

QUEEN'S PARK INSIDER



Spring 2020

The Official Magazine of the Ontario Legislature Internship Programme



OLIP IS A PROGRAMME OF THE CANADIAN POLITICAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION

LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

Dear Readers,

Our time at Queen's Park is quickly approaching its end. Through the Ontario Legislature Internship Programme (OLIP), we have been afforded the rare opportunity to engage with influential individuals working in politics, public policy, and beyond. As we reach the conclusion of our internship, we reflect on moments past, while planning our future endeavours. In this issue of the Queen's Park Insider, you will read about incredible meetings, unforgettable adventures, and the many lessons learned during our internship.

From working alongside dedicated MPPs and their staff, to visiting constituencies around Ontario, and gaining insight from scholars and professionals in a variety of fields, this year is one that we will surely never forget. As you will read, we have been given the chance to participate in study tours to Ottawa, Quebec City, and Yellowknife. Each destination has opened our eyes to different legislatures and their political and cultural dynamics.

In light of the COVID-19 crisis, OLIP has worked to adjust and adapt. This is a unique situation which has caused us all to reflect on the values of collaboration, flexibility and compassion. Although certain aspects of OLIP have been modified, our cohort has nonetheless learned a great deal about hard work, supporting one another, and adapting to unexpected circumstances.

We are grateful for these unparalleled opportunities and experiences, which are only made possible with the generous support of our sponsors, about whom more information can be found on pages 24-27. We want to extend our gratitude as well to the Canadian Political Science Association and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, without whom this programme and its many opportunities would not exist. It is an honour and privilege to learn about how Canadian politics works from the inside, and we hope to carry this knowledge into our future careers.

We also would like to extend our appreciation to the OLIP administrative team, consisting of Academic Director Dr. Peter P. Constantinou, Programme Coordinators Jocelyn McCauley and Michael Vidoni, Programme Manager Elisa Ntarelli and archivist Richard Sage. As well, we would like to welcome Valerie Quioc Lim and Meghan Stenson to the administrative team.

Thank you for taking the time to peruse this issue of the Queen's Park Insider and enjoy the highlights of OLIP's 44th year.

Sincerely,

Vanessa Groves
Editor-in-Chief

Clare MacDonald
Deputy Editor

Queen's Park Insider 2019-2020

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STUDY TOURS

JEREMY ISTEAD

THE ADMIN TEAM

ACADEMIC DIRECTOR

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LETTER FROM THE ACADEMIC DIRECTOR



It is hard to believe that we are already in May, and that OLIP's 44th year will soon come to an end. The interns are finishing their placements, and transitioning to the next chapter of their careers. It is an exciting time of the year, if a little bittersweet, in that our time together is almost done. The Queen's Park Insider is a recollection of the experiences they have shared, and a tribute to their time as OLIP interns.

Spring is also a great opportunity for us to welcome our new cohort of 2020-21. We are excited for them to experience everything that OLIP has to offer and we look forward to seeing them in September.

On behalf of OLIP, I would like to extend a sincere thank you to the Canadian Political Science Association and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario for their continued support and generosity. As well, thank you to the Speaker of the House, the Honourable Ted Arnott and House Clerk Todd Decker for their amazing support of the programme. I am profoundly grateful as well to our administrative team for the support that they provide our interns. Thank you Jocelyn McCauley, Michael Vidoni, Elisa Natarelli, Richard Sage, Valerie Quioc Lim and Meghan Stenson for all your contributions and for your ongoing dedication to the success of our programme. I have seen the programme grow tremendously during my five years as OLIP's Academic Director.

Over this time, our interns have worked hard to connect the programme with new sponsors and supporters, some of which are featured in this issue, and to expand the range of opportunities available for future cohorts. This year, we received a record number of programme applications, and have experienced a dramatic increase in our social media following. I have been genuinely impressed by our interns' engagement with stakeholders, many of whom have commented on the interns' professionalism and enthusiasm for their work.

This year was also marked by the impact of COVID-19 in Ontario and around the world. It has been remarkable to witness the resiliency and creativity demonstrated by our institutions, our officials and this cohort! With their perseverance, and with the ongoing support of our sponsors and friends, OLIP has deployed new tools for communication and collaboration to provide a rich programme of experiences, and to support our MPPs. We have all learned valuable life lessons that will be carried forward in the years to come. What this time has taught us is that challenges can be overcome when we come together and build on the best of our character.

It is always a sad occasion to part ways with a talented group of interns, and I am very proud of how much this year's cohort has grown and accomplished in their short time with us. I know that they will stay connected to OLIP's alumni network and come back soon to share their wisdom with their successors. I am confident that they have bright futures ahead of them and wish them much success wherever their paths lead.

Sincerely,

Dr. Peter P. Constantinou
Academic Director

The Ontario Legislature Internship Programme was established in 1975. The Programme is administered by the Canadian Political Science Association and is supported by a substantial grant from the Ontario Legislative Assembly. The Programme is not associated with the Government of Ontario or with any political party. OLIP provides backbench opposition and government members of the Legislative Assembly with highly qualified assistants, while simultaneously giving interns academic and practical experience in the day-to-day work of the Legislature.

SPRING MPP



MISHA APEL IS PLACED WITH MPP SOL MAMAKWA NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY

I am excited to be placed with MPP Sol Mamakwa of Kiiwetinoong for my opposition placement, and to be working alongside his Executive Assistant, Athena Bedassigae-Pheasant. MPP Mamakwa, who is the second person elected in Ontario of full First Nations descent, is the Critic of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation as well as a member of the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs. MPP Mamakwa advocates in the Legislature on Indigenous issues and for matters important to his constituents. I look forward to continuing to learn about Northern issues! Thank you for the warm welcome and for embracing me into the team!

JEREMY ISTEAD IS PLACED WITH MPP DAVID PICCINI PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE

My spring placement is with MPP David Piccini, who represents the riding of Northumberland—Peterborough South. MPP Piccini is also the Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Colleges and Universities, and a member of the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs. He brings a wealth of experience to Queen's Park, having previously served in policy, business, and diplomacy roles in both the public and private sectors. I am excited to learn about his riding, which features small municipalities and a large rural population, and I look forward to assisting with tasks related to his committee roles and the Ministry of Colleges and Universities. I'd like to thank MPP Piccini and his staff for warmly welcoming me, and I'm particularly grateful to his Executive Assistant Tory Pearson for her kindness and guidance.



