

QUEEN'S PARK INSIDER



FALL 2021

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE ONTARIO LEGISLATURE INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME



OLIP IS A PROGRAMME OF THE CANADIAN POLITICAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION

LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

Dear Readers,

As the holidays quickly approach and the interns work hard in their placements with MPPs, we are proud to present to you the 2021 fall edition of the Queen’s Park Insider!

Since we began in September, we have had the pleasure of meeting some of Ontario’s brightest minds, experts, and parliamentary leaders, who have reignited a passion in us for our beautiful province. This has allowed us to work closely with one another, supporting each other in our endeavours, and quickly forming us into one big family.

Each cohort experiences something new that makes its experience unique. Our cohort happens to be one of the first in OLIP’s history to adopt a hybrid model of work. Most of us have spent some of our days at Queen’s Park and in our respective constituency offices, rushing to help our Members, moving from committee to committee, and learning more about the ins-and-outs of Ontario political life. We are grateful for this invaluable opportunity, which would not have been possible during the early days of the pandemic.

In this issue of the Queen’s Park Insider you will read about the interns, our first placements with MPPs, and some of the interesting meetings the cohort has experienced thus far. We have also included some fun additions, such as an OLIP bingo card and a map of the interns’ favourite spots around Ontario.

This issue of QPI highlights our wonderful partners, alumni, and friends of OLIP, who continue to contribute to OLIP. Importantly, this includes the Clerk, the Speaker, and the whole Legislative Assembly of Ontario, as well as the Canadian Political Science Association, whose continued support makes our OLIP experience memorable. Lastly, we thank our administrative team for helping to bring our vision of QPI to life.

We are grateful for the opportunity to participate in OLIP and to learn about Ontario’s Legislature from the passionate, driven people leading our province’s democratic institutions. We hope you enjoy reading about our first months of the Programme.

Sincerely,

Janine AlHadidi and Melody Greaves
Co-Chairs of the Queen’s Park Insider
2021-2022

THE COMMITTEES

Alumni Relations
Iqra Mahmood
Dia Mukherjee

Magazine
Janine AlHadidi
Melody Greaves

Meetings
Tori Llewellyn
Iqra Mahmood

Recruitment
Alessia Rao
Habon Ali

Events & Reception
Habon Ali
Clare Simon

Social Media
Clare Simon
Alessia Rao

Partnerships
Sharika Khan
Alex Horbal

Study Tours
Dia Mukherjee
Tori Llewellyn

THE ADMIN TEAM

Academic Director
Dr. Peter P. Constantinou

Programme Coordinators
Meghan Stenson
Michael Vidoni

Programme Manager
Luisa Natarelli

Archivist
Richard Sage

LETTER FROM THE ACADEMIC DIRECTOR



As the Academic Director of the Ontario Legislature Internship Programme (OLIP), I am thrilled to introduce our 46th cohort. Since its inception in 1975, OLIP has given recent graduates the opportunity to gain first-hand experience working with Members of Provincial Parliament and to learn about the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

The Programme would not be possible without the close collaboration between the Canadian Political Science Association (CPSA) and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, nor could it thrive without the ongoing support of the Speaker, Hon. Ted Arnott, and the Clerk, Todd Decker, the Board of Internal Economy, and the Members of the Legislative Assembly. I also extend thanks to our numerous partners—some of whom are featured in this magazine—for their generous contributions and the experiences they provide the interns. Additionally, my appreciation goes to our alumni, who are an essential part of the OLIP experience. Finally, I would like to extend my thanks to OLIP’s administrative team, including Luisa Natarelli, Meghan Stenson, and Michael Vidoni. Their hard work and dedication to the Programme are key to its success.

This year provides a set of unique challenges and experiences. The global pandemic necessitated a shift to virtual media, requiring interns to work remotely during the majority of their orientation. We are fortunate to have begun transitioning the Programme to a hybrid model, with several of our interns coming into Queen’s Park, conducting on-site meetings, and visiting constituencies around the province, as safety protocols allow. Through it all, this cohort has demonstrated the ability to overcome challenges and an exceptional eagerness to learn.

While this year’s cohort represents a diverse mix of backgrounds, academic disciplines, professional experience, and interests, the interns share a passion for Ontario politics and provincial affairs. Over the coming months, the interns will work closely with MPPs, participate in virtual and in-person study tours of other legislatures, and complete academic papers to present at the CPSA’s annual conference. During their time with OLIP, I am confident that the interns will contribute meaningfully to the Programme and hone essential skills for their future career pursuits.

Thank you for reading this issue of the Queen’s Park Insider. On behalf of the administrative team, I wish this year’s cohort success in their endeavours and look forward to celebrating their achievements in the future. I am certain the Programme will continue its important work for years to come!

Best wishes,

Dr. Peter P. Constantinou

OLIP 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.

GET TO KNOW THE INTERNS



JANINE ALHADIDI

I was born and raised in Amman, Jordan and moved to Oakville, ON, nearly four years ago. I studied Political Science and Diaspora & Transnational Studies at the University of Toronto. During my university years, I was a student journalist and editor writing for on-campus newspapers and other independent publications. There, my interest in print, multimedia, and photojournalism continued to grow. I applied to OLIP because I wanted to understand the ins and outs of Queen's Park, particularly the details of how legislation is drafted, orchestrated, and passed in the House, and how it is covered by the press. OLIP represents the perfect opportunity to learn and immerse myself in the world of Ontario politics and journalism. Fun fact, I am a massive Heath Ledger fan and have watched the iconic 90s movie 10 Things I Hate About You over 100 times!

JANINE BY MELODY

Janine has a bubbly, outgoing personality, and a passion for politics and journalism. I can always count on Janine to lighten the mood and find fun in each meeting! She has already demonstrated a great artistic eye, which will certainly be valuable as we develop the Magazine together as Co-Chairs.



MELODY BY JANINE

From the moment I met Melody, I knew that we would be the perfect journalism duo. Melody's impeccable drive and kind spirit keep our OLIP experience fun, which fuels the passion in our work together. Melody represents the ideal co-editor, is always generous, and never misses a beat!



ALEX HORBAL

I was born and raised in the beautiful neighbourhood of Bloor West Village in Toronto. I recently completed my undergraduate degree in Political Science and History at McGill University in Montreal. At McGill, I was deeply involved in the Model UN community and participated in a number of ways, including traveling with the team to competitions and organizing McGill's high school level conference. I was drawn to OLIP by the opportunity to see the practical side of the politics I had studied, and to get a better sense of what a career in Ontario's public service could look like. A fun fact about me is that I am a James Bond mega fan and have re-watched all 24 films throughout the pandemic. Catch me at No Time to Die this fall!

ALEX BY SHARIKA

Alex is driven by a deep sense of curiosity and a willingness to learn, which allows him to embrace every new opportunity with humility and an open mind. He displays genuine commitment to his team and his passions. I am thrilled to be working with Alex as Co-Chairs of the Partnerships Committee!



