

QUEEN'S PARK INSIDER



SPRING 2022

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE ONTARIO LEGISLATURE INTERNSHIP
PROGRAMME



OLIP IS AN OFFICIAL PROGRAMME OF THE CANADIAN POLITICAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION

LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

Dear Readers,

Spring is finally here, and we could not be more excited! Over the last few months, Queen’s Park has quickly become a second home for many of us as we have assisted our MPPs with daily legislative duties, learned about provincial issues, and benefited from the wisdom of past and present parliamentarians and community leaders.

It is bittersweet to see our time with OLIP come to an end. As many of us jet off to new experiences after OLIP, we hope this magazine serves as a time capsule of the wonderful memories we made together as a cohort. We are privileged to have shared this life-changing experience with the eight other interns, who have enriched our experiences. From the adventures of travelling across Canada and across the world, to attending countless fascinating events, our friendships with the group added such value to our OLIP experiences.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, our cohort has worked hard to adapt and remain flexible. Although some aspects of OLIP have been modified, we have still learned a great deal from our MPP mentors, administrative team, and our fellow interns.

While this edition of the magazine as always includes some of our intriguing meetings with political figures, alumni, and partners, it also features some special additions. We are proud to include highlights from our Speaker Series panels, Alumni Panels, and virtual and in-person study tours. We will present a tribute to the late Robert Speller, a former Ontario Cabinet Minister and OLIP intern. Lastly, this edition will celebrate the Members of Provincial Parliament who have demonstrated their commitment to the Programme by hosting many interns over the years.

We are immensely grateful for the opportunities and experiences that OLIP has provided over the last several months, and we would like to thank those who continue to support the Programme. This includes our generous partners, the Clerk, Todd Decker, and the Speaker, Hon. Ted Arnott, the members who hosted us this year, and the wonderful staff at the Legislative Assembly. We also thank the Canadian Political Science Association and our administrative team for their hard work and tireless support.

We sincerely hope you enjoy this look into our last few months as OLIP interns.

Janine and Melody
Co-Editors of *Queen’s Park Insider*

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Academic Director

Peter Constantinou

Programme Coordinators

Meghan Stenson
Michael Vidoni

Programme Manager

Luisa Ntarelli

Archivist

Richard Sage

LETTER FROM THE ACADEMIC DIRECTOR



It is remarkable that another year of OLIP has nearly flown by and that the 2021-2022 cohort will soon be moving on in their careers! The interns have finished their second MPP placements and have transitioned to their final placements with the Independent Officers of the Legislative Assembly during the election period. I am proud of the hard work they have done, and will do, in their final weeks with OLIP.

Each spring, we welcome the next cohort of interns. This year, we have selected yet another set of ten outstanding interns and are looking forward to seeing them in September.

The interns have travelled to Yellowknife, Quebec City, and Ottawa, and will be travelling to the United Kingdom for their final study tour. During those tours, they explored different legislatures and met with past and current elected officials and others. Despite the challenges of COVID-19, I am thrilled that this cohort of OLIP has been able to experience everything the Programme has to offer and learn more about Ontario’s legislature through a comparative lens.

As we transition to a post-pandemic world, I am once again impressed by the interns’ dedication to their work. They have connected the Programme to new partners, hosted incredible events with stakeholders and OLIP alumni, planned incoming and outgoing study tours, and developed creative ways to grow OLIP’s social media engagement. All the while, they produced engaging academic papers on diverse topics that contribute to the literature on legislative matters.

On behalf of the OLIP administrative team and the 2021-2022 interns, I would like to thank the Canadian Political Science Association and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario for their generous support of the Programme. Additionally, I would like to extend my thanks to the Speaker of the House, the Honourable Ted Arnott, and Clerk Todd Decker for their dedication and support. Lastly, I would be remiss not to thank our fantastic administrative team of Luisa Ntarelli, Meghan Stenson, and Michael Vidoni, for going above and beyond to support the interns throughout the year. Thanks also too for the great volunteerism of Rick Sage who leads our archival project. It is a joy to work with such wonderful people.

It has been a privilege watching the interns grow from curious graduates to competent leaders, and I know that their skills will carry them far in their future pursuits. I am certain that they will remain connected to the Programme through OLIP’s alumni network and will return soon to share their wisdom and diverse experiences with their successors.

Sincerely,

Dr. Peter P. Constantinou
Academic Director

SPRING PLACEMENTS

SHARIKA IS PLACED WITH MPP MARIT STILES NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY



For my spring placement, I am thrilled to be working with MPP Marit Stiles, the NDP Member for Davenport and Opposition Critic for Education. As one of the most diverse ridings in Toronto, Davenport is home to vibrant communities representing different cultures and heritage, including a large Portuguese population. In her role as Education Critic, MPP Stiles is responsible for keeping the government accountable on education policies and initiatives. So far, I have been involved in various legislative tasks including writing Member's statements and preparing speaking notes for debates and speeches. I also contribute to weekly community newsletters, participate in stakeholder meetings, and correspond with constituents. MPP Stiles and her team are passionate about their work for Davenport community members and Ontarians more broadly. It has been a rewarding experience to work with this office! Thank you to MPP Stiles, Ashley, Greg, and Peter for welcoming me to the team!

TORI IS PLACED WITH MPP LAURA MAE LINDO NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY

For my opposition placement, I am excited to be working with MPP Laura Mae Lindo of Kitchener Centre. MPP Lindo holds two different critic portfolios as the Critic for Anti-Racism and Colleges and Universities, allowing me to deepen my knowledge in a range of issues from university finances to anti-racism legislation. For example, MPP Lindo recently debated her Private Member's Bill aimed at combatting racism in the education system, which has helped me further understand how constituent and stakeholder concerns are translated into legislation. MPP Lindo is also planning an event called the Black Excellence in Leadership Awards (BELA) to recognize racialized women in her community. I have enjoyed witnessing this event come together and learning how MPP Lindo uses her platform as the Anti-Racism Critic to promote racial equity. I want to give a big thank you to MPP Lindo and her amazing staff, Shailene and Julie, for the warm welcome!



ALEX IS PLACED WITH MPP BILLY PANG PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE PARTY

For my spring placement I am working in the office of MPP Billy Pang of Markham–Unionville. The riding demonstrates all that makes Ontario special: ethnic diversity, a vibrant civil society, and an economy adapted to today's challenges. MPP Pang is the Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism, a role that is suited to the issues of the constituency, as 84.6% of Markham–Unionville identifies as a visible minority. The work I have done with the office varies from speech writing to helping design the print newsletter. One highlight has been preparing MPP Pang's remarks for an announcement at GE Hitachi regarding the company's work on Ontario's small modular nuclear reactor, and then attending this event myself in person! Thank you to MPP Pang, Conni, Kitty, Dickson, Larry, and Sam for the warm welcome to the office!



HABON IS PLACED WITH MPP DEEPAK ANAND PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE PARTY



I am conducting my spring placement with MPP Deepak Anand of Mississauga–Malton. MPP Anand is the Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Labour, Training, and Skills Development. He is also a member of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts and the Standing Committee on Government Agencies. Mississauga–Malton is one of the most diverse communities in the province. MPP Anand cares deeply about youth employment, food insecurity, reducing red tape, and bridging the gap between the people and their elected officials. In this office, I have been able to conduct research, write speeches, questions, and statements, and create social media graphics and videos. Additionally, I have been able to help community members and local organizations keep up to date on funding announcements that impact their lives and work. I would like to extend my gratitude to MPP Anand, Anushka Tiwari, Jinkle Mehta, and Nabiha Paracha for creating an incredible learning environment.

SPRING PLACEMENTS

JANINE IS PLACED WITH MPP JOHN FRASER LIBERAL PARTY



I am thrilled to be placed with MPP John Fraser, Member for Ottawa South. MPP Fraser is the Liberal House Leader, and the Critic for Health, Long-Term Care, Seniors Affairs and Accessibility, Intergovernmental Affairs, and Labour. Ottawa South is a vibrant and culturally diverse riding in the heart of the nation's capital. Throughout my placement, I have drafted Member's statements, questions, and policy briefs, and have engaged with stakeholders from the riding while learning about Ontario's health infrastructure. I was privileged to visit the riding and hear from constituents about the issues they care about most. I am grateful for the valuable opportunity of working in this office and would like to extend my gratitude to MPP Fraser, Eric, Carolyn, and Celeste!

DIA IS PLACED WITH MPP MIKE SCHREINER GREEN PARTY



For my opposition placement, I have had the opportunity to work with MPP Mike Schreiner, who represents the riding of Guelph and also serves as the Leader of the Green Party of Ontario. When MPP Schreiner was sworn into office in 2018, it was the first time in nearly half a century that a fourth party was represented at Queen's Park. As such, my placement has been a unique experience. I have been able to dive into a variety of issues and portfolios, while gaining a better understanding of legislation through an environmental lens, which has an impact on nearly all aspects of our lives in Ontario. I have been able to contribute to the team meaningfully by drafting debate remarks, monitoring media sources, creating briefings on newly introduced legislation, and staffing stakeholder meetings. This has been a fulfilling and well-rounded experience thanks to Mr. Schreiner and the dynamic team in his office.