PLACEMENTS

VANESSA GROVES IS PLACED WITH MPP STAN CHO PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE

I am excited to be placed with MPP Stan Cho, Member for Willowdale and Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Finance. MPP Cho previously served as Parliamentary Assistant to the Treasury Board, and he currently sits on two Standing Committees: Public Accounts as well as Finance and Economic Affairs. In my placement, I hope to learn more about the functioning of the Ministry of Finance, how other ministries interact with the ministry, and the dynamic role of stakeholders. MPP Cho's team, Ryan Cole, David Li, Ashley Seo, and Christina Botsis have provided me a warm welcome. In my first two weeks working in the office, I was tasked with a variety of responsibilities and had the opportunity to attend the Budget Day Announcement in Kleinburg. I look forward to learning from and working alongside such an amazing team!



CLARE MACDONALD IS PLACED **WITH MPP BHUITA KARPOCHE** NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY

My second placement is with MPP Bhutla Karpoche of Parkdale—High Park. MPP Kapoche worked as a Queen's Park staffer prior to being elected, and has been a longtime community organizer in Parkdale. She is also the first person of Tibetan heritage to be elected to public office in North America. Our spring placements have broken from the usual pattern because of the COVID-19 pandemic, and after two weeks spent in our new offices, the interns began to work from home. Nonetheless, Bhutla and her Legislative Assistant Lisa Druchok made me feel like a part of their team from afar, and have involved me in their efforts to respond to and act on a wide variety of constituent concerns. I have learned a lot from this work so far and am grateful for their guidance despite the challenging times. I look forward to helping as well with long-term projects related to MPP Karpoche's several private member's bills. Thank you to Bhutla and all of her staff for having me.

SPRING MPP PLACEMENTS



KIERAN LAWLOR IS PLACED WITH MPP NORM MILLER

PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE

I am excited to be placed with MPP Norm Miller, the Member for Parry Sound—Muskoka and the Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs. MPP Miller is a well-respected member of the Legislature and has represented his riding since 2001. His father Frank Miller also represented the former riding of Muskoka from 1971-1987, and served as Ontario's 19th premier. Lesley Daw, MPP Miller's Executive Assistant, is also a highly experienced staffer, having worked for five different MPPs over her time at Queen's Park. I am grateful to be able to draw on their collective wealth of knowledge. I'd like to thank MPP Miller, Lesley, and Legislative Assistant Sam Routley for welcoming me into the office!



MEAGHAN IRONS IS PLACED WITH MPP JAMIE WEST

NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY

For my opposition placement, I am working in the office of MPP Jamie West, who represents the riding of Sudbury. MPP West is a member of the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills, and the critic for the Labour Relations Act. This critic portfolio is quite fitting, as MPP West spent his career before politics advocating for workers' rights and fairness, as the Worker Safety Representative at the Copper Cliff Smelter and as President of the Sudbury & District Labour Council. I am excited to learn more about the issues important to both MPP West's community of Sudbury, and to Northern Ontario more generally, including healthcare, public safety, and poverty alleviation. Thank you MPP West and Legislative Assistant Alison Blagden for welcoming me so warmly to your office.



SPRING MPP PLACEMENTS

ERIC OSBORNE IS PLACED WITH MPP JOHN FRASER LIBERAL PARTY

For my spring placement, I am delighted to be working with Liberal MPP John Fraser, who has represented the riding of Ottawa South since 2013. MPP Fraser, who holds the position of House Leader, also has a very diverse portfolio because the Liberal Party of Ontario currently holds eight seats in the House. MPP Fraser brings an abundance of experience to the House. Prior to holding the seat himself, MPP Fraser worked for former Premier Dalton McGuinty in his native riding of Ottawa South. He was the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care in the Wynne government, and prior to the recent election of the new party leader, he was Interim Leader of the Liberal Party of Ontario. I am looking forward to working in his office with his fantastic staff, and learning from his years of experience. It will be an excellent learning opportunity to work in an office that must cover so many bases at once. I want to thank MPP Fraser and his executive assistant Grace Johnson who have been very welcoming, and for creating such an enriching and enjoyable work environment.



JENNIFER HAN IS PLACED WITH MPP MICHAEL PARSA PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE

I am thrilled to be starting the spring term with MPP Michael Parsa, Member for Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill. MPP Parsa has a background as a small business owner, and he has an extensive understanding of finance and economics. He currently sits as the Parliamentary Assistant to the President of the Treasury Board, and is a member of two Standing Committees: Estimates and Public Accounts, both of which I have had the chance to observe. As a native of Richmond Hill myself, it has been a valuable experience to observe how the work at Queen's Park affects the riding where I live. MPP Parsa recently tabled a private member's public bill, *An Act to Proclaim Ontario Day*, which serves to celebrate the rich history and diversity of our province, and it has been an incredibly exciting time to be placed in his office. I am grateful to MPP Parsa and his staff, Kai Nademi, Shaida Maleki, and Philip Hattin, who have warmly welcomed me into the office, and who have already tasked me with some research, speech writing and staffing assignments!

SPRING MPP PLACEMENTS



MARION DAVIS IS PLACED WITH MPP JOHN VANTHOF NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY

I have learned a great deal while working with MPP John Vanthof, who represents the northern riding of Timiskaming—Cochrane. MPP Vanthof is one of two Deputy Leaders of the Official Opposition. He is also the Critic for Agriculture, Food and Rural Development, Commissioner of the Board of Internal Economy, and Chair of the Standing Committee on Government Agencies. In addition to learning about these parliamentary roles, I have learned how MPP Vanthof ties his prior experiences as a dairy farmer and community organizer into his work at Queen's Park. I am enjoying learning about Northern Ontario, and am very grateful to have been warmly welcomed by MPP Vanthof's team at his constituency offices.

HOW DO I STAY IN TOUCH AS AN ALUMNUS?

There are many ways you can get involved as an alumnus! Please email our Alumni Committee Chair Clare at cmacdonald@olipinterns.ca to be added to our private alumni social media pages, and to provide OLIP with your most up-to-date contact information.

You may also complete our online form at www.olipinterns.ca/alumni-survey to update your contact information.

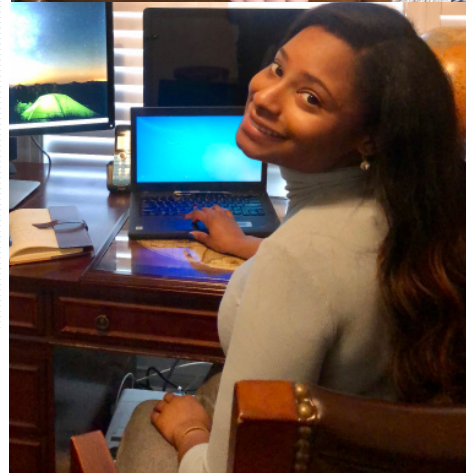
Stay connected by joining our private alumni group pages on Facebook and LinkedIn.