SHARIKA BY ALEX

When I first met Sharika, I was struck by her ability to listen. This has been valuable for our work together as Co-Chairs of the Partnerships Committee. Sharika is there to ground our conversations when I frequently digress, and I can rely on her for thoughtful consideration of each new opportunity.



MELODY GREAVES

I was born and raised in Hamilton before moving to Waterloo. I attended Wilfrid Laurier University to earn my BA in Political Science and French, and then my Master of Applied Politics. I enjoyed studying environmental policy, policy analysis, and advocacy. After finishing my Master's in 2020, I spent a year volunteering and working with non-governmental organizations in my community, giving me a first-hand understanding of how provincial legislation impacts municipalities and the organizations that support people directly. This experience made me want to understand the legislative development process from the government's perspective, which is why I applied to OLIP. A fun fact about me is that prior to studying Political Science for my undergraduate degree, I planned to study music as a Trombone major.



SHARIKA KHAN

I was born in Vienna, Austria but grew up in Scarborough, Ontario. I recently graduated from a dual graduate degree program, earning a Master of Public Policy from Sciences Po in Paris and a Master of Global Affairs from the Munk School at the University of Toronto. Before I applied to OLIP, I worked as a Consultant with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) as part of the IOM Development Fund. I was drawn to the OLIP programme for a number of reasons, but primarily the opportunity to directly engage with provincial policy issues from a nonpartisan standpoint. A fun fact about me is that I love watching F1 racing!

GET TO KNOW THE INTERNS



TORI LLEWELLYN

I was born and raised in Hamilton. I completed an Honours Bachelor's Degree in Political Science and History from McMaster University and a Master's degree in Public Policy and Administration from Ryerson University. For two terms at the Ontario Cabinet Office, I worked as a research assistant, focusing on issues related to the machinery of government. I also recently finished an internship with the Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs as a policy intern, where I spent time working on the Council of the Federation and advancing Ontario's intergovernmental priorities. I am excited to be a part of this year's OLIP cohort and look forward to learning more about the legislative process. A fun fact about me is that I love mint-flavoured sweets, including anything from mint ice cream to mint chocolate!



IQRA MAHMOOD

I was born in Pakistan, and I settled in Ontario with my family at a young age. While my childhood consisted of residences across Ontario, I currently reside in Toronto—Danforth, where my heart lives. I recently graduated from the University of Toronto with a Bachelor's degree in Health Studies and Psychology. I am passionate about studying health and ageing through an intersectional and cross-disciplinary lens. As a former Jackman Scholar and a Ward Summer Student, I enjoyed researching palliative care, inclusion, and accessibility in city planning, policy transfer, and digital storytelling. So, I applied to OLIP to better understand how health policy research evolves within the Ontario Legislature. In my free time, you can find me painting or reading high-fantasy books on my porch.

TORI BY DIA

Working alongside Tori on the Study Tours Committee, I have witnessed her insightfulness and strong work ethic. Tori confidently leads our team meetings with ease and always shares the funniest GIFs. With her passion for politics and public service, the future of Ontario rests safely with her! I happily call Tori a friend.



DIA BY TORI

Dia is a great listener and is always open to new ideas. In our meetings, she is reliable and consistently has a thoughtful comment or question to raise. Dia is very driven and never misses a deadline. I look forward to continuing working with her as we plan this year's study tours!

IQRA BY CLARE

Iqra is a great colleague and an equally amazing friend. Her passion for health policy and accessibility is so inspiring. She asks extremely thoughtful questions in our meetings, prompting reflection from interns and guest speakers alike. I am so excited to take this journey with her this year!



CLARE BY IQRA

After worrying about what the upcoming year would bring, I remember meeting Clare and immediately feeling lighter. Clare is incredibly warm, supportive, and inspiring. In the midst of the challenges of the programme, she seemed excited to dive in headfirst and help everyone else along the way.



DIA MUKHERJEE

I was born in Kolkata, India, but was raised in Etobicoke. I then moved to Montreal to earn a Bachelor of Arts with Distinction in English Literature and History from McGill University. My interest in the legislative process stems from my previous experience serving as a Legislative Page at Queen's Park, which was an incredible opportunity that sparked a passion for Ontario politics. OLIP offers recent graduates behind-the-scenes access to the very place where our laws are made. I have always sought to be a changemaker, so OLIP is the perfect opportunity to gain a wealth of knowledge on the daily issues impacting Ontarians. A fun fact about me is that I am currently learning the art of calligraphy using self-learning kits and online tutorials!



CLARE SIMON

I was born in Halifax, but have lived most of my life in Burlington, Ontario. I completed my undergraduate degree in History at Queen's University, and I recently graduated with my Master's in Modern British History at the University of Cambridge. Having studied policy history in an academic setting, OLIP offered an opportunity to transfer this knowledge and gain a practical understanding of politics and policy. Having a positive impact on others is important to me, and being an OLIP intern will give me the skills needed to pursue a service-based career. A fun fact about me is that I collect postcards from every city, country, and museum I visit outside of Canada. Any tips on how I could collect postcards from our upcoming virtual study tours would be greatly appreciated!



HABON ALI

I was born and raised in Toronto. I graduated with an MSc in Global Health from McMaster University and an Honours Bachelor of Science in Biology and Environmental Sciences from the University of Toronto Mississauga, where I was the valedictorian. As someone who researches the social determinants of health, it is clear that health is a political issue. I was drawn to OLIP because such important decisions are made by our MPPs that impact every aspect of our lives, including our health. I am excited to learn more about health policy while expanding my understanding of provincial politics. A fun fact about me is that I come from a large family with three brothers and three sisters!

HABON BY ALESSIA

Upon our first meeting, I thought Habon was not only passionate and intelligent, but also a funny and kind person. I was impressed by her past advocacy work and could tell that she cared so much about her community, which I’m sure will support her work this year. I clicked with her right away!



ALESSIA BY HABON

From our first meeting, I saw that Alessia is a vibrant and joyful person. She is incredibly funny and has an extensive GIF collection, which keeps our conversations light. As her Vice-Chair on the Recruitment Committee this year, I am thankful for her kindness, organization, and leadership.



ALESSIA RAO

I was born and raised in Toronto. I finished my BA in Politics and Governance at Ryerson University before completing my MA in Social Justice and Community Engagement at Wilfrid Laurier University. Looking forward to my career following my Master’s, I was particularly fascinated with the well-rounded experience that OLIP provides, allowing us to gain a first-hand understanding of the different sides of parliamentary government. Additionally, I had worked as a part-time Student Usher at the Legislature prior to this internship, which compelled me to learn more about the inner workings of our legislature. Some fun facts about me: I have re-watched The Office and Modern Family an embarrassing number of times, I love staying active, and my grandparents are my best friends!