IQRA IS PLACED WITH MPP RUDY CUZZETTO PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE PARTY

For my spring placement, I am excited to be placed with Rudy Cuzzetto, MPP for Mississauga–Lakeshore and Parliamentary Assistant to the President of the Treasury Board. There are many exciting development projects happening in Mississauga–Lakeshore, which makes for an exceptionally engaging work environment for an intern. From expansions to the Mississauga Hospital, to new long-term care beds, working in MPP Cuzzetto's office has been a great opportunity to see how new health care infrastructure is planned, built, and integrated to address the needs of communities. I have worked on a variety of assignments in his office, including several Member's statements and debates. I also helped plan a visit by the Minister of Seniors and Accessibility to the constituency office and accompanied him to events across the riding. Thank you to MPP Cuzzetto, and his staff Kristian, Michael, Joanna, Carm, Dorothy, and Leo for having me in your office and teaching me what it is like to work on the government side of the House!



CLARE IS PLACED WITH MPP NORMAN MILLER PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE PARTY

I am placed with MPP Norman Miller of Parry Sound–Muskoka for my government placement. Having grown up in the GTA, this placement has given me an opportunity to learn about some of the issues facing people living in Ontario's Near North. At the beginning of my placement, I was able to attend meetings between local representatives and ministry staff at the Rural Ontario Municipal Association Conference. These meetings gave me insight into some of the concerns in the riding, including topics like environmental sustainability and infrastructure. I have also enjoyed writing Member's statements, news releases, and speeches for MPP Miller. In fact, one of the highlights of my placement so far has been writing MPP Miller's speech for the second reading of his Private Member's Bill, the *Lifejackets for Life Act*. I want to thank MPP Miller, Lesley, Karen, Emily, and Christine for such a fantastic learning opportunity!



SPRING PLACEMENTS

MELODY IS PLACED WITH MPP MONIQUE TAYLOR NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY

I am thrilled to be placed for my opposition placement in the office of MPP Monique Taylor, the Member for Hamilton Mountain. Having grown up in Hamilton myself, I have enjoyed contributing to meaningful work in my own community and learning more about the people and key issues in the city. MPP Taylor is the NDP's Critic for Mental Health and Addictions, so much of my work has been in support of her upcoming Private Member's Bill focusing on mental wellness in Ontario's schools. I have also particularly enjoyed writing questions for Question Period, conducting research to support her bill and local initiatives, and engaging with diverse stakeholders and constituent groups. MPP Taylor is passionate about her work for her community and for the province, so working in her office has been a great experience so far. Thank you to MPP Taylor and Jessica, MPP Taylor's Executive Assistant, for welcoming me to your team!



ALESSIA IS PLACED WITH MPP VIJAY THANIGASALAM PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE PARTY



For my second placement, I am working in the office of MPP Vijay Thanigasalam, who has represented Scarborough—Rouge Park since 2018. MPP Thanigasalam is passionate about building relationships in his constituency and enjoys giving back to the community. During this placement, I have had the opportunity to write speeches, contribute to local community events, and connect with families and individuals of Scarborough—Rouge Park through constituency work and outreach. MPP Thanigasalam is also the Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Transportation. As a result, I have enjoyed learning more about the Scarborough subway extension, which will connect Scarborough residents to the downtown core. I extend my thanks to MPP Thanigasalam as well as Saranja, Anetes, and Tas for making me feel part of the team! Each of you has been an integral part of my professional development.

OLIP HALL OF FAME

Since OLIP's inception in 1975, interns have been fortunate to be placed with many different MPPs. We extend our sincere thanks to all MPPs who have acted as mentors, provided unique learning opportunities, and welcomed interns into their offices. Some MPPs have gone above and beyond in their commitment to our Programme, hosting several interns over the years. We thank the following current Members for welcoming the most interns:



1st - Norman Miller
with 17 interns



2nd - Ernie Hardeman
with 13 interns



3rd - Gilles Bisson
with 11 interns



4th Jim Wilson
with 10 interns



France G  linas & Laurie Scott
with 9 interns each

We would also like to celebrate two other former Members who have hosted many interns since the first year of OLIP. Mike Colle hosted 11 interns, and Dave Levac hosted 10 interns. We thank you all for your dedicated support! On behalf of all OLIP interns—past and present—we would like to congratulate MPP Norman Miller on his upcoming retirement this year after more than two decades representing Parry Sound—Muskoka. Thank you for your commitment to our Programme, and for having hosted 17 interns over 21 years, including two of us just this year. We wish you all the best!



MPP Miller with five of his past interns: Ryan Cookson, Braelyn Guppy, Kassandra Loewen, Melody Greaves, and Kieran Lawlor

PREMIERS

PREMIER DOUG FORD



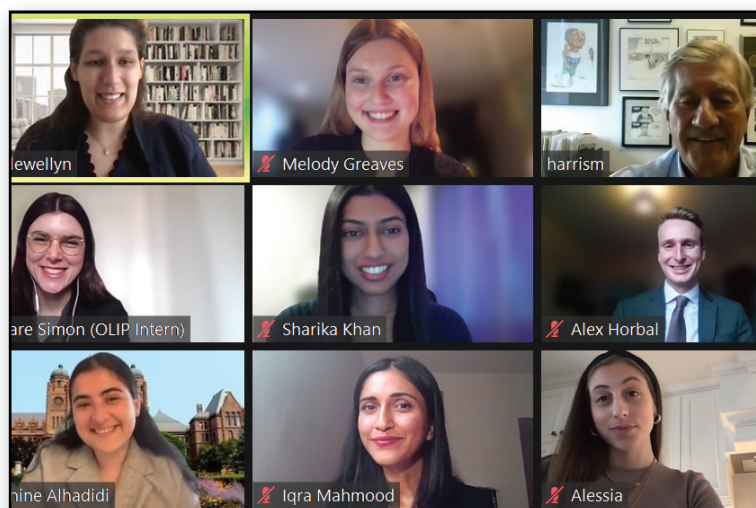
We had the pleasure of meeting with the premier of Ontario, Hon. Doug Ford. Premier Ford spoke about the importance of listening to different perspectives in the policy development process, his experience as Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, and the challenges of balancing his roles as premier and the MPP for Etobicoke North. We appreciated the valuable advice he imparted to us, especially as we consider how we can use our OLIP experience to be effective leaders in the future. The meeting gave us plenty to reflect on, and we are thankful for Premier Ford's time and his support for the Programme!

KATHLEEN O. WYNNE



We had the honour of meeting with MPP Kathleen Wynne, Ontario's 25th premier. During the discussion, she spoke about being the first female premier and what that signified to her. She discussed her experiences with sexism, including instances in which people assumed that her male Chief of Staff was the premier. She also spoke openly about her decision to remain an MPP after the 2018 election, and other difficult times in her career. Through it all, she expressed that focusing on her constituents' needs helped her persevere and provided positive moments. Thank you, MPP Wynne, for taking the time to share your experiences!

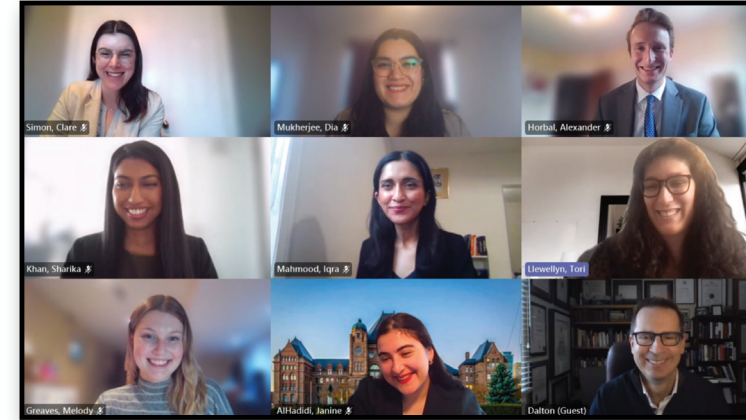
MIKE HARRIS



In May, we met with Ontario's 22nd premier, Mike Harris. Premier from 1995-2002, Mr. Harris reflected on governing during several key events in Ontario politics at the turn of the century. He discussed the amalgamation of the City of Toronto, the inception of the "Common Sense Revolution" with the goal to control government spending, the introduction of standardized testing in Ontario, and the large public demonstrations that frequented Queen's Park during his tenure. When sharing his insights regarding the creation of the Ontario Works program, Mr. Harris stressed that everyone has the potential to offer value and fresh perspectives to each workplace. This insight will certainly help us in our own careers. Thank you, Mr. Harris, for sharing your experiences!