Attend our receptions and alumni meet-ups throughout the year. Notice for meet ups are sent through email and our alumni group pages.

INTERNS WORKING REMOTELY



Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, like many organizations, OLIP shifted into working from home beginning in mid-March of this year. While we miss the buzz of Queen's Park, the interns are adapting well to working from home. We have been working together—from afar—to develop effective work-from-home strategies. Most important to us is scheduling time each week to get together virtually like we do so often over the course of a regular OLIP week. This includes a virtual version of our weekly Friday OLIP meetings. We also find it helpful to maintain a daily work structure and incorporate breaks with fresh air and exercise, as if we were still walking between the Leg and Whitney Block! Although these are difficult times, we are grateful for the support that we find within our own cohort, our administrative team, and from the countless friends of OLIP.



ONTARIO'S PAST PREMIERS



Former premier **DALTON MCGUINTY** captivated us with his reflections on politics, and on his life outside of public office. He spoke about the importance of valuing idealism over cynicism, the positive role his father played in his upbringing, and the ongoing dynamics of family and public life. Mr. McGuinty shared his memories of serving in various posts, including as Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, as well as of his law career as senior partner at McGuinty and McGuinty. We learned about the political landscape during his three terms as premier, as well as some of the challenges and highlights, particularly in respect of re-election campaigning, health care, transit, and the environment. We are honoured to have had the opportunity to hear Mr. McGuinty's experiences and wisdom first-hand. We thank him deeply for taking the time to meet with us.

We had the pleasure of meeting with former premier **DAVID PETERSON**. In our meeting, Mr. Peterson discussed how he became the first Liberal premier after over 40 years of Conservative government. We also discussed Mr. Peterson's experience as premier, which included the Meech Lake Accord, a key event in Canadian history that many of us had studied in school. We learned that despite the outcome, the Meech Lake Accord was a pivotal moment in his political career. Not only did we learn about Mr. Peterson's political past, but he also left us with some words of wisdom: "There is opportunity everywhere, you just have to spot it and see its value." Thank you Mr. Peterson for the lovely and insightful meeting.



We had the privilege of virtually meeting the 21st premier of Ontario, and current Special Envoy of Canada to Myanmar, the **HON. BOB RAE**. Our conversation touched on many topics from Mr. Rae's nearly five decade career. We discussed Mr. Rae's time in provincial politics, from his reasoning behind the 1987 Liberal-NDP Accord, to his becoming premier and how he learned to lead and govern. We also learned about Mr. Rae's experience in international diplomacy, and the effects COVID-19 may have on global organizations. He told us that to this day he does not feel his learning is over: a good lesson from someone with such an illustrious career. We would like to thank Mr. Rae for taking the time to meet with us during this extraordinary time!

INTERNS IN OTTAWA

Our meeting with the Supreme Court of Canada and **COURT JUSTICE ANDROMACHE KARAKATSANIS** was fulfilling and incredibly interesting. Nominated in 2011 by Prime Minister Stephen Harper, she is the first Greek-Canadian appointed to the Supreme Court, and one of four women currently on the Court. Justice Karakatsanis' passion for the rule of law and for working collaboratively with the other justices was evident in her responses to our questions on the inner functions of the Supreme Court. We were in awe to be in a building of such importance and grandeur, and we profusely thank Justice Karakatsanis for giving her time on a Friday evening to speak to a group of curious interns.



One of the highlights of our time in Ottawa was a discussion over breakfast with **MP ERIN O'TOOLE**, the Official Opposition Shadow Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the representative for the riding of Durham. As a lawyer and former Air Force Captain, MP O'Toole brings a wealth of past experience to the Hill. We enjoyed hearing about his time as Minister of Veterans Affairs and discussing the importance of mental health supports in society, particularly for veterans. We are so grateful to MP O'Toole for speaking with us and generously answering our many questions.

We had the privilege of meeting with the **CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND ETHICS COMMISSIONER, MARIO DION**. His office administers the Conflict of Interest Code and *Conflict of Interest Act*, and has the power to conduct investigations and levy fines. Mr. Dion has held 13 positions in his 39 years in the public service, and his considerable experience benefits him greatly in his current role. We were fascinated to learn about the work of his office and to have the chance to ask him questions about potential conflicts of interest. We are thankful to Mr. Dion for his presentation and for his generosity.



INTERNS IN QUEBEC CITY



VERONIQUE HIVON is a Québec Member of the National Assembly (MNA) who has represented the riding of Joliette for over ten years. As a member of the Parti Québécois, she is focused on a wide range of issues that her constituents care about. In our time with her, Mme. Hivon shared an interesting opinion about her party—that many people feel the Parti Québécois is good at governing, such that separation begins to feel less necessary and takes a backseat. We appreciated the chance to meet with the Member for Joliette, and thank the Québec interns for organizing this meeting.

We had the pleasure of meeting Québec Member of the National Assembly (MNA) **CHRISTOPHER SKEETE**, who is a member of the Coalition Avenir Québec (CAQ), and represents the riding of Sainte-Rose. He is currently the Parliamentary Assistant to the Premier for Relations with English-Speaking Quebecers. Député Skeete took the time to share his experiences with us during the CAQ's first term forming the Government. He also discussed Franco-Anglo relations in Quebec and the CAQ's various policy positions. Député Skeete is a supporter of the Fondation Jean-Charles-Bonenfant Internship Programme at the National Assembly, and is paired with an intern himself. Thank you Député Skeete for the conversation and for supporting our fellow interns!



We thoroughly enjoyed meeting **PHILLIP AUTHIER** from the Montréal Gazette, **MARTIN CROTEAU** from La Presse, and **CAROLINE PLANTE** from La Presse Canadienne at the National Assembly of Québec. Turning the tables on the journalists, we were able to ask them our pressing questions on media access, hot topics in Québec, and how their experiences have changed over the course of their careers. We were especially interested in the use of both English and French during scrums in the National Assembly of Québec, and how they differed from scrums in our Legislature. Thank you very much for meeting with us and for taking the time to answer our questions.