OLIP BINGO

Meet the Speaker	Experience your first midnight sitting of the Legislature	Visit your MPP’s constituency	Help write a speech or statement that is read in the House	Find a new dream career at least once a week
Deliver a note to your MPP in the House	Find unexpected inspiration for your OLIP paper topic	Sit in the Premier’s seat in the House	Meet a political leader at the Queen’s Park cafeteria	Go on your first offsite visit
Write a question for Question Period	Write an article for Queen’s Park Insider	OLIP “cone of silence” FREE SPACE	Meet an alumnus in an unexpected place	Meet the Premier
Sit in the Gallery of the Legislature	Access materials at the Legislative Library for the first time	Meet the Clerk	Use the secret tunnel to the subway under Queen’s Park	Experience your first Study Tour, virtually or in person
Present your research at the CPSA annual conference	Meet the Leader of the Official Opposition	Take a nap on public transit	Take behind-the-scenes photos of the Legislature	Conduct research for a Private Member’s Bill

Remember what it’s like to be an OLIP Intern? Screenshot the bingo card and tag us at @olipinterns!



FALL PLACEMENTS

WITH MPPS

SHARIKA IS PLACED WITH MPP LOGAN KANAPATHI PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE PARTY



For my fall placement, I am pleased to be working with MPP Logan Kanapathi, who represents the riding of Markham—Thornhill. As one of Canada’s most diverse ridings and a top tech hub, Markham—Thornhill is home to vibrant cultures, a wealth of rich histories and traditions, and innovative businesses and entrepreneurs. MPP Kanapathi was elected as the MPP for Markham—Thornhill in 2018 after serving as a Markham City Councillor for over 12 years. He also currently serves as the Chair of the Standing Committee on General Government. So far this term, I have been assisting MPP Kanapathi with his legislative affairs, which involves preparing briefings, statements, questions, speaking points, and research for future Private Member’s Bills. I have also had the opportunity to take part in constituent outreach through newsletters and stakeholder meetings. It has been rewarding to see and be a part of MPP Kanapathi’s advocacy efforts and engagement with constituents and stakeholders. A big thank you to MPP Kanapathi and his Executive Assistant, Lavanya, for welcoming me to the team!

JANINE IS PLACED WITH MPP MICHAEL PARSA PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE PARTY



I am excited to be working in MPP Michael Parsa’s office for my fall placement. MPP Parsa represents the riding of Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, an entrepreneurial hub, and one of the most culturally diverse communities in the province. MPP Parsa was previously a small business owner before being elected to the Ontario Legislature in 2018. Much of his work centres around supporting entrepreneurs, small businesses, and community organizations in his community and Ontario at large. MPP Parsa is also the Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Finance, the Deputy Government House Leader, and the Deputy Government Whip. It has been fascinating to learn more about the role of the Deputy Government House Leader in the Legislature in pushing the government’s priorities forward. I have had the opportunity to work on Member’s Statements, speeches, committee reports, news articles, and briefing notes for different meetings. One highlight has definitely been learning more about fiscal activities in Ontario and budget priorities allocated by the Ministry of Finance. Shaida, Shauna, Cristian, Kristine, and Marcus have welcomed me with open arms, and I am extremely grateful for the opportunity to work in their office!

ALEX IS PLACED WITH MPP JAMIE WEST NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY

I am excited to be working with MPP Jamie West for my fall placement. MPP West is the NDP Member representing the riding of Sudbury, and he serves as the Critic for Northern Infrastructure, Transportation, and Roads. Sometimes referred to as the “Big Nickel” for its abundance of valuable minerals, Sudbury is more than just a mining city—it is the economic centre of Northeastern Ontario. As a former union representative, MPP West enjoys helping constituents with their problems and representing their interests at Queen’s Park. The work I do in MPP West’s office is unique each day, and varies from question pitch writing to social media planning. One particularly rewarding project involved contacting a constituent about a concern, writing a question on the issue, and hearing MPP West present it—seeing it come full-circle. Thank you to MPP West, Jenny, Nicole, and Jessie for your warm welcome to the office!



IQRA IS PLACED WITH MPP FRANCE GÉLINAS NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY

For my fall placement, I am pleased to be placed with MPP France Gélinas, who represents the riding of Nickel Belt. MPP Gélinas is the NDP Critic for Health, and much of her office’s work revolves around meeting with different health-related groups, reviewing policy proposals from the Ministry of Health, and drafting questions for relevant ministers about various health policies. As someone who has studied health research, it is exciting to see this academic discipline discussed and debated within the political arena. Besides assisting with MPP Gélinas’ critic portfolio, learning about the riding of Nickel Belt has been a fascinating experience. I have only lived in cities throughout my lifetime, so learning about the infrastructure, environment, and social issues present in Northern Ontario has been endlessly captivating. Further, working with Francophone and Indigenous constituents has helped me push the limits of my own understanding of what it means to be an Ontarian. Thank you to MPP Gélinas and her staff, Damien, Adele, Jasmine, and Monique, for welcoming me onto your team and always encouraging me to be better.



FALL PLACEMENTS

WITH MPPS

MELODY IS PLACED WITH MPP NORMAN MILLER

PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE PARTY



I am thrilled to be working for my fall placement with MPP Norman Miller, who represents the riding of Parry Sound—Muskoka, located in Ontario's Near North. The riding boasts beautiful natural surroundings, and has an interesting population makeup that includes a high number of cottagers during the summertime. MPP Miller has been in office since 2001, and is the Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, so he has a depth of knowledge and experience to share. This term, I have been working on research to support an upcoming Private Member's Bill while communicating with stakeholders and Ministries throughout the process. I have also enjoyed writing statements, news releases, and doing media work to support the office. One highlight this term was visiting the constituency offices to better understand the riding and its residents' needs. MPP Miller even provided an aerial tour of the riding from up in his seaplane! Thank you to MPP Miller and his staff—Lesley, the Executive Assistant, and Emily, Karen, and Christina at the constituency offices, for making my first placement memorable.

TORI IS PLACED WITH MPP BILL WALKER

PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE PARTY



For my fall placement, I am working with MPP Bill Walker, who represents the people of Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound. It has been an exciting few months with MPP Walker, and there is never a dull moment. At the start of my placement, MPP Walker was appointed Deputy Speaker, which has allowed me to learn more about House proceedings, the role of the Speaker, and the Standing Orders. Sitting in the Legislature for ten years has made MPP Walker a fount of knowledge, so I have learned a great deal about the workings of Queen's Park. I have lived in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area my whole life, so it has been eye-opening to gain constituents' perspectives from a more rural riding and learn about the particular issues they face, like access to energy. I am excited to learn more about riding stakeholders and the importance of nuclear isotopes as I delve deeper into my work in MPP Walker's office. I want to thank Karen, Chris, Lisa, and Julie, who work from MPP Walker's constituency office, for the warm welcome!

