella High School

"Becoming part of the MOSS organization has helped me turn a tragedy into something positive - making sure all schools are safe. I have learned what it means to **show responsibility outside of the classroom** and to be part of an organization that is changing the world. I am so grateful to be a part of this movement and can't wait to see what the future holds."

-Alexa, 17

SENIOR SCHOLARSHIPS

Alyssa Alhadeff MOSS Scholarship

Each school year, several **graduating senior MOSS Club members** will be selected to receive the **Alyssa Alhadeff MOSS Scholarship** — a competitive award honoring leadership, impact, and dedication to school safety.

How to Apply:

1. Write a Short Essay (400 words)

- Topic: How has being part of MOSS impacted your life?
- Deadline: March 30 of your graduation year.

2. Record a 45-Second Video Testimonial

- Briefly share how MOSS has influenced your personal growth or future goals.



Email Your Submission To:

allison@makeourschoolssafe.org

Be sure to include your full name, school, and contact info in the email.



Let your voice be heard — and your leadership celebrated.
You've made schools safer.
Now let us celebrate your impact.



MOSS CLUB SPONSORS

Each club will be assigned a corporate sponsor.

Corporate sponsors play a vital role in supporting the mission and growth of student-led initiatives like MOSS Clubs. Their contributions—whether financial, in-kind, or promotional—help provide the resources needed to host impactful events, create awareness materials, and expand safety programs across schools. Maintaining strong, consistent communication with sponsors is essential to building lasting partnerships.

Sending updates **at least three times per year** ensures that sponsors are kept informed, appreciated, and engaged in the club's progress. These updates should highlight milestones, student involvement, event outcomes, and upcoming plans. By sharing the tangible impact of their support, clubs reinforce the value of the partnership and encourage continued collaboration that benefits both the school community and the sponsor's brand.

You will receive a point of contact for your sponsor as well as their logo to be included on your club t-shirt.



For ideas and suggestions on how to reach out to your corporate sponsor, please email Allison Cohen:

allison@makeourschoolssafe.org

MEET THE SPONSORS:



**TOGETHER WE WILL
MAKE OUR SCHOOLS SAFE**



IN HONOR OF
Alyssa Alhadeff
2003-2018

CONTRIBUTORS



Lori Alhadeff - *Founder & CEO*

Allison Cohen - *MOSS Club Director*

Isabella Eaton - *MOSS Intern*

Stacey Steinbaum - *Clinical Social Worker*

Ashley Schwartz - *Moss Club President, Pascack Hills High School, New Jersey*

Elijah Falkenstein - *Moss Club Co-President, Staples High School, Connecticut*

Jayla Daniels - *Moss Club Vice President, J.P. Taravella High School, Florida*

Mya Ryan - *Former MOSS Student*

MOSS Board members:

Lori Alhadeff– CEO

Dr. Ian Alhadeff– Chair of Board

Matteen Terrany– Member at Large

Jodi Lippman– Member at Large

MOSS Advisory Board