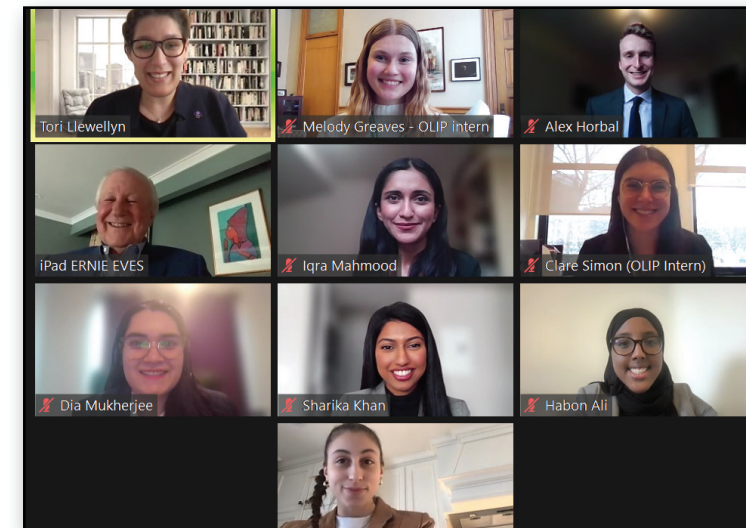
PAST AND PRESENT

DALTON MCGUINTY



We were privileged to have the opportunity to meet with former premier and MPP for Ottawa South, Dalton McGuinty. In our conversation, Mr. McGuinty emphasized the importance of storytelling, and reminded us to never underestimate the power of a story; we were happy to hear plenty of stories from Mr. McGuinty's almost 10 years as premier of Ontario. We had a lengthy discussion about the nature of good leadership, the importance of listening to others, and the value of idealism. Thank you, Mr. McGuinty, for taking the time to meet with us and for being so candid about your experiences!

ERNIE EVES



We were honoured to meet with Ontario's 23rd premier, Mr. Ernie Eves. Mr. Eves told us that when starting his 22-year-long political career, he was interested in serving the public and never expected to become premier. Mr. Eves sought to embody good leadership by standing by his principles and pursuing change because it was the right thing to do, regardless of partisan lines. Prior to becoming premier, Mr. Eves acted as Minister of Finance for six years. He is proud to have achieved balancing Ontario's budget, but his proudest achievement was his work in expanding funding for disability supports. Thank you, Mr. Eves, for the wonderful discussion!

DAVID PETERSON



We had the pleasure of meeting former premier David Peterson, the 20th premier of Ontario, who served from 1985 to 1990. In the meeting, Mr. Peterson shared some of his political experiences with us, including his involvement in the Meech Lake Accord. He explained his critical role in the creation of the accord and reflected on this historic, yet controversial, moment from his perspective as premier. Premier Peterson emphasized the importance of cross-party collaboration in the Legislature, particularly during the creation of 1985's Liberal-NDP accord. We are grateful to have had the chance to meet with Mr. Peterson and hear about his extensive career!

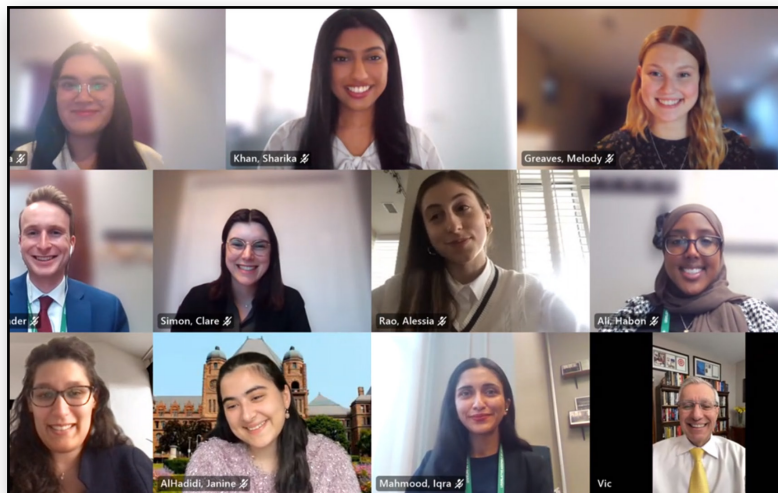
MINISTERS

MINISTER CHRISTINE ELLIOTT



We were honoured to meet Ontario's Minister of Health and Deputy Premier, Hon. Christine Elliott. Minister Elliott first became interested in public life through her volunteer work with various mental health and addiction support associations. She discussed the importance of volunteering in politics, and the role of science in informing health policy. As Minister of Health, much of her duties have involved managing the COVID-19 crisis. We were interested to learn that despite its challenges, the pandemic has also provided an opportunity to push for health care changes that otherwise may have been delayed, such as virtual care options. Thank you, Minister Elliott, for taking the time to speak with us!

MINISTER VIC FEDELI



We were thrilled to meet Hon. Vic Fedeli, the MPP for Nipissing and Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade. Minister Fedeli spoke about his prior municipal experience as North Bay's mayor, which helps him employ a holistic policy approach to his work as Minister. He also discussed new trends in electric vehicle manufacturing and the need to balance economic growth and action on climate change. Citing Ontario's strong manufacturing capacity, wealth of natural resources, and clean power grid, Minister Fedeli presented a vision for an economy that manages growth and sustainability. Minister Fedeli, thank you for taking the time to meet with us!

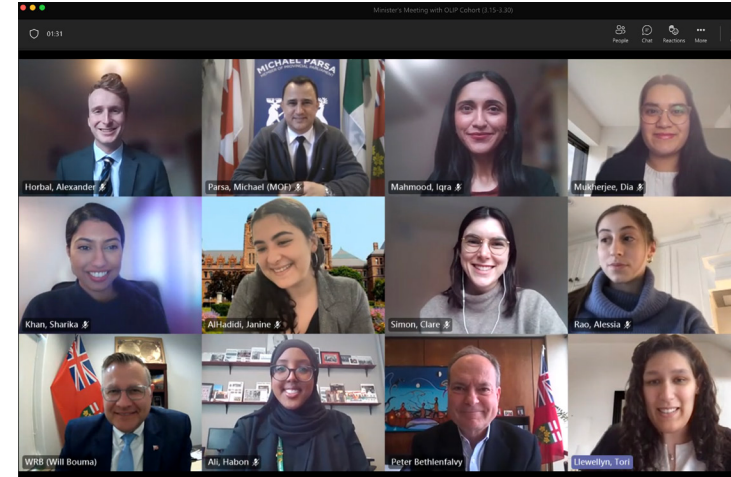
ATTORNEY GENERAL DOUG DOWNEY



We were thrilled that Hon. Doug Downey, the Attorney General of Ontario, took the time to meet with us. As the Attorney General, Minister Downey oversees the justice system in Ontario and is the chief legal advisor to the Government of Ontario. In our meeting, he discussed his passion for municipal politics, especially in the City of Orillia where he was a city councillor. Furthermore, he was proud to discuss his efforts as Attorney General to digitize court proceedings and increase the accessibility of court systems. Thank you again, Minister Downey, for meeting with us and speaking about your experiences!

& MORE

MINISTER PETER BETHLENFALVY



Weeks before the 2022 provincial budget was tabled, we met with Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy, the Minister of Finance, and MPPs Michael Parsa and Will Bouma, the Minister's Parliamentary Assistants. The Minister discussed his experiences working in the private banking sector, which inform his approach to the Cabinet portfolio. Minister Bethlenfalvy explained that in both roles it is key to prioritize the needs of stakeholders, whether they are private clients or the people of Ontario. We also discussed the outlook for Ontario's economy, how to bolster skilled trades, and how red tape can be further reduced for small businesses. Thank you to the Minister and Parliamentary Assistants for the excellent conversation!

SECRETARY OF CABINET MICHELLE DIEMANUELE

We were honoured to meet with Ontario's Secretary of the Cabinet, Head of the Public Service, and Clerk of the Executive Council, Michelle E. DiEmanuele. As the chief public servant, Ms. DiEmanuele acts as an advisor to the premier as the Deputy Minister of the Ontario government. Ms. DiEmanuele has worked in the public and private sectors, tasked with modernizing and improving service delivery; she felt that this has prepared her for the position of Secretary of the Cabinet. She emphasized the importance of setting long-term goals and maintaining her core values to guide her work. Thank you for sharing your wisdom with us, Ms. DiEmanuele!

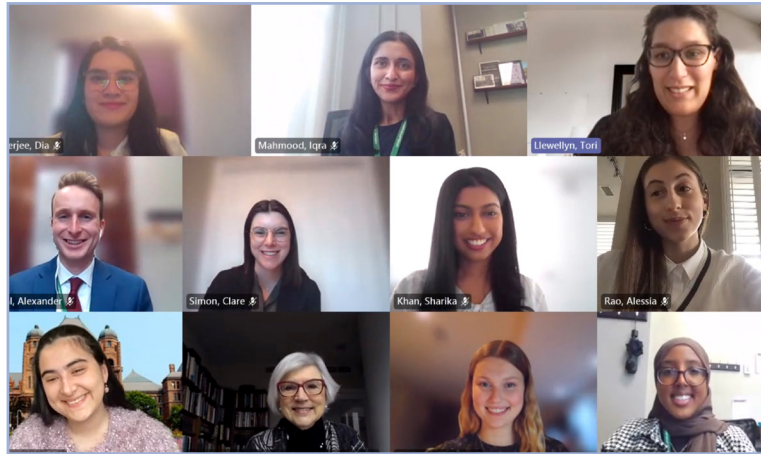


DR. GRAHAM WHITE



We met with Dr. Graham White, professor emeritus at the University of Toronto. His career began as an intern in OLIP's first cohort, and he has since become an expert in Ontario politics and provincial legislatures. Dr. White is credited with writing several foundational books and articles on Ontario's political system and explained to us some of the fascinating ways the Legislative Assembly has evolved over time. Having been an intern in 1976-1977, he reflected on OLIP's beginnings at a time when the Legislature was undergoing a bureaucratic overhaul. Dr. White later acted as OLIP's Academic Director, and he has rarely missed OLIP receptions over the decades. Thank you, Dr. White, for the riveting conversation!