ALESSIA IS PLACED WITH MPP BHUTILA KARPOCHE

NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY

For my fall placement, I am fortunate to be working with MPP Bhutla Karpoche, who represents the diverse and vibrant riding of Parkdale—High Park. Since 2018, MPP Karpoche has made history both in the Ontario Legislature and North America as the first person of Tibetan heritage elected to public office. She is the NDP Critic for Early Learning and Childcare, with policy interests in affordable housing, public health, and workers' rights. MPP Karpoche's passion for politics began with her involvement in the Tibetan community, where she was inspired to serve the public. This term, I have gained experience writing speeches, preparing for press conferences, and engaging with the community. More specifically, I had the chance to work on and learn about Ontario's housing laws and regulations as well as tenants' rights. MPP Karpoche's staff are always willing to help me learn and grow, and I want to sincerely thank MPP Karpoche, Carly, Spencer H-M., Dechen, Jeremy, and Spencer J. for graciously welcoming me into their office and assisting in my orientation and learning process. Thank you for the fascinating experience!



CLARE IS PLACED WITH MPP CHRIS GLOVER

NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY



For my fall placement, I am placed with MPP Chris Glover, who represents the downtown Toronto riding of Spadina—Fort York. The riding is home to the Financial District, the Toronto Islands, and several residential neighbourhoods, all with unique communities and concerns. From small businesses impacted by the pandemic, young professionals concerned about affordable housing, to a large homeless population, MPP Glover's office has given me a chance to hear diverse perspectives. I began my placement the week that MPP Glover tabled his motion to protect migratory birds. I spent my first week helping by writing a Member's Statement, contacting stakeholders, and planning a press conference. Since then, I have worked on MPP Glover's Homelessness Advocacy Working Group, writing speeches, and conducting research for a Private Member's Bill. The office is busy, but I am happy to be part of an active team that is passionate about making a difference in their community. I wish to thank Pranav, Nancy, and Benna for their warm welcome into the office. I cannot wait to see what the rest of my time in MPP Glover's office holds!

DIA IS PLACED WITH CHRISTINE HOGARTH

PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE PARTY



This fall term, I am placed in the office of MPP Christine Hogarth, who represents the riding of Etobicoke—Lakeshore and is the Parliamentary Assistant to the Solicitor General. Having spent most of my life in Etobicoke, my work with MPP Hogarth has provided me with the unique opportunity to better understand my own community's demographics, activities, and key issues. Responding to constituents' concerns, assisting my Member in preparing for events in the riding, and building relationships with local stakeholders have been particularly informative in this respect. In October, I assisted in the creation of a House speech about the Solicitor General's 120 Day COVID-19 Report. It was rewarding to see my efforts translate into this impactful project. Working on my placement duties has given me valuable insight into the hard work and dedication required to succeed at Queen's Park and in constituency offices. I want to thank the incredible staff at MPP Hogarth's office, including Val, Adam, and Ted, for their constant support. I am grateful to MPP Hogarth for offering me such an amazing experience.

HABON IS PLACED WITH TOM RAKOCEVIC

NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY

I am excited to be working with MPP Tom Rakocevic for my fall placement. MPP Rakocevic represents the riding of Humber River—Black Creek. He is also the NDP Critic for Transit and the Vice-Chair of the Select Committee on Emergency Management Oversight. Humber River—Black Creek is an interesting riding with racial, cultural, religious, and socio-economic diversity. I have become well acquainted with the constituency office, where I have been able to learn more about constituent engagement and outreach. MPP Rakocevic worked for a city councillor before becoming an MPP, and has been very active in his community ever since. It has been eye-opening and humbling to learn about the breadth of experiences, challenges, and opportunities facing those living in the riding. I have been able to connect with constituents, community organizations, and schools. I am also contributing to research that supports briefing notes, speaking notes, and a Private Member's Bill. It has been an absolute pleasure to learn from MPP Rakocevic and his exceptional team of Evelyn, David, and Alida!



THE CLERK



On our first day at Queen's Park, we had the immense pleasure of meeting with Todd Decker, the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly. Acting as the chief permanent officer, a role equivalent to a deputy minister, the Clerk is responsible for advising the Speaker and MPPs on the rules and practices of the House. Mr. Decker has nearly four decades of experience at the Legislative Assembly, and he shared a great deal of knowledge and many fascinating stories with us. It was particularly interesting to hear how Queen's Park has evolved over the years, yet remains strong and resilient. Finally, he highlighted the role of the permanent non-partisan staff at the Legislative Assembly, which contributes to this resiliency even during changing times. Thank you, Mr. Decker, for sharing your insights, and for such a warm welcome to Queen's Park.

Our very first meeting this year was with the Honourable Ted Arnott, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. Speaker Arnott was first elected as an MPP in 1990, and was happy to share advice and stories from his thirty-year-long career at the Legislature, including his three years as Speaker. The Speaker is responsible for presiding over the business of the House, and ensuring that the Standing Orders are followed and that MPPs are maintaining decorum. Speaker Arnott spoke to us about the importance of non-partisanship in his role and its value in promoting cooperation and respect. He graciously answered all our questions about the different responsibilities of the Speaker, including the difficult task of striking a balance between representing his constituents, maintaining order in the House, and representation of the Legislative Assembly on the international stage. Thank you, Speaker Arnott, for your time and for your long-term support of OLIP.

THE SPEAKER

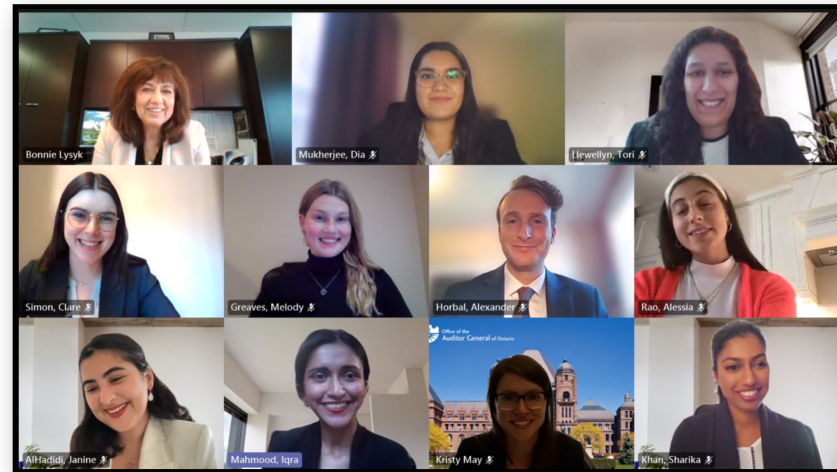


THE SERGEANT-AT-ARMS



We had the pleasure of meeting the Legislature's Sergeant-at-Arms, Jackie Gordon. Ms. Gordon is responsible for security in the House and the Legislative Precinct, as well as building operations and maintenance. As the first female sergeant-at-arms at Queen's Park, Ms. Gordon detailed her career journey in policing, and the challenges and opportunities for women to succeed in a male-dominated profession. Sergeant-at-Arms Gordon spoke of her previous experiences with Halton Regional Police Services and how she carved out space as a leader at a time when women were actively limited in their growth and leadership. Ms. Gordon's story exemplified how we can overcome barriers if we are determined and persevere through challenges that come our way during our careers. We also discussed security services, Chamber practices, and her everyday duties in the House. Thank you, Ms. Gordon, for sharing your experiences with us!

