

QUEEN'S PARK INSIDER

2024-2025

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE ONTARIO LEGISLATURE INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME



OLIP IS A PROGRAMME OF THE CANADIAN POLITICAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION

OPENING REMARKS

Dear readers,

It has been a pleasure to serve as the Academic Director of OLIP's 49th cohort. The interns have immersed themselves in the life of this Legislature and worked hard to support the important work of their Members.

I would like to thank the Canadian Political Science Association and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario for their continued support and generosity toward the programme. A very special thank you to the former Speaker, Ted Arnott, and the Clerk, Trevor Day, who have both been great champions of the programme for many years. As the Speaker has announced his retirement, we thank him for his tireless support and—there are many—including me, who will miss him. We also say a great thanks to both Michael Vidoni and Julia Douglas who mark the end of their terms with the programme. Their hard work, dedication and professionalism is acknowledged and appreciated, and they too will be missed. In their place we welcome Nick Ruderman and Tanzima Khan.

Thanks as always to our Programme Manager Elisa Natarelli and volunteer archivist, Richard Sage. We are grateful for their work and dedication to ensuring this year's programme was the profound success that it has been.

I would also like to offer my thanks to the numerous OLIP alumni who continue to champion the virtues of our programme in their good works as well as support this cohort of interns. A great thanks to all our sponsors without whom we could not do what we do. They are all listed on the back page of this publication as acknowledgement for their generosity.

As we look towards celebrating OLIP's first fifty years, we will remember all those that have come before us and strive to continue with their good work.

With gratitude and best wishes for the 49th OLIP Cohort,

Dr. Peter Constantinou



The Ontario Legislature Internship Programme (OLIP) was established in 1975 and is administered by the Canadian Political Science Association and supported by a substantial grant from the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. The non-partisan 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.

We acknowledge the land on which we operate is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis. We also acknowledge that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 with the Mississaugas of the Credit.

LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

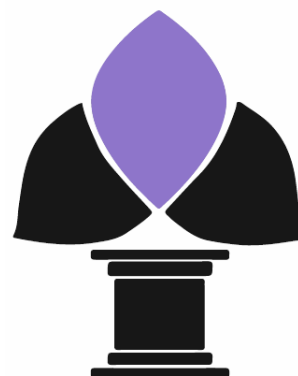
Dear readers,

It is our pleasure to present to you the official magazine of the 49th OLIP cohort. It has been a truly special experience to be able to revisit a deeply rewarding and fulfilling year. We hope this exercise in reflection can provide value to you as well, as we highlight the contributions and generosity of all those involved in fostering such a formative environment for us to learn, develop, and evolve.

To our fellow interns, not only have you been impressive and hard-working colleagues, but also supportive teammates and genuine friends. Let this magazine serve as a token of appreciation for all our time spent together. We hope this trip down memory lane brings you as much joy as it has for us.

Happy reading to all,

Massimo Rigatto & Ayesha Ali



INTRODUCING THE INTERNS



Ayesha Ali
Brampton, Ontario

Born in Toronto but currently residing in Brampton, Ayesha Ali is a recent graduate of the Master of Global Affairs program at the Munk School of Global Affairs & Public Policy and holds a Bachelor of Commerce degree from Rotman Commerce at the University of Toronto, in addition to minors in Economics and Women and Gender Studies.

She completed her Assembly placement with the Legislative Library, where she worked on a project recommending future adaptation strategies for the Current Data Files system. She is one of the Co-Chairs of the Magazine Committee.



Caitlin Arizala
Toronto, Ontario

Caitlin is a proud resident of Northwest Toronto. She graduated from the University of Toronto with a Bachelor of Science in Population Health, along with double minors in City Studies and Psychology.

She completed an Assembly Placement with the Legislative Protective Service, conducting a mixed-methods study on strategies to enhance recruiting practices for women candidates.

Caitlin serves as Chair of OLIP's Social Media Committee and Vice-Chair of Receptions Committee.