FORMER CHIEF JUSTICE BEVERLEY MCLACHLIN



It was an honour to meet the Right Honourable Beverley McLachlin, Canada's 17th Chief Justice, whose extensive experiences in law are a true inspiration. Ms. McLachlin is not only the first woman to hold the position, but is also the longest-serving Chief Justice in Canada. She discussed her work following her time on the Supreme Court and how she is proud to have been appointed to the Hong Kong Court of Final Appeal and Singapore's International Commercial Court. Lastly, she discussed how she finds happiness in meeting and sharing advice with young people like us. Thank you, Chief Justice McLachlin for meeting with us!

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR ELIZABETH DOWDESWELL



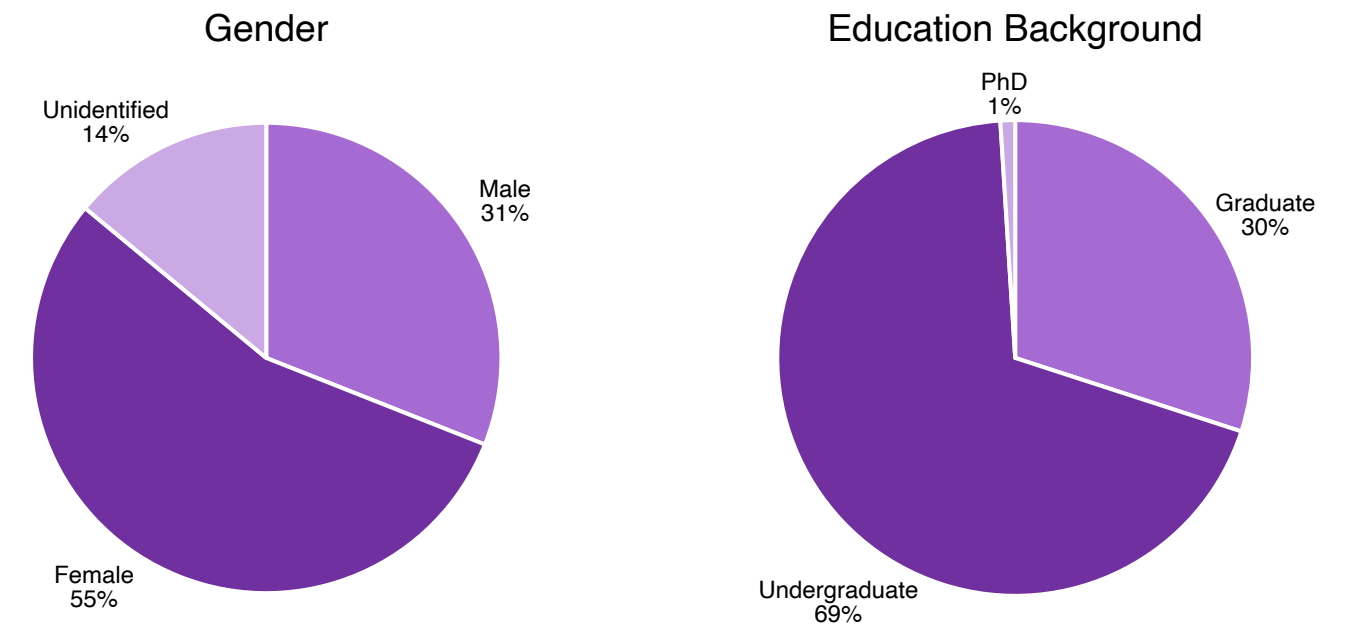
We had the privilege of meeting with Her Honour the Honourable Elizabeth Dowdeswell, 29th Lieutenant Governor of Ontario. We engaged in an insightful conversation about the role of the Viceroy, and the power of stories as a tool to encourage meaningful dialogue. Her Honour explained that her responsibilities go beyond ceremonial duties, especially during times of crisis. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Her Honour has been a symbol of continuity for Ontarians. After our discussion, we toured the Lieutenant Governor's suite and viewed an exhibition exploring the roots and promises of democracy. We value these important lessons as we continue to navigate the processes of Ontario's democratic system.

OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN

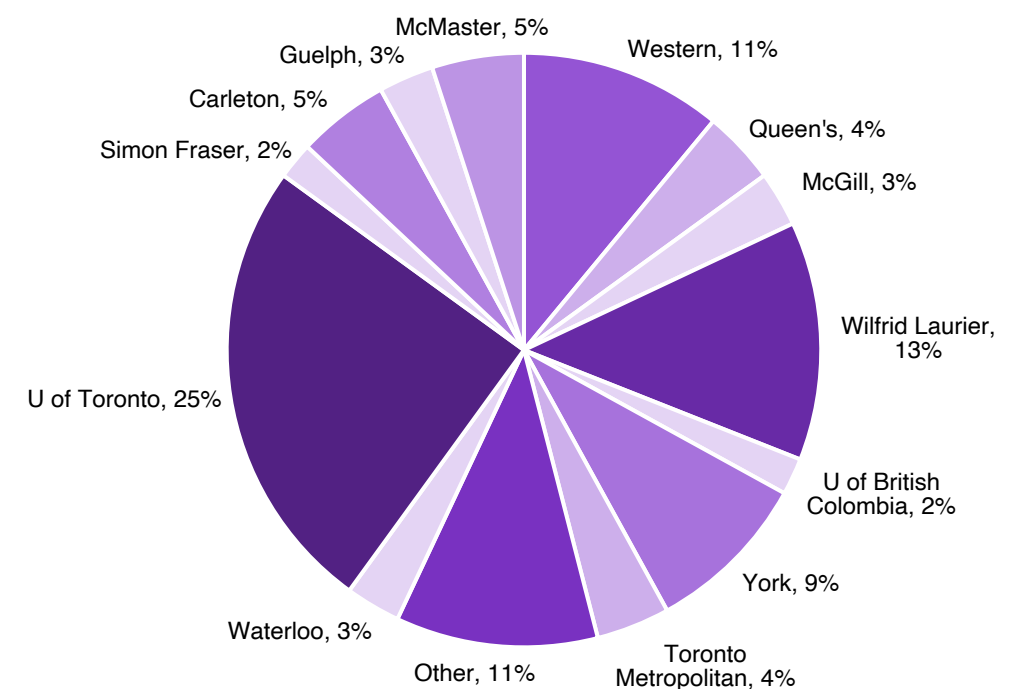


We had the pleasure of meeting with Ontario's Ombudsman, Paul Dubé, the Deputy Ombudsman, Barbara Finlay, as well as Ontario's French Language Services Commissioner and Deputy Ombudsman, Kelly Burke. The Ombudsman promotes fairness and accountability in the public sector by reviewing complaints from the public. Remaining non-partisan is essential to the Ombudsman's role, as he cannot be seen to execute his mandate in accordance with any party's priorities. The Ombudsman plays a fundamental role in protecting the rights of Ontarians, and ensuring that all Ontarians know how to connect with this resource is essential. Thank you to the Office of the Ombudsman for meeting with us!

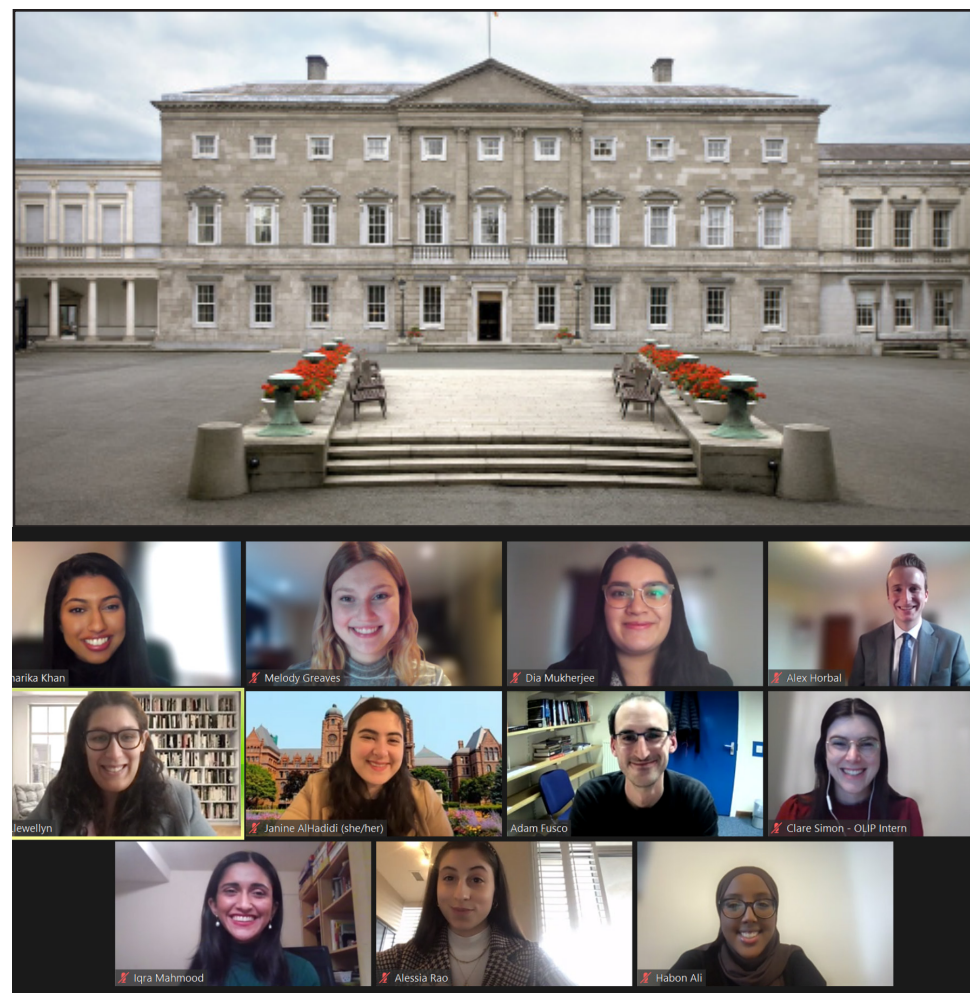
Every year, the OLIP interns and recruitment committee work diligently to select a new group of 10 recent graduates across Canada to form the next OLIP cohort. This year, we received many impressive applications representing a diverse range of backgrounds and experiences. We look forward to following their journey with OLIP next year!