THE AUDITOR GENERAL



We were honoured to meet the 13th Auditor General of Ontario, Bonnie Lysyk. She spoke to us about her role and her responsibilities as an independent officer of the Legislature. These include watching over the administration of Ontario's finances to help the Legislature hold the government accountable for its expenditures, carrying out detailed reviews of government spending, and producing annual and special audit reports. As the first female Auditor General in Ontario, Ms. Lysyk provided insights into her career path, previously working in other provinces, including serving as the Provincial Auditor of Saskatchewan, and Deputy Auditor General and Chief Operating Officer of Manitoba. We enjoyed learning about the unique opportunities at the Office of the Auditor General and the importance of maintaining non-partisanship in her office to better serve MPPs and the people of Ontario. We are immensely grateful to Ms. Lysyk for her time and insights!

THE CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER



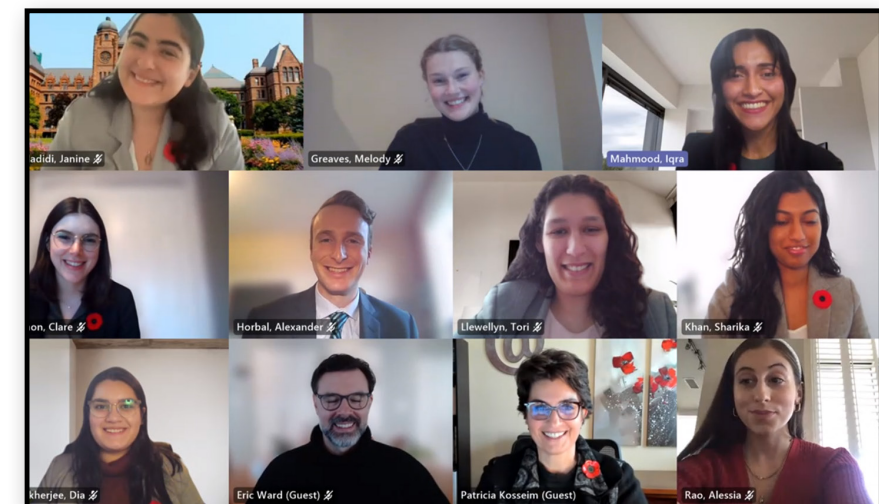
In October, we conducted our first offsite visit to Elections Ontario, where we met with Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), Greg Essensa. Mr. Essensa gave us a warm welcome and delivered a thorough presentation on his role in Ontario's elections. His long career in facilitating elections, first with the City of Toronto and then with Ontario since 2008, made for a thoughtful discussion on electoral planning grounded in experience. The CEO is a non-partisan officer of the Legislative Assembly who is chosen with the consent of all political parties. Consequently, in ensuring Ontario's elections are administered to the highest democratic standards, Mr. Essensa is not allowed to cast a vote. While administering elections is a large responsibility, Elections Ontario also leads the push for electoral innovation. As CEO, Mr. Essensa has implemented technology to increase the efficiency and security of our elections. Ontario is globally renowned for its elections, and strong leadership from the CEO is crucial to that reputation. Thank you, Mr. Essensa, for your time and service to Ontario!

THE INTEGRITY COMMISSIONER



In September, we had the privilege of meeting with Integrity Commissioner the Honourable J. David Wake. As one of seven officers of the Legislative Assembly, Commissioner Wake is tasked with investigating ethical matters among MPPs, the Ontario Public Service, and lobbyists. In explaining his non-partisan role to us, he stressed that ethical political behaviour is paramount to establishing trust within the government. Commissioner Wake had a long career in law prior to this role, serving on the Ontario Judiciary for over a decade. He highlighted the ways in which his role as the Integrity Commissioner differs from his work on the Judiciary. While he now offers advice rather than rulings, both the Commissioner and Judiciary positions entail a great deal of public scrutiny, requiring a strong commitment to making ethical decisions. It was not hard to glean the passion that Commissioner Wake has for his position. Thank you for taking the time to meet with us, Commissioner Wake!

THE INFORMATION AND PRIVACY COMMISSIONER



We had the honour of meeting Patricia Kosseim, Ontario's Information and Privacy Commissioner (IPC), and Assistant Commissioner Eric Ward. Ms. Kosseim and Mr. Ward led an insightful discussion about the role of the IPC in overseeing Ontario's access to information and privacy laws. Ms. Kosseim discussed the balance between protecting privacy and facilitating access to information during the pandemic. While the current public health imperatives require access to our personal information, Ms. Kosseim stressed the importance of ensuring that sensitive information is still protected. We also learned about the IPC's four strategic priorities: privacy and transparency in a modern government; children and youth in a digital world; next-generation law enforcement; and trust in digital health. As society's use of digital tools increases, the IPC aims to address these priorities as the key challenges to individuals' privacy and access rights. Thank you Ms. Kosseim and Mr. Ward for this eye-opening conversation!