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS



We had the pleasure of meeting with OLIP alumna Kate Mulligan, Director of Policy and Communications at **ALLIANCE FOR HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES**. Kate engaged us in a lively discussion about her work in public health, and specifically about her recent work on social prescribing, a perspective that looks at healthcare through a holistic lens. She explained how the Alliance for Healthier Communities uses this perspective to advance health equity. During the meeting, we discussed how the Alliance assists in community programming, such as newcomer community cooking. Our meeting right in the Alliance's community kitchen provided a unique opportunity to understand the value of community spaces and integrated services, and to learn about how these programs can have positive impacts on newcomers in Toronto. Thank you Kate!



In November, we had the rare opportunity to sit down and meet the **HONOURABLE GEORGE R. STRATHY**. Chief Justice Strathy was appointed as Chief Justice of Ontario and President of the Court of Appeal for Ontario in 2014. During our meeting, we learned that Chief Justice Strathy specializes in civil litigation, focusing particularly on maritime and transportation law. Chief Justice Strathy shared profound insights into the legal profession and decision making by the courts. He reminded us that dissent in life, law and politics is healthy, and that we are all looking for happiness and the greatest good in the long run. Thank you Chief Justice Strathy for your candid conversation, and also for urging us to pursue careers as law clerks!



We had the chance to visit the **SAMARA CENTRE FOR DEMOCRACY**, where we met Kendall Anderson, Executive Director; Michael Morden, Research Director; and Adelina Petit-Vouriot, Research Analyst. The Samara Centre is a non-partisan charity that produces research on Canadian democracy and advocates for Canadian politics to become more accessible, responsive, and inclusive. Their staff gave us a presentation of their most recent projects, and offered to help us with the methodology for our own OLIP papers! Thank you Ms. Anderson, Mr. Morden, and Ms. Petit-Vouriot for your presentation and for tips on our papers.

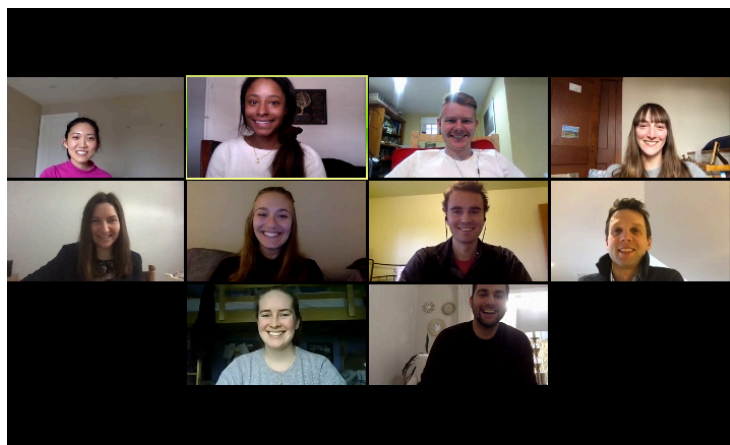
MEETING HIGHLIGHTS



In a visit to his downtown Toronto studio, we had the pleasure of meeting with renowned Canadian photographer **ED BURTYSKY**, who is known for his remarkable depictions of contemporary global industrial landscapes. We had a long and productive discussion with Mr. Burtynsky about topics such as changes to the photography industry over the course of his decades-long career, and how he does not consider himself to be an environmentalist despite the environmental focus of his work. Mr. Burtynsky also showed us how he is using augmented reality to give his works a new life, and offered us a sneak peak of his next project! Thank you Mr. Burtynsky for your time and for welcoming us into your studio.



We thoroughly enjoyed our tour of the **CBC TORONTO NEWSROOM**, and especially appreciated learning from our tour guide, Mark Mietkiewicz. We met several journalists whom we recognized from CBC Radio, and had the exciting opportunity to see the studio where *The National* is broadcast from every night! We also met with Paul Hambleton, Director of Journalistic Standards, who taught us a great deal about journalistic standards and balance in reporting. It was very interesting to discuss Queen's Park news with the people who report on it! We will fondly remember our insider look into CBC News.



OLIP has had to adapt in order to continue our meaningful Friday meetings during the COVID-19 crisis. We are very fortunate that our first virtual meeting in these unprecedented times was with Mr. Sean Mullin, founding Executive Director of the **BROOKFIELD INSTITUTE**. Prior to his work at the Institute, Mr. Mullin worked in senior political staffing positions, including Director of Policy to the Premier of Ontario, and as Special Advisor to Ontario's Minister of Finance. Mr. Mullin described to us how various policy decisions are made by the Ontario government, what his role as Director of Policy entailed, and what it takes for the Ministry of Finance to craft a provincial budget. Mr. Mullin's extensive knowledge of economic issues encouraged an intriguing discussion on how COVID-19 will affect the way think tanks like Brookfield Institute approach policy analysis, and what economic recovery may look like in Ontario after the pandemic. We thank Mr. Mullin for suggesting we take this meeting online, and for allowing us the opportunity to learn about his experiences while working from home.

MEETING WITH MINISTERS



We had the pleasure of meeting **MINISTER PETER BETHLENFALVY**, MPP for Pickering—Uxbridge, and President of the Treasury Board Secretariat. During our meeting, Minister Bethlenfalvy shared with us how he got involved in politics and the Treasury Board's ongoing projects. We were especially interested in hearing his insights on the inner functions of the Treasury Board, and what he sees as the future of how Ontario manages its expenditures. Thank you very much Minister for taking the time out of your busy schedule to meet with us! It was an incredibly interesting and thought-provoking meeting.



We were fortunate to meet with the **HONOURABLE RAYMOND CHO**, MPP for Scarborough North and Minister of Seniors and Accessibility. It was fascinating to hear about Minister Cho's journey from South Korea to Canada, and his experiences with all three levels of government. Minister Cho's story is inspiring, and highlights themes of perseverance and hard work. For instance, Minister Cho explained how his background in social work and experience of working multiple jobs—both inside and outside of politics—have helped him with his current portfolio. He also told us that dedication and a positive attitude can carry you far in achieving your goals. Thank you Minister for your inspiring chat, and for encouraging us in our own professional journeys.

INTERNS IN YELLOWKNIFE

As Ontario Legislative Interns, our trip to the Northwest Territories, alongside interns from the Manitoba Legislative Assembly, served as an important reminder of the unique culture and rich traditions that exist within each of the provinces and territories across Canada.

We thank **CORINNE KRUSE** and **CRYSTAL COCKNEY** for facilitating our tour of the beautiful Legislature building, led by **KATIE WEAVER**. It was enriching to connect the themes and values of the consensus government with the physical features of the building itself.