Where did OLIP applicants study?



IRISH STUDY TOUR



Interns meeting with Dr. Adam Fusco during a seminar on Irish politics and history.

Despite the pandemic restricting our ability to travel, we were able to participate in an exciting and insightful virtual tour of the Houses of the Oireachtas in Dublin—the bicameral Parliament of the Republic of Ireland at the heart of the nation’s capital. Conor Reale currently works as a Parliamentary Education Officer with the Oireachtas and brings years of experience as a teacher of Irish politics and history. Mr. Reale very graciously prepared a workshop, giving us an opportunity to view the grand Parliament building and its many ornate rooms. Simultaneously, we were able to learn about the distinct differences between politics in Ontario and Ireland.

For instance, Mr. Reale informed us that Ireland’s civil war history left deep divides among the population, shaping the political parties that are currently represented in the Oireachtas. Additionally, Mr. Reale discussed the importance of referendums in Irish politics, in which the public directly participates in decision-making and governance.

To complement our virtual visit of the Oireachtas, Dr. Adam Fusco, a professor of Irish Political Ideology at the University of York, delivered an academic seminar on Irish politics and history. Through his excellent presentation, we were able to gain a deeper understanding of Ireland’s tumultuous history, the lingering impacts of British colonialism, and the religious divide between Catholics and Protestants on Ireland’s political history.

We thank Mr. Reale and Dr. Fusco for their insightful presentations on Irish politics—we learned so much and are grateful to be able to take a study tour abroad, albeit virtually!

HUMAN RIGHTS STUDY TOUR



Interns attending a United Nations Asia & the Pacific human rights tour!

Our first virtual study tour of the year was not organized around a particular location, but instead focused on the theme of human rights. We had the pleasure of attending a virtual tour hosted by the Canadian Human Rights Museum in Winnipeg, Manitoba. This world-renowned museum has 10 core galleries and many exhibits, providing a space for visitors to explore the subject of human rights, both within Canadian and international contexts.

We were impressed by the museum’s ability to invoke both reflection and hope, particularly when touring one of the museum’s most popular features, the Contemplation Garden. This study tour allowed us to take a moment to contemplate our role in the advancement of human rights in Canada and the world around us.

To complement our experience at the Canadian Human Rights Museum, we attended a virtual tour of the United Nations Headquarters in New York City, hosted by the Visitor Centre. This unique thematic tour allowed us to explore Asia and the Pacific to learn more about the connection between the region and the international community. The tour celebrated the many contributions of Asian and Pacific countries to the United Nations, focusing on the region’s involvement in promoting sustainable development, Indigenous rights, peace and security, and disarmament. We were fascinated to learn more about peace efforts in Timor-Leste and Myanmar and the key contributions of notable figures in the preparation of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights.

Thank you to the Canadian Museum of Human Rights and to the Visitor Service Centre for generously hosting us on these wonderful tours!

OTTAWA STUDY TOUR



During our study tour to Parliament Hill in Ottawa, we had the pleasure of meeting with several Members of Parliament who represent Ontario ridings. These include Liberal MP Yasir Naqvi of Ottawa Centre, Conservative MP Melissa Lantsman of Thornhill, Green MP Mike Morrice of Kitchener Centre, and NDP MP and Assistant Deputy Speaker Carol Hughes of Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapuskasing. It was fascinating to hear about the experiences of Ontario MPs from diverse political parties in the federal legislature. We also met with MP Erin O'Toole of Durham, former Leader of the Conservative Party of Canada, who candidly shared his thoughts on his time as Leader and his hopes for the party in the future.

We enjoyed watching these MPs in action during a viewing of Question Period. A meeting with the Clerk of the House of Commons, Charles Robert, helped prepare us for what we saw in the House and shared some of the differences between the federal Standing Orders and the rules of procedure at Queen's Park.

We also had the honour of meeting with two federal ministers. Hon. Marc Miller, the Minister of Crown – Indigenous Relations discussed the challenges of his role, particularly when dealing with major issues like boil-water advisories and working towards reconciliation, and the importance of building trust with Indigenous peoples. Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos, the Minister of Health spoke about his experiences with the health portfolio during a pandemic and the difficulties associated with juggling ever-changing case numbers and expert information from across Canada.

We capped our week off with a tour of the Senate. Since Ontario is a unicameral system, we were intrigued to learn about the differences in the federal bicameral system. We would like to thank all the guests we had the pleasure of meeting during our time in Ottawa. In particular, we would like to extend our gratitude to our federal counterparts in the Parliamentary Internship Programme who helped coordinate our Study Tour!

QUEBEC STUDY TOUR



We were privileged to visit Quebec's National Assembly in Quebec City, where we learned about Quebec's history, and its different legislative processes and policy priorities. We began our study tour with a walking tour of the Quebec National Assembly and marveled at its beautiful artistic features and thematic exhibitions, which showcase Francophone history in Canada, women-led movements in Quebec, and archives from the Assembly's heritage collection.

Afterwards, we had the pleasure of meeting with Members of the National Assembly (MNAs) from across the party spectrum to gain a deeper understanding of different political and socio-economic issues in Quebec. Our meetings included Québec Solidaire MNA Sol Zanetti of Jean-Lesage and Parti Québécois MNA Sylvain Gaudreault of Jonquière. The MNAs spoke openly about their careers and the different issues facing their respective districts and Quebec at large. We also met with Associate Deputy Minister at the Health and Social Services Ministry, Lucie Opatrny, who spoke to us about Quebec's health infrastructure and its challenges during the pandemic.

Watching Question Period allowed us to witness Quebec's political dynamics at play, while improving our French political lexicon! This experience was complemented by a meeting with Secretary General of the National Assembly Siegfried Peters, as well as Third Vice-President Maryse Gaureault. These meetings allowed us to better understand the procedural differences between the QNA and Queen's Park, and the importance of balance and non-partisanship across Westminster parliaments.

We ended our study tour with a meeting with La Coalition Avenir Québec MNA, Joëlle Boutin of Jean-Talon, and Liberal MNA David Birnbaum of D'Arcy-McGee. In these meetings, we learned about the different priorities and internal dynamics of both the party in government and the Official Opposition. We were excited to hear their thoughts on Quebec's political future!

PLACEMENTS WITH PARLIAMENTARY OFFICERS

ALESSIA FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE

For my placement with an Independent Officer of the Legislative Assembly, I will be placed in the Financial Accountability Office. I am eager to get started on different financial projects, and to learn more about the office's inner workings and how financial transparency is maintained in Ontario. Although I do not have a financial background, I am certainly looking forward to further developing my skillset in this area while working alongside a new team and taking on some of the FAO's tasks and responsibilities!

CLARE INFORMATION AND PRIVACY COMMISSIONER

I am looking forward to being placed with the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario. After our meeting with the Commissioner earlier this year, I was immediately intrigued by the breadth of ways that privacy and information issues interact with other systems, such as the justice system and healthcare system. In a world with rapidly evolving technology, I am excited to learn more about privacy policy and assist with the office's outreach initiatives.

HABON ELECTIONS ONTARIO

For my placement with an Independent Officer of the Legislative Assembly, I am fortunate to be working with Elections Ontario. Elections Ontario is the non-partisan office of the Legislative Assembly that has the important responsibility of overseeing provincial elections. I am particularly excited to experience this office given that Ontario will hold a provincial election in June. I am looking forward to learning more about voting accessibility as well as how integrity and security is maintained in electoral processes.

MELODY OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN

I am excited to be placed with the Office of the Ontario Ombudsman. The Ombudsman annually investigates over 1,000 government and public sector organizations and reviews complaints from people across Ontario. After our initial meeting with the Ombudsman, I developed an interest in learning more about the process used to triage complaints and develop positive solutions. I hope to use my own skills and non-partisanship to help the office connect Ontarians with the resources and services they require.