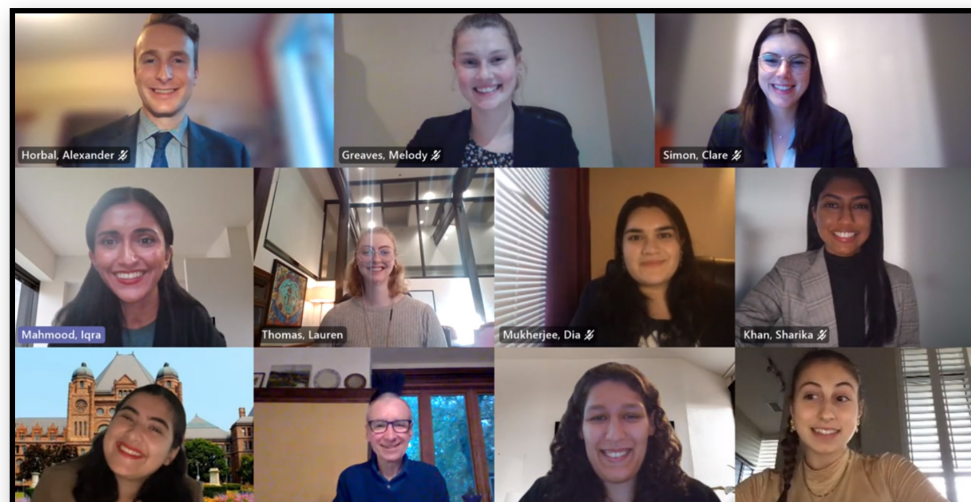
MORE

AMBASSADOR BOB RAE



We had the privilege of meeting with the Honourable Bob Rae, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations in New York. This was a highly anticipated meeting considering Ambassador Rae's prolific career, including his time at Queens Park as premier, and his current role at the United Nations. Ambassador Rae discussed the inspiration behind his decision to serve in public service for many years, explaining that, as a child of a diplomat, he wished to root himself within Ontarian and Canadian culture. Ambassador Rae also spoke about his work as Special Envoy to Myanmar, through which he was able to gain a deeper understanding of the way in which the lives of the Rohingya refugees have been uprooted due to this crisis. We were inspired by Ambassador Rae's belief that our generation will need to focus on tackling global challenges, such as climate change and structuring a post-COVID-19 world, by collaborating across borders. Thank you, Ambassador Rae, for taking the time to speak with us and for being such an avid supporter of OLIP.

SENATOR TONY DEAN



We were happy to meet with Senator Tony Dean. Senator Dean began his career in England as a millwright, but found that his skills and interests lay elsewhere, leading him to move to Canada to pursue politics. We were inspired by his pursuit of his passion. While Senator Dean currently sits in Canada's Senate, he has strong connections to Queen's Park as the former Secretary of the Cabinet and heading the Ontario Public Service. During our meeting, Senator Dean talked about the process of depoliticizing the Senate as an independent member to end the duopoly of power and push forward meaningful initiatives. He described two of the most important changes he has seen in his time at the Senate, including the creation of anti-harassment policies for Senate staff and encouraging greater diversity. To this end, he believes in the need to pursue a "modern, more responsive, and less partisan Senate" to improve its functioning. Thank you, Senator Dean, for sharing your thoughts with us!

MEETINGS

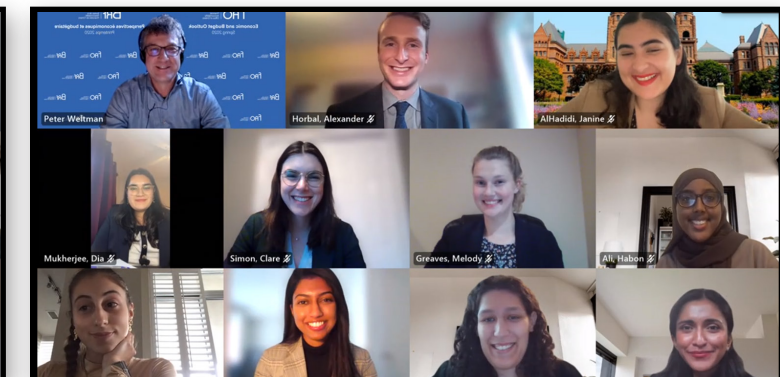
FORMER SPEAKER DAVE LEVAC



We were honoured to meet with a former Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Dave Levac. Mr. Levac became Speaker in 2011 and spent seven years in the role, making him the longest serving Speaker in Ontario. He discussed his career path leading up to this prestigious role, including as a teacher and principal, working with non-profit organizations, and acting as an MPP. In 2008, Mr. Levac initiated the Holodomor Memorial Day Act, which was a rare piece of tri-partisan legislation passed in the House. By working across party lines, he was able to connect all three parties together to co-sponsor the Bill and earn unanimous support. He explained that although collaboration takes time and effort, it produces significant benefits. Finally, Mr. Levac highlighted the importance of life experience, vulnerability, and collaboration in the world of politics, which will sharpen our judgement and ground us in our future careers. Thank you, Mr. Levac, for an open, honest conversation!



The interns at a virtual tour at the UN!



The interns meeting with the Financial Accountability Officer!



The interns meeting with Mr. Tim Murphy, Former Chief of Staff to Former Prime Minister Martin!

GRANT WEDGE 1977-1978



I was in the second cohort of OLIP in 1977-1978, and it completely changed my career and life direction. I fondly remember my time with OLIP. Especially, I recall the funniest moment I experienced, having a pillow fight with the Member I was working with during an overnight trip to Northern Ontario.

After my time in OLIP, I have been engaged with Ontario politics generally and with Indigenous issues specifically over the last 40 years. This included becoming a lawyer and then serving in various roles, including as a Minister's Chief of Staff in 1990, Assistant Deputy Minister, Deputy Minister in 1994-1995, and Legal Director in 2006-2013. Since 2017, I have been working as Assistant Deputy Minister of Negotiations and Reconciliation with Indigenous Affairs Ontario, where I work to achieve reconciliation through Land Claim settlements. During the course of my career, I also did a stint with the federal government and was a consultant and mediator in private practice for a total of 10 years.

OLIP helped me observe the dynamics, values, and contradictions of Parliamentary democracy at the working level. The Programme also grounded me and gave me an appreciation for the need and value of respect and ethical conduct in all I do.

KAILA MINTZ 2004-2005

OLIP allowed me to marry my academic understanding to a practical understanding of how systems of power and politics work. I developed a deep camaraderie with my fellow interns, and we continue to support each other to this day. Several of us became active with Equal Voice Canada, helping to form the Toronto youth chapter and advocating to elect more women and diverse voices to government.

Immediately after OLIP, I had a brief stint at the Legislature's Hansard as a transcriber. I then joined Canada's foreign service in Ottawa. OLIP had prepared me for the task of swiftly writing briefing notes and talking points and supported my ability to understand the sensitive foreign policy files I covered. I also served at Canada's Embassy to Ethiopia in Addis Ababa for two years, focusing on humanitarian response and development policy.

I then pursued a master's degree which turned into a mid-career shift. I became a Research Assistant at X (Ryerson) University where I met former leader of Ontario's NDP, Stephen Lewis. This new network connection allowed me to become the inaugural Coordinator of NGO AIDS-Free World's Code Blue Campaign, which aims to end impunity for sexual offences committed by United Nations personnel. Diving into advocacy brought me back to my Queen's Park days as I drafted my OLIP paper on the role of receptions as a lobbying tool for NGOs and other interest groups.

OLIP taught me to be nimble, responsive, empathetic, and quick at research, providing me with the essential tools to succeed.



PAUL DAVIDSON 1988-1989



I was an intern of the 1988-1989 cohort, a year that featured both the great Free Trade election and the ratification process of the Meech Lake Accord. We had a front row seat for both. That year, some highlights included watching the 1988 federal election results at the home of Stephen Clarkson and Christina McCall Newman, and travelling to the National Assembly in Quebec City, to Parliament in Ottawa, to Boston and to London, including a visit to number 11 Downing Street. We also hosted interns from other programs, which led inadvertently to a post-internship job opportunity as an advisor to Bob Nixon, former Leader of Ontario's Opposition. I then was fortunate to work with the Deputy Premier and Treasurer.