Themes of community and consensus extended to all aspects of government, as we learned from observing the **STANDING COMMITTEE ON ACCOUNTABILITY AND OVERSIGHT**, and from speaking with **CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER NICOLE LATOUR**, and **OMBUD COLETTE LANGLOIS**.

Meeting with ministers and ministry staff such as **SHAWN MCCANN**, **SHANE THOMPSON** and **JOHN VANDENBERG** allowed us to gain an understanding of the challenges of governing a population of 44,000 across a vast territory, and furthered the importance of liaising with other governments such as Indigenous and municipal counterparts.

We are grateful to the **CLERK OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, TIM MERCER**, as well as the amazing individuals and organizations who helped to shape such a memorable learning experience. The Yellowknife climate may have been cold, but your welcome was incredibly warm! Thank you.



TIM MERCER, Clerk of the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories.

COLETTE LANGLOIS, Ombud of the Northwest Territories.



NICOLE LATOUR, Chief Electoral Officer of the Northwest Territories.

JOHN VANDENBERG, Assistant Deputy Minister, Department of Infrastructure.

INTERNS IN YELLOWKNIFE

THE HONOURABLE FREDERICK SONNY BLAKE JR. was first elected in 2011 to represent the electoral district of Mackenzie Delta. Following the 2019 election, Mr. Blake was elected by his colleagues to the position of Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories. The Speaker very kindly hosted us for a delicious local lunch at the nearby Trader's Grill and entertained us for a generous two hours with stories about his life before politics. He graciously answered our many questions about his current role, his riding, and his perspective on consensus government. His staff member Corinne also kindly arranged a tour of the Legislature for us on our first day in Yellowknife, which allowed us to learn more about the symbolism of the building's architecture and Chamber. The tour and our lunch with the Speaker set the stage for the rest of our incredible visit.



One of the most memorable moments of our Yellowknife study tour was the afternoon we spent with **SCOTT MCQUEEN**. Mr. McQueen and his family took us dogsledding on the frozen lake behind their home. Mr. McQueen shared many stories about his childhood in the area, and of his father's experiences with dog sledding throughout the 1960s and 1970s. Over a delicious meal of bannock and stew, Mr. McQueen reminisced about the many dogs he has worked with, and described his future plans for dog sledding with his children and with the growing number of tourists in Yellowknife. We all left Mr. McQueen's house with a new appreciation for the traditions of dog sledding and storytelling. Thank you greatly Scott McQueen for your hospitality and warm welcome!



It was a pleasure meeting **BOBBY DRYGESE, COUNCILOR**, and **JASON SNAGGS, CEO, OF THE YELLOWKNIVES DENE FIRST NATION (YDFN)**. Mr. Drygeese shared his family's deep history of community involvement, explaining how both his grandfathers served as chiefs. He also told us the history of his community, along with their efforts to negotiate a comprehensive land claim. Mr. Drygeese finished our conversation by sharing his community's motto: "As long as the sun shines, the river flows, and the grass grows, we will be here." Mr. Snaggs followed afterward by giving us a fascinating presentation about the overall structure of the YDFN, their governance, and the extensive community programming they offer. We enjoyed learning about the YDFN, and thank them for helping us recognize the importance of different types of governance systems.



INTERNS IN YELLOWKNIFE



PREMIER COCHRANE hosted us for a lovely breakfast at the Legislature. Premier Cochrane, currently the only female premier in Canada, entered into political life five years ago, but politics was never in her plan. She recounted how she had to grow up quickly, leaving home at age 13, and having to work multiple jobs to support herself and her children when she became a single mother. However, these hardships led Premier Cochrane to pursue a degree in social work. Her experience as a social worker, predominantly working with women and on the housing crisis in Northwest Territories, informed her role as Minister responsible for the N.W.T. Housing Corporation. Her life experience and career as a social worker form part of the unique perspective that she brings to her role as premier, both in the Northwest Territories Legislature, and amongst the other First Ministers in Canada. Thank you Premier Cochrane for taking the time to meet with us, and sharing your experiences and perspectives on governance.

We had the pleasure of meeting with Yvonne Hopkins and her team at the **NATIVE WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES (NWA)**. During our meeting, we learned about the NWA's strong relationship with the RCMP, and the organization's wide variety of social services provided to many smaller communities throughout the Northwest Territories. Particularly, we discussed their 24 hour Victim Service program, dedicated to advocating on behalf of victims of crime as they navigate the justice and medical system. We also learned about the NWA's Aboriginal education and skills training programs, which equip individuals with employment strategies. Thank you Yvonne for sharing experiences from your time teaching in Indigenous communities across Canada, as well as her team, for taking the time to meet with us and providing us with arts materials to pay remembrance to Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls of the NWT.



We were pleased to meet with **SHEILA BASSI-KELLETT, SENIOR ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER AT THE CITY OF YELLOWKNIFE**. Prior to her role, Ms. Bassi-Kellett held various positions in the territorial public service, including Deputy Minister of Human Resources. We learned about Yellowknife's recycling and food waste systems, and were sobered to learn the extent of the challenges the city faces in addressing high rates of homelessness and substance abuse. We left the meeting with a truly transformed understanding of municipal and territorial politics, as well as governance in the Northwest Territories. The interns would like to thank Ms. Bassi-Kellett for generously sharing her time, insight and experience.

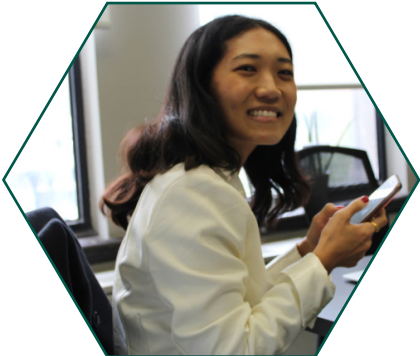


THE 2019–2020 YEAR IN REVIEW

The interns reflect on their favourite experiences of the internship.