Due to the provincial election, the Independent Officers of the Legislature generously offered to host us for our final placements. We are looking forward to rounding out our OLIP experience with new insights from these offices!



JANINE ELECTIONS ONTARIO

I am looking forward to my placement at Elections Ontario. As the Independent Office of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario responsible for the administration of provincial elections and referenda, I am excited to support the office during a real election. I am interested in seeing the ins-and-outs of the electoral process, getting a more thorough understanding of election laws in Ontario, and learning about the accessibility strategies used to accommodate the needs of different Ontarians.

SHARIKA AUDITOR GENERAL

For my placement with an Independent Officer of the Legislative Assembly, I am thrilled to be placed with the Auditor General of Ontario. The Auditor General plays an important role in holding the Ontario government financially accountable and responsible by conducting independent audits of public sector operations. I am especially looking forward to learning more about the Office's work in scrutinizing government spending and evaluating how well public resources are being used.

ALEX INTEGRITY COMMISSIONER

I will be working with the Office of the Integrity Commissioner of Ontario (OICO) for my placement with an Independent Officer of the Legislative Assembly. The OICO encourages high ethical standards among MPPs, lobbyists, and the Ontario Public Service, and carries out investigations when allegations of ethics violations are made. Since I will be studying law after OLIP, I am excited to gain some experience participating in legal work and investigations.

TORI AUDITOR GENERAL

For my final placement with OLIP, I am excited to be working with the Office of the Auditor General. In September, we had the honour of meeting with the Auditor General, Bonnie Lysyk, which sparked my interest in her office's work. While the Official Opposition play an important role in holding the government to account, I am interested in learning about the broader continuum of accountability that exists within our parliamentary system.

IQRA FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE

I will be placed with the Financial Accountability Office for my final placement. As the independent office responsible for the non-partisan analysis of Ontario's finances and trends, the FAO provides a fantastic place to learn about Ontario's fiscal matters. I am eager to learn about how finances affect policy decisions. I regularly consulted the FAO's resources during my MPP placements, so I am looking forward to developing a behind-the-scenes understanding of the FAO's work.

ALUMNI CORNER

CHELSEA PEET 2008-2009

“If I could come back in another life, it would be as an intern.” Robert Fisher, the former CBC radio host once said this, and as someone who has been out of the Programme for nearly 15 years, his words still ring true. I was an intern in 2008-09—we were the first cohort to have 10 interns instead of eight and were witness to two party leadership races, the start of the “great recession,” countless media scrums, Question Periods, protests, and even an MP vs. MPP hockey game.

Every day as an intern was a highlight, but some of my most special memories are everyday ones—walking in the tunnel from Whitney Block to the Legislature with my fellow interns, stamping Christmas card envelopes with the team, driving to Ottawa for our parliamentary visit, or scoping out whom to try to introduce ourselves to at the evening stakeholder receptions.



OLIP 2008-2009 cohort

OLIP showed me the value of networking skills, and the importance of being responsive, positive, and solutions-oriented. These skills served me well when I was job searching as a young graduate, reaching out for informational interviews, and continue to help me as I navigate an ongoing career in the civil service. Since my time in OLIP, I’ve served in policy and operational roles, in both domestic and more international functions, and am currently leading Ontario’s Trade and Investment Office out of the Canadian Consulate in San Francisco. OLIP was an incredibly special year in my life, and without a doubt put me on a trajectory to where I am now. I’m grateful for everything I learned and the wonderful people, colleagues, and friends that I met.

JONATHAN TRENTADUE 2009-2010



OLIP was, and remains, a defining moment in my career. The skills I learned as an intern continue to serve me well to this very day. More importantly, the friendships I made along the way continue to be a daily source of strength and support throughout my career journey.

One thing you are told as an OLIP intern is that you take from the Programme what you put into it. During my time in 2009-2010, our OLIP cohort lived that mantra to its fullest, devoting all our efforts to learning the most we could from every experience, and gaining valuable insights into the world of Queen’s Park and beyond.

After OLIP, I joined Ontario Lottery and Gaming (OLG), as part of their Social Responsibility and Policy division. My time at OLG helped me hone the skills that I first developed as an intern and gave me the chance to work on unique, public-facing projects.

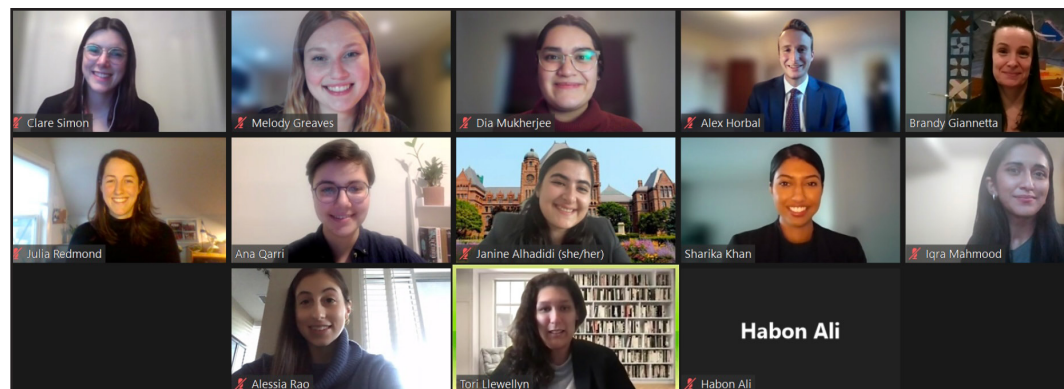
Following my time at OLG, I returned to Queen’s Park and joined the Machinery of Government team in Cabinet Office (CO). The fast-paced and challenging experience of CO has been truly rewarding. One highlight of this position for me has been supporting the government and Cabinet in their decision-making process through the COVID-19 pandemic. In my current role with CO, I serve as the Senior Manager of Machinery of Government. The view from the “centre” is a privileged one, and it is something I would not get to experience if it were not for OLIP.



OLIP 2009-2010 cohort

ALUMNI PANELS

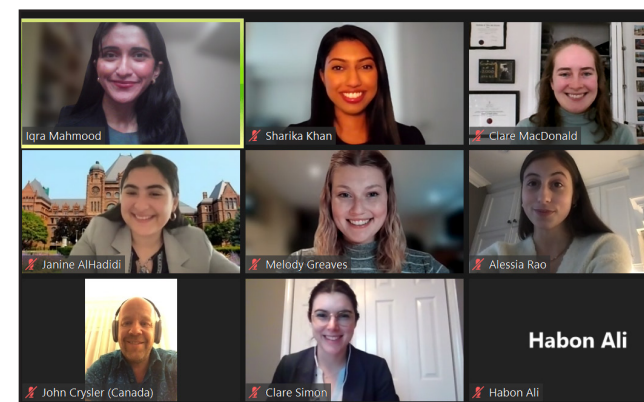
We are always eager to learn about the career pathways that OLIP alumni have taken after the Programme, and to hear their perspectives, advice, and fond memories. This year, the Alumni Relations Committee put together two panels to provide a dedicated space in which we could discuss these topics to better prepare us for life after OLIP. The Panels featured alumni with fascinating careers, including “Alumni in Public Service” and “Alumni in Advocacy.”



Interns with OLIP Alumni Ana Qarri, Julia Redmond, and Brandy Giannetta during the Alumni in Advocacy event.



Interns and alumni during the Alumni in Finance event.



Interns and alumni during the Alumni in Public Service event.

The first panel, “Alumni in Public Service,” took place in November and introduced us to various careers in the public service and the common skills needed to succeed in the field. Our alumni panelists, John Chrysler, Clare MacDonald, and Mackenzie Bonnett discussed their varied experiences in the public service and how they found their place within the sector.

In January, we held our second panel, “Alumni in Advocacy,” which offered a unique look into the diverse ways in which alumni have pursued advocacy, whether in their careers or personal lives. We were particularly interested in learning about how to turn our passions into meaningful professions. Thank you to our speakers Julia Redmond, Ana Qarri, and Brandy Giannetta for sharing insights into your careers after OLIP and what advocacy means to you.

Our final panel, “Alumni in Finance,” took place in April. We were thrilled to speak with alumni who have pursued interesting careers in finance and economic development in Ontario and internationally. The alumni discussed new, innovative ways to encourage job creation and growth in Ontario’s economy, particularly in the small business sector. We heard how job creation and economic growth are essential to support the province as we transition towards COVID-19 recovery. Thank you to our alumni panelists Clare Devereaux, Joydeep Mukherji, and Justyna Zegarmistrz!

REMEMBERING ROBERT SPELLER

The OLIP family is saddened by the passing of Robert (Bob) Speller. Bob was an intern in the 1981-1982 cohort and was later elected to the House of Commons four times, where he served from 1988 to 2004. In 2003, Bob was named the federal Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food. He passed away on December 16th, 2021. On behalf of the OLIP Programme, we offer our condolences to Bob’s loved ones and thank the 1981-1982 interns for sharing the following tributes and memories with us.