After working for Mr. Nixon in the 1990s, I led the Toronto office of a boutique government relations firm and led the Association of Canadian Publishers for five years, working for a prominent publishing firm. I then headed a Canadian-based international NGO, World University Service of Canada.

Since 2009 I have been President of Universities Canada advancing higher education, research, and innovation on behalf of Canada's 97 universities.

The internship experience helped prepare me for a career advancing public policy. It helped me develop skills to bridge the public, private, and civil society sectors. It imbued me with respect for legislators and legislatures, and the relationships that transcend partisanship for the benefit of Canada. It also fostered lifelong friendships with people across the country. My mentors taught lasting lessons and remain friends today.

PATRICK DEROGHIE 2011-2012

OLIP was a transformative, enlightening, and invaluable experience—not to mention a lot of fun! I will always consider it one of the best years of my life. The skills I developed, connections I made, and knowledge I gained as an OLIP intern continue to pay social and political dividends to this day. And I formed lifelong friendships with my fellow interns that made my time at Queen's Park even more special.

After OLIP, I began working in a government relations, policy development, and political organizing role for SEIU Healthcare, one of Canada's largest healthcare unions, before leveraging this skill set to pursue my passion—climate activism. I spent almost five years as the Climate & Energy Program Manager for Environmental Defence Canada, managing campaigns to push for ambitious climate action in Ontario, Alberta, and federally. Most recently, I have taken my expertise in climate and energy policy to Canada's financial sector. I'm currently the Senior Manager for Shift Action for Pension Wealth and Planet Health, a sustainable finance NGO that tracks the fossil fuel and climate-related investments of Canadian pension funds and mobilizes beneficiaries to engage their fund managers on the climate crisis.

My year as an OLIP intern equipped me with the social and professional connections, insider knowledge of political institutions and legislative processes, and political skill set that have served me well throughout my career.



BY DR. GRAHAM WHITE



The 2021-2022 OLIP cohort with alumni Jad El Tal and Shireen Salti

Our alumni are an important element of OLIP and contribute to the long-term success of the Programme. So far this year, we have had many fascinating meetings with alumni who spoke openly about their memories of OLIP and their career paths. We would like to thank them for generously offering their time and advice to us, giving us exciting prospects for our own careers after OLIP.

We invite all our alumni to stay in touch by following us on social media; we are @olipinterns on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn.

You can always email our Alumni Relations Committee Chair, Iqra, at imahmood@ola.org with any questions or comments.

Want to join the OLIP Family?

The applications for OLIP's 2022-2023 cohort are now open and are due January 31st, 2022! Go to www.olipinterns.ca/apply-to-olip for more information and to apply.

You can also reach our Recruitment Committee Chair, Alessia, at recruitment@olipinterns.ca



OLIP lost a good friend and longtime supporter with the recent passing of Graham Murray. Graham was a fixture at Queen's Park from OLIP's early days, having started work in NDP research in the late 1970s. He later established his own government relations firm, GP Murray Research, where his activities included writing and publishing Inside Queen's Park, a weekly newsletter. With its astute and witty analysis of policy and politics, and its listings of who'd been promoted, sidelined, or moved on from "the Park" (not to mention the often wonderfully obscure trivia items), IQP quickly became a must-read for anyone wanting "the inside dope" on Ontario politics.

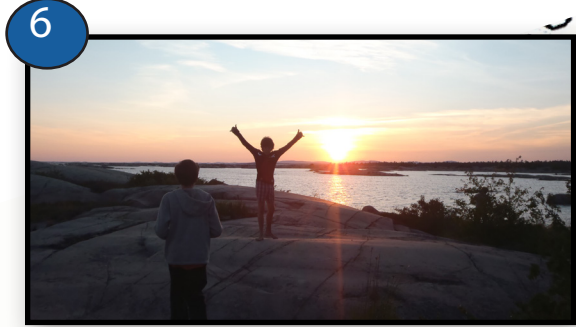
Graham was always eager to meet the new batch of interns and they soon came to appreciate his encyclopedic knowledge of and insights about the people and the politics they were encountering. He rarely missed an OLIP event and never missed an opportunity to pass along the current issue of IQP from the ever-present store in his suit jacket pocket. As an avid booster of the programme, Graham helped out with fundraising by regularly passing along leads for possible partners. Little wonder that he was an obvious candidate for the coveted status of "Honourary Intern"—and little wonder that, as he might say in his still noticeable English accent, he was chuffed at the recognition. He'll be missed.

We thank Dr. Graham White for writing this piece in memory of Graham Murray.

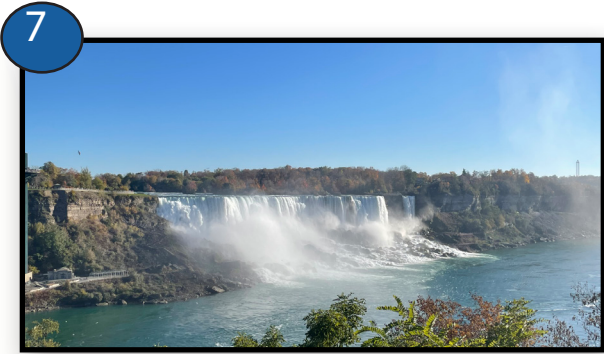
INTERNS ACROSS ONTARIO



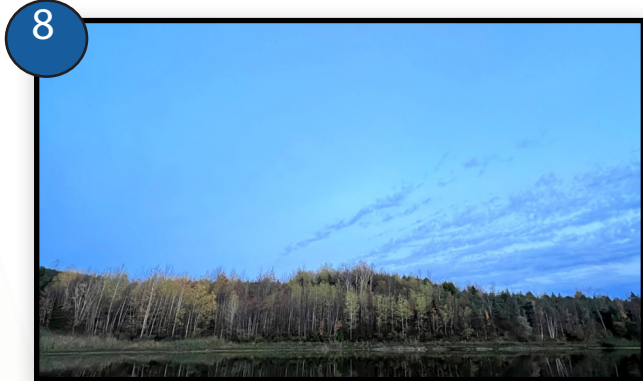
Melody in Parry Sound.



Alex in Killarney.



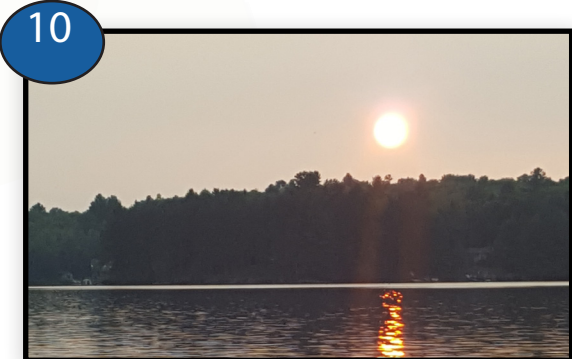
Dia in Niagara Falls.