I loved helping to develop a private member's bill from start to finish. It gave me exposure to policy research, stakeholder engagement, event planning, communications and so much more, and it was rewarding to be a part of this process. - **Jeremy**

I really liked learning about politics and policy in our Friday meetings. I enjoyed learning firsthand about the many ways MPPs serve their constituents. And having the chance to interview MPPs for my paper and learn about how they decide to spend their time and energy was also a very unique experience. - **Clare**



I enjoyed meeting incredible people and building a network of life-long friends and colleagues! - **Misha**

My main highlight from OLIP was the chance to really learn first-hand about Ontario's diversity. Working in MPPs' offices from both northern and southern Ontario gave me the opportunity to learn about what is important to people across our province. I also found attending both the stakeholder meetings with my MPPs and our Friday meetings really valuable for learning more about and discussing a wide range of policy issues, and different approaches to solving them. - **Meaghan**



This year, we had the opportunity to work in three offices and I am so appreciative of the diversity of learning experiences at Queen's Park. I would like to thank everyone at Precinct Properties and the offices of MPP Khanjin and MPP Vanthof for welcoming me as part of your teams, and for taking the time to teach me about your work for Ontarians. - **Marion**



I loved Fridays when OLIP regrouped and met with individuals and organizations from a variety of sectors. Some favourite meetings for me included Stephen Jost, Elizabeth McIsaac and Mark Bulgutch. - **Jenn**



I have really enjoyed the opportunity to connect with both of my MPP placements' ridings, and seeing constituency concerns as well as advocacy from the ground up. Some of the highlights of my placement include presenting briefs on stakeholders and getting to shadow my MPP at events. Memorable meetings with my colleagues include our tour of CBC Headquarters and our visit to Osgoode Hall where we chatted with Chief Justice Strathy. - **Vanessa**



I think my highlight of the year was simply the opportunity to work in the offices of MPPs. I have been interested in politics for much of my life and having the chance to experience what happens behind the scenes in a hands-on way has been an unforgettable experience. A huge thank you to both MPP Marit Stiles and MPP Norm Miller for welcoming me into their offices! - **Kieran**

I enjoyed working in the fast paced environment of Queen's Park. As a student of politics, it was exciting to work with politicians and legislative staff, and to set up meetings and attend receptions. Along with meeting politicians, it was interesting to engage with stakeholders and hear about what action they would like to see taken in Ontario. It really gave me an in-depth look into different sectors and issues that I never had the chance to hear about before. - **Eric**

HONORARY INTERNS

TONIA GRANNUM and **VALERIE QUIOC LIM** are this year's Honorary OLIP Interns, a distinction awarded to individuals who have made significant contributions to the programme.

Tonia served as OLIP Coordinator from 2001-2007, and Valerie served in the same role from 2015-2019. Today, Tonia is **CLERK OF PROCEDURAL SERVICES** and Valerie is **SENIOR CLERK OF COMMITTEES**.

We sat down with Tonia and Valerie to learn more about their experiences with OLIP.



Valerie (left), Tonia (right)

What did you enjoy most about being an OLIP coordinator?

VALERIE: It was amazing to be part of a programme where you can meet bright young minds and have the opportunity to provide mentorship. I first heard about OLIP when I started working in the Legislative Assembly, and found the interns to be a great group of people. I enjoyed meeting interns from across the country with different backgrounds and experiences. It was also nice to host interns who visit from other Legislatures, like Manitoba and Québec. As past coordinators, we are proud of our former interns and are always interested to know what they are up to these days.

TONIA: I always felt very proud of the OLIP programme and the fact that as a coordinator you were part of the panel that selected such young and bright minds. It was also nice to be in a position to provide guidance and advice to the interns, and give them an overview of the Legislative Assembly. During study tours, I had the opportunity to see the interns "in action," and I was always impressed with the well thought out questions they asked during meetings. The programme has a great reputation in other jurisdictions such as the Northwest Territories and Washington, D.C.

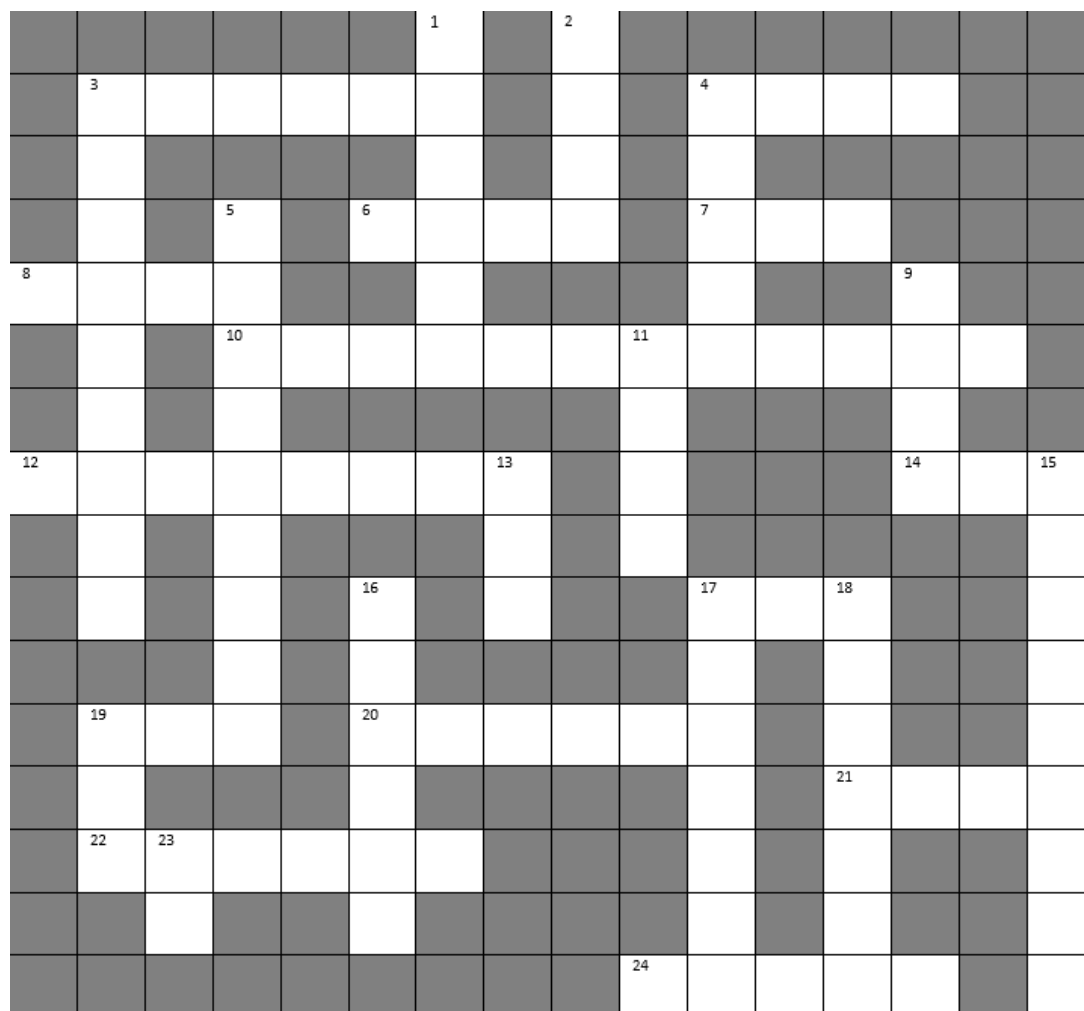
What do you think makes OLIP such a strong internship programme?