“Bob and I were legislative interns together in 1981-1982. We came from diametrically different backgrounds and had different outlooks. Nonetheless, we managed to bridge these divides, largely because of Bob’s generosity of spirit and kindness. This made our year as interns a most memorable one. RIP Bob.”

Daniel Cayen (OLIP 1981-1982).

“It was such a great shock to hear about the passing of Bob Speller, a fellow intern from 1981-82. Bob was a good, kind, and generous soul who befriended us all in our internship year. In doing so, he brought us all together, which reflects an important part of who Bob was. He went on into politics, the only one from our crew, and I admired his commitment and resilience in pursuing that career. It was a significant achievement for him to reach a Cabinet position and I wonder if any subsequent interns met with him in that role. I am convinced that he served his constituency well and know that he cared deeply for his family and community. Here’s to you Bob.”

Monica Neitzert (OLIP 1981-1982)



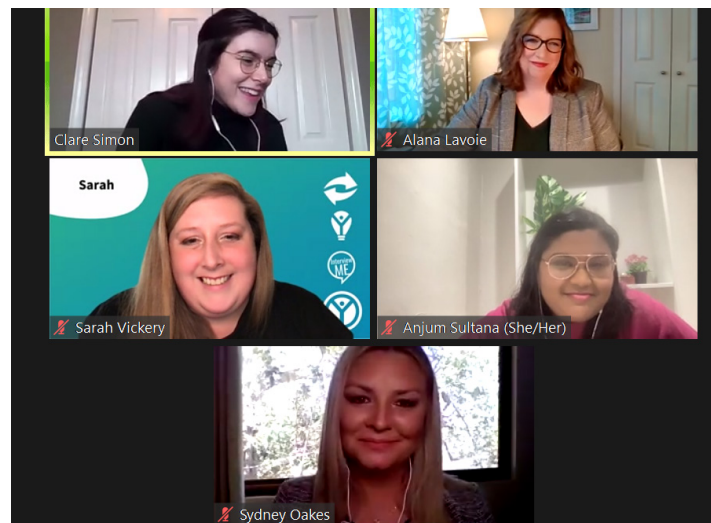
Robert Speller (second to the left) and OLIP’s 1981-1982 cohort.

SPEAKER SERIES

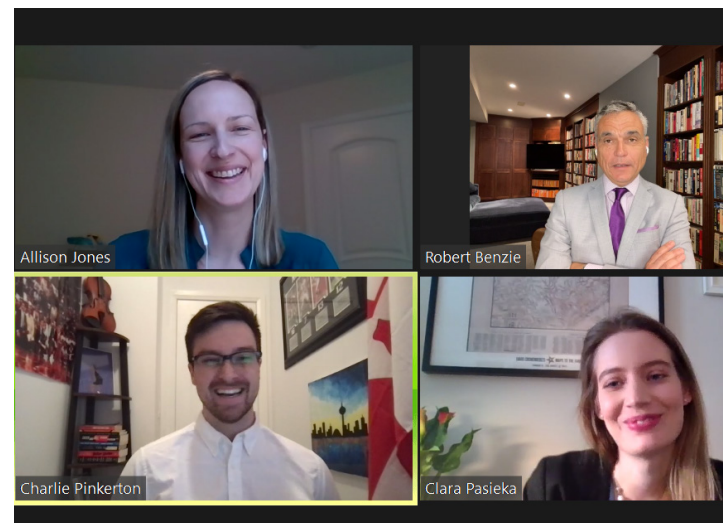
This year, we were thrilled to host four Speaker Series panel discussions, which featured experts in a wide range of fields. These events were sponsored by AMAPCEO, one of OLIP's generous partners. We would like to thank all panelists and moderators for sharing their insights, and AMAPCEO for its support, which made these events possible.

In November, we held our first event, entitled "Voter Apathy and Declining Voter Turnout." We were joined by John Beebe, the founder of Toronto Metropolitan University's Democratic Engagement Exchange; Dr. Dennis Pilon, Associate Professor in York University's Department of Politics; and Samantha Reusch, the Executive Director of the organization Apathy is Boring. The panel was moderated by Seher Shafiq, the Active Citizenship Manager of the North York Community House. The panel explored the factors that influence voter turnout, the indicators of healthy democracies, and ways to increase voter turnout in Ontario.

In February, we hosted our second panel, on "Non-Profits and the Provincial Government." Our panelists included Anjum Sultana, the Director of Youth Leadership and Policy Advocacy at Plan International Canada; Alana Lavoie, the National Director of Government Relations at Habitat for Humanity Canada; and Sarah Vickery, the Senior Manager of Youth and Program Services at Opportunity for All Youth. The panel was moderated by Sydney Oakes, Principal at Provoke Public Relations and an OLIP alumna. The panelists discussed the interactions between non-profit organizations and the government, taking a closer look at the benefits, transformations, and challenges of this relationship during recent years.



"Non-Profits and the Provincial Government" Speaker Series Event.

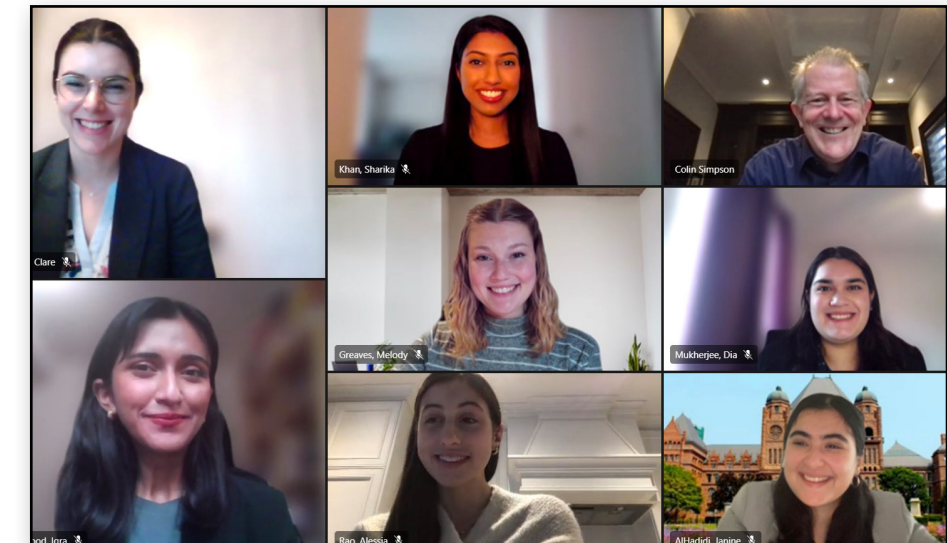


"Covering Election Campaigns" Speaker Series Event.

In March, we hosted a discussion on "International Relations and Diplomacy." We were glad to welcome as our panelists Ambassador Kerry Buck, former Canadian Ambassador to the North Atlantic Council (NATO); OLIP alum Tristan Landry, a public servant and former diplomat; and Ambassador Elizabeth Williams, Ambassador of Canada to Costa Rica. Moderated by Dr. Alistair Edgar from the Balsillie School of International Affairs, the panelists discussed the current role of diplomacy in resolving international conflicts, the challenges created by emerging technologies, and the role that provincial governments play in Canadian foreign policy.

In April, we hosted our next panel on "Covering Election Campaigns." We were thrilled to include Robert Benzie, Queen's Park Bureau Chief at the Toronto Star; Allison Jones, correspondent for the Canadian Press; and Clara Pasieka, journalist for CBC and OLIP alumna. The panel was moderated by Charlie Pinkerton, Deputy Editor of *Queen's Park Briefing*. The panelists discussed their experiences as journalists on the campaign trail and the challenges of covering election campaigns, such as how they balance information like public opinion polls, party platforms, and debates.

THANKING OUR PARTNERS



We met with Chief Executive Officer Colin Simpson, and Vice President of the Executive Greg Kruk, of the Insurance Brokers Association of Ontario, one of our generous partners. They discussed the role of brokers in Ontario's competitive insurance industry, ensuring that clients get the right insurance for their individual needs. IBAO advocates on issues facing the industry, such as creating a supportive regulatory environment and finding new ways to modernize the industry and implement new technology. IBAO acts as the non-partisan voice of brokers because working across political lines is key to advancing brokers' perspectives and producing the best solutions. Thank you to Messrs. Simpson and Kruk for an open conversation, and to IBAO, for your generous support of OLIP.