Sharika in Caledon.



Tori in Hamilton.



Iqra in Haliburton.



Habon in Georgian Bay.



Alessia in Cobourg.



Janine in Belleville.



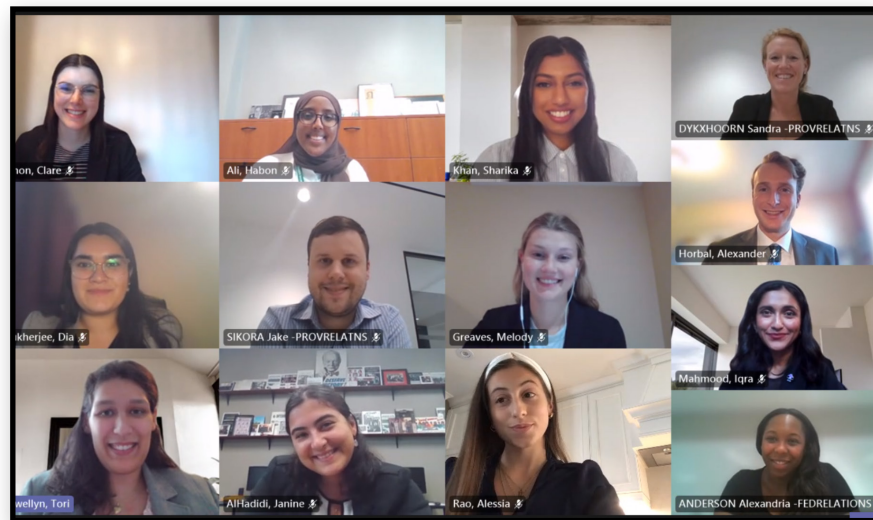
Clare in Paris.



THANKING OUR



We had the pleasure of meeting Dave Bulmer, President of AMAPCEO, and Strategic Advisor, Grant Burns. AMAPCEO is a union that represents more than 14,000 professional employees in the Ontario Public Service. During our meeting, we discussed the impact of COVID-19 on the Ontario Public Service, including how the pandemic changed the nature of AMAPCEO's work. The fact that 99% of AMAPCEO's members are now working remotely highlights the importance of the union's advocacy on behalf of members' everyday needs, and not just when negotiating major collective agreements. Mr. Bulmer explained that this type of leadership is about connecting with people and contributing to a better quality of life for all. Thank you Messrs. Bulmer and Burns for the great discussion and for AMAPCEO's support of the Programme!



In September, we met with Alexandria Anderson, Sandra Dykxhoorn, Lyndsay Miller, Shawn Ogborne, Jake Sikora, and their colleagues from Ontario Power Generation (OPG). As Ontario's largest clean electricity generator, OPG's diverse generation portfolio produces roughly half the province's power. The representatives from OPG discussed the company's strategic objectives, its role in protecting the environment, and its latest initiatives. We learned about OPG's efforts to advocate on issues like climate change, decarbonizing Ontario's electricity system, supporting Ontario's transportation electrification, and promoting nuclear energy to achieve net-zero emissions. It was fascinating to hear how organizations like OPG try to leverage new technologies for the betterment of the province. We left the discussion with a new interest in Ontario's energy supply. Thank you to the OPG team for the enlightening conversation and for your continued support of OLIP!

PARTNERS

We met with Ryan Clarke from Noviscend, who is also the founder of Advocacy Solutions. Noviscend aims to accelerate the access of innovative medical technologies in the market to ensure that all individuals can benefit from these products. Noviscend partners with strategic investors, policymakers, and stakeholders to bring sustainable solutions to major healthcare problems facing Canada today. Noviscend highlights the importance of developing strong messaging and engaging decision-makers to gain strategic insight. In our discussion, Mr. Clarke gave us valuable career and life advice. He explained that effective advocacy campaigns and successful careers are achieved by those with similar qualities: individuals must be committed, consistent, open to learning opportunities, and have strong relationships with others. As interns just starting our careers, we found Mr. Clarke's wealth of advice fascinating. We want to thank Mr. Clarke for sharing his knowledge with us, and Noviscend for generously supporting the Programme.

NOVISCEND



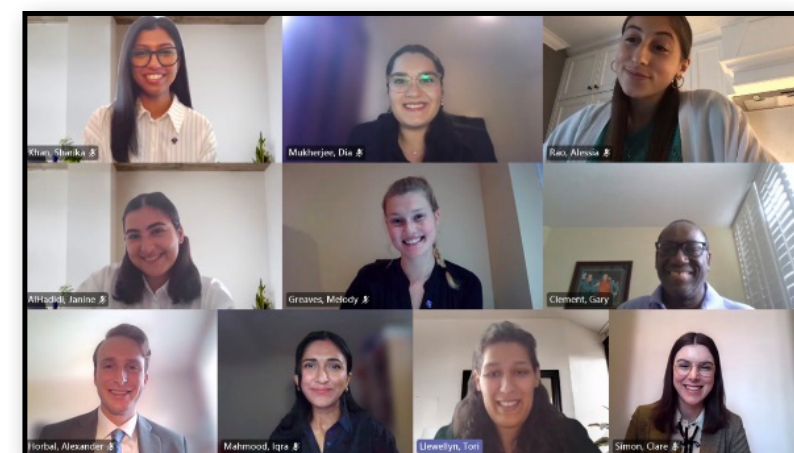
LOBLAW COMPANIES LIMITED



In September, we met with Vanessa Dupuis, Senior Manager of Government Relations at Loblaw Companies Limited and a former OLIP Intern! It was interesting to hear about Loblaw's enterprise-wide responses to issues like legislative reform, COVID-19, data and privacy, and extended producer responsibility. She outlined her responsibilities, including managing communication, engagement, and outreach to political staff and public servants. Ms. Dupuis shared that she worked at the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario after OLIP, where she was one of few employees without a background in accounting at that time. Her diverse background now supports her success at Loblaw. We always enjoy hearing about former interns' pathways and learning about impactful companies like Loblaw. We were reminded of the company's commitment to our Programme, so we extend our thanks to Loblaw for its generosity and to Ms. Dupuis for her insights.

TD BANK

We had the pleasure of meeting with Gary Clement, Director of Government Relations at TD Bank. Mr. Clement discussed his career in provincial and federal politics, and his transition to government relations at TD. Having experienced the many facets of decision-making in both the public and private spheres, Mr. Clement provided us with unique insights from his career. In our candid conversation, Mr. Clement advised us that working in politics presents a new set of challenges every day, requiring individuals who can manage crises and learn at every opportunity. We are certain that our time with OLIP will teach us how to overcome similar challenges and grow from each opportunity. We are grateful to Mr. Clement for taking the time to meet with us, and to TD Bank for being a generous partner of OLIP over the years.



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