TONIA: The Speakers of the House have always been great supporters of the programme. Intern constituency visits are another great opportunity for the MPPs to provide the interns with exposure to their work and ridings, and for the interns to see new parts of Ontario.

VALERIE: MPPs love the programme, and many of them apply for an intern every year. The academic papers that are produced by interns are always impressive, and a number of them even get published. In addition to their MPP placements, we also appreciate when the interns have the opportunity to work in offices of the Legislature while the House is not sitting.

KEEPING UP WITH QUEEN'S PARK

A crossword puzzle about all things OLIP and the Leg! Fill in the blanks with your best answers.



Down

- 1 - Standing ____: The permanent written rules under which the House
 2 - Number of interns who work for government and opposition MPPs each term
 3 - A meeting highlight was with the Samara Centre for ____
 4 - MPPs may have to sit past 6pm for a ____ sitting
 5 - You are invited to a ____ in room 228
 9 - Members of the Press Gallery might report on a recent opinion ____
 11- Opposite of Ayes
 13 - What might an MPP say in their speech when short on time?
 15 - Street on which Queen's Park is located
 16 - The In ____ dining room can be found in the basement of Queen's Park
 17 - Last name of MPP with whom intern Misha is placed
 18 - Something MPPs might not have a lot of time for
 19 - Short form for OLIP's sister programme, which operates at the federal level
 23 - Short form for Attorney General or Auditor General

Across

- 3 - Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, Todd ____
 4 - Particularly exciting clips of question period might make it into the ____
 6 - Yellowknives ____ First Nation is across the bay from Yellowknife
 7 - Short form for Minister Paul Calandra's title
 8 - The Whip usually makes sure that everyone attends an important ____
 10 - Last name of OLIP's Academic Director
 12 - Last name of the MPP with whom Clare is placed
 14 - What do MPPs work together to pass in the legislature?
 17 - Short form for MPP Steve Clark's Ministry
 19 - You can find many of these at the gift shop and may want to put them on your lanyard
 20 - TTC subway station directly north of Queen's Park
 21 - All ____ are off once question period begins
 22 - Interns write these throughout the internship year
 24- Last name of the MPP with whom Jenn is placed

ALUMNI

CATHERINE FROST

1990-1991



Tell us a bit about yourself and your work since OLIP. What do you do now?

After spending a couple of years working at Queen's Park as an advisor and later as a communications strategist for a major international PR firm, I'm now a professor of Political Science at McMaster University, researching issues of representation and political community. Currently I am working on a book on Declarations of Independence worldwide, because I am interested in how new things get started in politics. Moments of political founding fascinate me because they require us to "think the unthinkable," as political theorist Hannah Arendt put it, and the world is never the same again as a result.

How has your work changed in the face of the COVID-19 crisis?

I think we will all be taking stock on that question for a long time, but in the meantime I have learned to love Zoom as a makeshift classroom setting. I also learned how amazing my students are in terms of adapting to a whole new way of doing things. I learned how important familiar structures are to taming the unknown—both my students and I embraced the online classroom because it allowed us a dose of (weird) normalcy. And I learned it is very unsatisfying to try to write a book using digital sources alone. Finally, I have also thought a lot about the role of community in our current situation, and the sudden awareness people have that "we are all in this together." Writing a book about "thinking the unthinkable" while the world is being turned upside down, and everyone is scrambling to figure it out, is a living laboratory.

What is the most significant lesson you learned from your OLIP experience?

How hard politicians work, and how committed most are to doing the right thing—even if they don't agree what that is. Generally it's unfashionable to esteem anyone in elected politics, but being an Intern at Queen's Park gave me a privileged view of that world. There are enormous sacrifices made by the people who take up a life in elected politics, or a life in politics more generally. The internship left me in awe of the passion and commitment people bring to the process. From the outside looking in people only see the conflict between political groups. From the inside you see the effort it takes to build things, keep things working, or find common ground when needed. There is a lot of cynicism around politics these days, fed by an artificially toxic public discourse. But having the internship to look back on reminds me that politics has this constructive quality too. This is the real saving grace of the political world, and I am grateful to have had an up-close education in it.

SPOTLIGHT

DIEGO ORTIZ

2011-2012

Tell us a bit about yourself and your work since OLIP. What do you do now?

I am a proud Canadian by choice. My immediate family and I landed in London, ON, in the late 90s as political refugees from Colombia. I grew up in the Forest City and graduated from the University of Western Ontario. Following a stimulating internship year at Queen's Park, I spent some quality time at the Devon Group in Toronto as a Communications Consultant. After developing some minor cubicle allergies, I volunteered to deploy abroad with the Navy. I have been a Naval Reservist since grade 11 and my extensive naval training enabled me to deploy on Operation CARIBBE, Canada's international mission to combat illegal trafficking in the eastern Pacific Ocean. I was a Naval Communicator and the Spanish linguist on board HMCS Edmonton. Upon returning home, I worked as Digital Comms Director at a creative tech-startup in the defence industry. I have since returned to serving in the Navy full-time, this time in strategic communications. I was commissioned from the ranks, and served as Public Affairs Officer at the Toronto Naval Reserve Division: HMCS York.

Today, I have the honour of serving Canadians in the role of Regional Public Affairs Officer providing guidance and mentorship to Public Affairs teams in seven Naval Reserve Divisions across the province, while supporting national outreach campaigns and strategies.

How has your work changed in the face of the COVID-19 crisis?

The Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) has had to drastically adapt to the threat posed by a global pandemic. As a military, we are never closed for business. However, it is certainly not business as usual either. Military leaders are trained to lead troops into battle. But what a global pandemic is humbly teaching us is to also lead them to "shelter in place". To do this, for the first time in my naval career, I have been working from home for over a month. However, the main responsibility for the Chief of the Defence Staff is the defence of Canada. Therefore, national security activity remains uninterrupted; it just looks and feels a bit different. Warships have been sent to sea, and soldiers and aircrews are sequestering to stay healthy and be able to respond at short notice. The Reserve Force has been effectively activated, and today is part of a national task force of over 24,000 CAF members ready to respond to any domestic situation—from natural disasters to pandemic response, and in support of provincial requests.

What is the most significant lesson you learned from your OLIP experience?