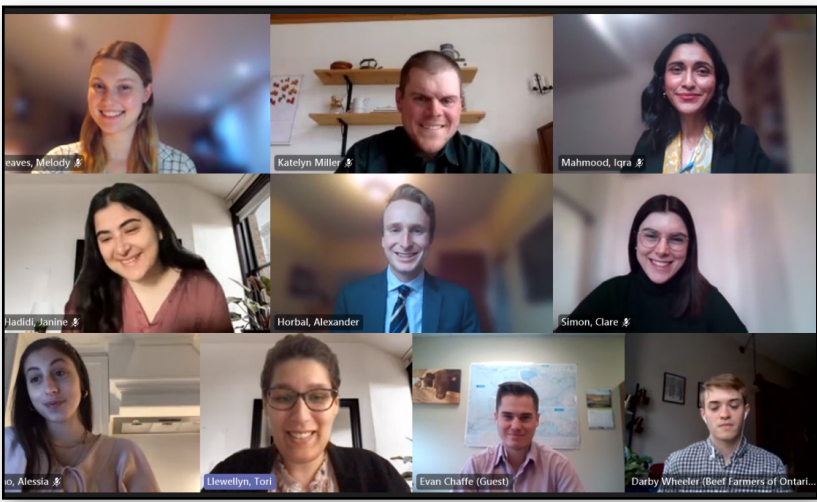


We had the pleasure of meeting with the Ontario Real Estate Association (OREA), a partner of our Programme. OREA is focused on helping Ontario realtors succeed in building stronger communities today, while educating the next generation of prospective real estate professionals. During our luncheon meeting, we heard from Tim Hudak, the CEO of OREA and former leader of the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario, and the Hon. Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. They provided their insights on Ontario's Housing Supply Action Plan and the state of affordable housing in the province. We are grateful to the OREA for inviting us to this fascinating conversation, and for their support of OLIP!

THANKING OUR PARTNERS



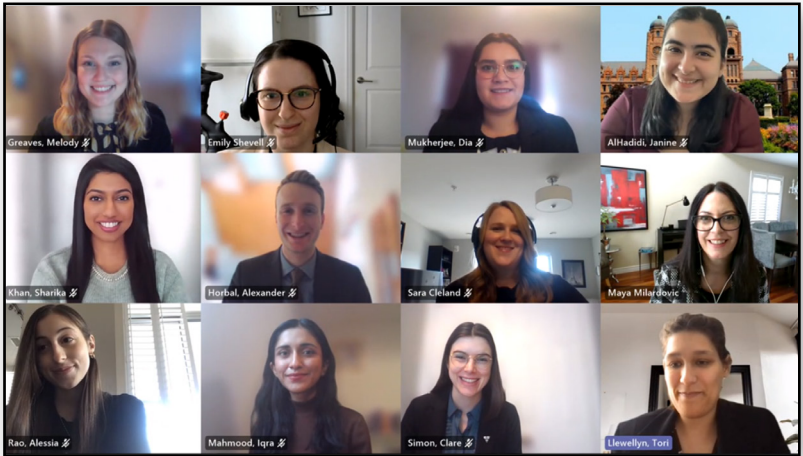
Earlier this year, we met with John Peevers, Director of Community, Media Relations and Economic Development of Bruce Power, one of OLIP’s loyal partners. Bruce Power reliably produces nearly 30% of the province’s electricity, emission-free. Much of its current work is focused on the development of small modular reactors, a technology that has the potential to increase the portability of nuclear energy. Given the role that nuclear power is expected to play in reaching net-zero emissions, the development of such technologies has the potential for impacts beyond the province, and extends to Canada as a whole. Thank you, Bruce Power, for your time and for supporting OLIP!



We were excited to meet with Beef Farmers of Ontario (BFO), OLIP’s Symposium Partner and the voice of 19,000 cattle farmers across Ontario. BFO advocates on numerous issues including market development, sustainability, animal health, and domestic and international recognition of Ontario’s high quality beef products. Our guests also discussed several pressing issues facing beef farmers, such as improving risk management practices and mental health services, and the need to attract more workers to the sector. Lastly, we were interested to learn that a shift in consumer preference towards locally produced agricultural products has created new, advantageous opportunities for Ontario’s farmers. Thank you BFO for your support of OLIP!

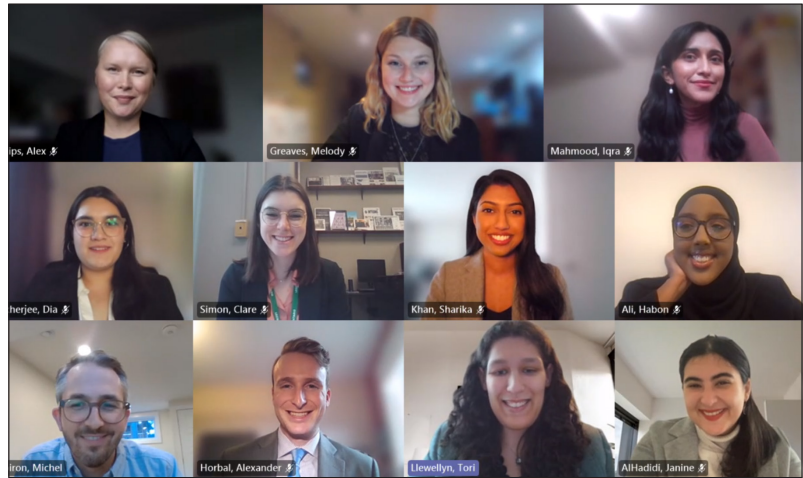
CO-OPERATORS GROUP LIMITED

We had the pleasure of meeting with Sara Cleland, Maya Milardovik, and Emily Shevell from the Co-operators Group Limited, a leading Canadian financial services co-operative offering multi-line insurance and investment products and services. Given that nearly one quarter of Ontario’s population is a member of a co-operative, the Co-operators advocate on behalf of a diverse base of members to reduce red tape, advance opportunities for innovation, and improve systems to achieve the best client outcomes. We have gained a deeper understanding of the significance of co-operatives in Ontario. Thank you to the Co-operators for a fantastic meeting and for supporting OLIP!



CIBC

We were delighted to meet with Alex Philips and Michel Liboiron from CIBC, both of whom have extensive experience in finance and government relations. During our meeting, we learned how CIBC supports businesses and individuals across various sectors and the complex relationship between the financial sector and the different levels of government, which requires a strong government relations strategy. Ms. Philips and Mr. Liboiron explained the difficult task of making challenging financial concepts understandable and digestible by the public and the government. We thank Ms. Philips and Mr. Liboiron for answering our questions. We appreciate CIBC’s support of the Programme and the opportunity to learn from the organization!



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JANINE

OLIP has pushed me to become a better listener, writer, and legislative nerd. My favorite memory of being at Queen's Park is being able to experience the heart of Ontario's political media, while working in two MPP offices that inspired me every day. I am grateful to OLIP for introducing me to nine lifelong friends and allowing me to embark on several adventures across Canada!



MELODY

During my time with OLIP, I have particularly appreciated working in-person from Queen's Park, which has allowed me to experience the hustle and bustle of daily life at the Legislature, run into interesting people in the halls, and get the inside scoop on Ontario politics. I am also grateful to have learned more about Ontario's Legislature through a comparative lens on our fantastic Study Tours!

CLARE

OLIP has shown me issues and viewpoints I had never been exposed to before. I enjoyed working with two knowledgeable MPPs from two very different ridings, and I feel grateful to have learned about a wide range of policy areas, from lifejacket laws to high-rise condo regulations. I am leaving the Programme more well-rounded and with a greater understanding of and appreciation for the political process.



IQRA

Throughout my time in the internship, I have gained an invaluable understanding of Ontario's political system, specifically how political changes can cause a ripple effect in sectors like the province's healthcare system. Without OLIP, I would not have gained this unique insight. I look forward to finding new ways to apply this knowledge in the healthcare sector in the future.

SHARIKA

OLIP was a truly valuable experience. My work with MPPs across the aisle gave me the opportunity to work on a range of policy issues and to experience the daily thrills of life at Queen's Park. I have gained new perspectives on policy issues provincially and beyond. I am grateful to have met distinguished leaders and change-makers, formed lifelong friendships, and had many unique learning opportunities.



ALEX

We arrived in September, not yet placed with a Member. A Speech from the Throne and a Churchill dinner later. We finished one placement: the interns, made greater. Springtime came fast, our group now one less, as into the world of careers we soon press. I will always cherish my time at Queen's Park and enjoy seeing my nine friends make their mark.

ALESSIA

When reflecting on my year with OLIP, I am overwhelmed with gratitude. I have gained so much from the Programme, each of my placements, and the friends and mentors I made along the way. I am also thankful for being part of an inspiring group of bright, driven interns. This year flew by, and I am excited to see the next steps we will take!



HABON

The past seven months have been an absolute whirlwind. We were welcomed by the OLIP administration, alumni, legislative staff, and MPPs with open arms and confidence. The internship has allowed me to learn about the political process while strengthening my communication, research, and interpersonal skills. Our cohort has supported and taught each other, and has contributed our finest work to the province of Ontario.

TORI

OLIP has been the experience of a lifetime. The biggest takeaway I have to offer is the importance of the relationships that you make along the way. I have met some amazing people who enhanced my experience, and I learned that sometimes the people with whom you become the closest are the ones you would least expect. I have learned just how important it is to keep an open mind.



DIA

Taking part in OLIP has been an extraordinary experience! Having the opportunity to witness when new legislation is introduced and to work with two MPPs has offered me a unique perspective on governance in Ontario. I am grateful to have met nine ambitious individuals who make me hopeful for the future of Ontario and I am proud to share lifelong friendships with them going forward.



Did you know?

Since our first day with OLIP on September 9, 2021, individual interns or the Programme have been mentioned in speeches and debates delivered in the Chamber on many occasions. Interns have been mentioned by name 17 times and the Programme in general has been mentioned an additional nine times! We are happy to have made an impression on the House and that our days with OLIP will be forever remembered in Hansard!

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