Stand for what you believe in. Always. As an OLIPer, you are exposed to a sea of ideologies, policies, ideas and views very early on in your career. This is powerful. But what I learned to be even more powerful is the ability to stand your ground based on a strong moral compass. Not an easy feat for experienced politicians, let alone for an eager-to-impress intern. A key example of this was establishing a social media presence for OLIP. Back in the 2011/12 year, I knew social media had a new role to play in our democratic system for generations to come, and I quickly realized its potential for benefiting the programme. However, the programme's administration at the time was entrusted with protecting the 35 plus years of OLIP's integrity and reputation, and they were wary. I drafted a comprehensive social media plan, leveraged my military risk mitigation training, and ultimately received the green light for OLIP accounts on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Interns have been reaching new digital audiences ever since!



THANK YOU



We are privileged to have dedicated sponsors that go above and beyond to support OLIP every year! **AMAPCEO**, one of our long-standing sponsors, was this year's official Fall Reception Sponsor, and helped make our event a great success. AMAPCEO is a member-driven, non-partisan union of more than 14,000 professional employees. President Dave Bulmer, Senior Advisor Anthony Schein, and Labour Relations Specialist Benjamin Rossiter hosted us for lunch at their downtown Toronto office. With the substantial range of senior-level, professional employees represented by AMAPCEO, it was captivating to hear what it takes to advocate on behalf of a professional public service. We want to thank Dave, Anthony, Benjamin, and everyone at AMAPCEO for the invaluable support they provide to intern cohorts year after year.



THE LAW SOCIETY OF ONTARIO governs Ontario's lawyers and paralegals by setting high standards for learning, competence, and conduct for legal professionals. The Law Society, which protects the public interest and facilitates Ontarians' access to justice, regulates more than 50,000 lawyers, and over 8,000 licensed paralegals. Thank you Sheena Weir, Executive Director and Executive Director of External Relations and Communications, and Eddie Ashimi, Outreach and Events Coordinator, for facilitating a guided tour of Osgoode Hall, and providing an extensive overview of the Law Society's activities. We learned about the ongoing interactive exhibits at Osgoode Hall, which display diverse stories of those from varying racial and gender backgrounds who have contributed to the Canadian legal landscape. We thank the Law Society of Ontario for its continued support of our programme!

TO OUR SPONSORS!



We are grateful for the opportunity to enjoy lunch with one of our sponsors, the **CO-OPERATORS**. We were welcomed by Sara Cleland, Senior Government Relations Advisor, and Maya Milardovic, Associate Vice President Government Relations, and were joined by former OLIP interns Monika Wyrzykowska and Frank Lowery. As if we did not already have enough experience to learn from, we were privileged to also be joined by Erin Morgan, Executive Director of the Ontario Co-operative Association, Julien Geremie, Executive Director of the Conseil de la co-opération de l'Ontario, and finally, from the Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada, Government Relations Manager Scott Parry and Deputy Executive Director Harvey Cooper. We would like to thank the Co-operators for hosting this excellent event and for their support of our programme.



We were so pleased to meet with our sponsor, the **PUBLIC AFFAIRS ASSOCIATION OF CANADA (PAAC)**. PAAC is a national, not-for-profit organization that provides public affairs professionals with opportunities for professional development, exchanging new ideas, and networking. We enjoyed our afternoon learning from PAAC board members Jim Burnett, Harvey Cooper, Michelle Eaton, Alex Greco, and Paul Yeung about the varied work of public affairs professionals. Our hosts gave us valuable advice about applying for our next jobs, following our passions, and the benefit of non-partisanship in public affairs. We are grateful for PAAC's continued support of OLIP and for the opportunity to hear words of wisdom from its highly accomplished board members.

THANK YOU



ONTARIO POWER GENERATION (OPG) is the province's largest clean power generator with a diverse generating portfolio consisting of nuclear, hydro, thermal and solar power. We were grateful for the chance to meet with Alexandria Anderson, OPG's Stakeholder Relations Officer, Sandra Dykxhoorn, Director of Provincial Relations, and other colleagues including OLIP alumna Munisha Basiram, to gain insight into OPG's current projects and challenges. We learned that OPG plays a critical role in Ontario's economy through job creation and re-investing economic benefits, as well as leading innovations such as electrifying the transportation sector and exploring the use of small modular reactors. We continued to learn about OPG during our trip to the nuclear plant in Pickering where we had the chance to see the control room and experience the radiation safety protocols! Thank you, OPG, for the wonderful learning experience.



Given the number of recent changes to post-secondary education due to COVID-19, we were able to have an informative and timely video meeting with Executive Director Michael Conlon of **THE ONTARIO CONFEDERATION OF UNIVERSITY FACULTY ASSOCIATIONS (OCUFA)** and Communications Lead Ben Lewis. We discussed how OCUFA and its members have been impacted by and responded to the pandemic. We learned how OCUFA helped its members during the quick transition to online classes, and discussed the possibility of future virtual learning at Ontario universities. Thank you Michael and Ben for taking the time to virtually meet with us, and the whole team at OCUFA for your continued support of OLIP!

TO OUR SPONSORS!



We enjoyed our video meeting with Sophie Helpard, Director of Government Relations (Ontario), Noah Shack, Vice President of Greater Toronto Area, and Barbara Bank, Greater Toronto Area Chair, from **THE CENTRE FOR ISRAEL AND JEWISH AFFAIRS (CIJA)**. As one of this year's new sponsors, it was great to hear about CIJA's advocacy work across the country representing over 150,000 members of the Canadian Jewish community. It was particularly interesting to hear how they work to improve the quality of Jewish life in Canada by advancing the public policy interests of Canada's Jewish community. Using Bill 168, *Combating Antisemitism Act, 2020* and the mobilization of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's definition of antisemitism as a case study, we learned about the value of community organization. Thank you for taking the time to meet with us, and for sharing your commitment to advocating for issues that pertain to the Jewish community and others across Ontario and Canada.



It was a pleasure meeting with Doug Anderson of the **ONTARIO NURSES ASSOCIATION**. It was very interesting to learn from Mr. Anderson, Manager of the Provincial Services Team, about the extent of work the ONA's members are involved in. Their services range from hospitals to home care to public health and across all health care sectors. The ONA's advocacy has been inspiring, and although we met Mr. Anderson before the pandemic, it was apparent from our meeting that the ONA does an incredible amount of work to keep Ontario's nurses, health care workers, patients, and their families safe at all times. Thank you Mr. Anderson for taking the time out of your busy schedule to chat with us. We especially appreciate all the tireless work the ONA has done to support frontline health care workers during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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