Annie Dowd
Brockville, Ontario

Annie grew up in Brockville before attending Queen's University, where she earned a Master of Arts in History and a Certificate in Law.

Annie had the privilege of completing her Assembly placement with the *Canadian Parliamentary Review* (CPR), where she had the opportunity to research and write short-form articles, as well as conduct interviews for upcoming issues.

At OLIP, Annie also serves as Chair of the Alumni Relations Committee and Vice-Chair of the Recruitment Committee.

INTRODUCING THE INTERNS



Sayyidah Jaffer

Vancouver, British Columbia

Sayyidah Jaffer was born in Vancouver, BC, and graduated from Simon Fraser University with a Double-Major in Political Science and French. She thoroughly enjoyed her Assembly Placement with the Committees section of the Procedural Services Branch, learning a lot through the opportunity to observe legislative committees in session and prepare procedural documents. She is grateful to the Committee Clerks for explaining how they operate and answering her many questions! For OLIP, she serves as Chair of the Meetings Committee and Vice-Chair of the Social Media Committee.



Nika Lennox

Toronto, Ontario

Nika Lennox was born and raised in Toronto. She completed her Master's of International Social and Public Policy at the London School of Economics. After graduation, Nika worked for Citizens Advice, a British federated nonprofit, before moving back to her hometown of Toronto.

During her Assembly Placement, Nika worked with the Precinct Properties Branch where she completed a report on the sculptures on the grounds of Queen's Park. Nika is the Chair of the Receptions Committee and the Vice-Chair of the Meetings Committee.



James Liao

East Gwillimbury, Ontario

James Liao is from East Gwillimbury, Ontario. A recent graduate from Duke University in Durham, North Carolina, James completed a double major in Public Policy and Philosophy.

He thoroughly enjoyed his placement with the Parliamentary Protocol and Public Relations (PPPR) office, which provided him with various opportunities to plan events, support ceremonies, and outreach to local communities.

James is the Co-Chair of the Partnerships Committee, managing relationships with the OLIP partners.



Massimo Rigatto
Winnipeg, Manitoba

Growing up in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Massimo has always had a passion for politics and political studies.

During his tenure at OLIP, Massimo completed a placement at the Legislative Research Branch, where he helped to publish two Provincial Affairs Briefings and participated in research work to aid Members of Provincial Parliament.

Massimo also served as the Co-Chair of the Magazine Committee, working diligently to publish this magazine as a representation of the 49th OLIP cohort.



Madeline Ritter
Winnipeg, Manitoba

Madeline Ritter grew up in Winnipeg, Manitoba, before moving to Kingston for her Bachelor of Arts with Honours in Political Studies at Queen's University. While studying for her degree, Madeline developed her passion for critical thought and curiosity about democratic institutions.

She explored these interests during her Assembly placement with Parliamentary Counsel, which provides legal advice to ensure the Assembly functions efficiently. Madeline also serves as Chair of OLIP's Study Tours Committee and Vice-Chair of the Alumni Relations Committee.



Megan Ryan-Lloyd
Victoria, British Columbia

Megan Ryan-Lloyd was born in Victoria, BC, and graduated from the University of Victoria with an Honours degree in Political Science.

She was thrilled to do her Assembly Placement with the Table Research Office, where she supported the Office in providing procedural research and analysis services to the Speaker, the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, MPPs, and the Office of the Assembly staff.

She has also enjoyed serving as the Chair of the Recruitment Committee and Vice-Chair of Study Tours.

INTRODUCING THE INTERNS

Alex Salton

St. Catharines, Ontario



Alex grew up in St. Catharines, Ontario before studying International Development Studies at Trent University. He later graduated from McGill University with a Master of Arts in Political Science. Alex has worked at historic sites across Niagara and was most recently employed at the Immigration and Refugee Board. On weeknights, he sails in the Toronto Harbour.

Alex had the pleasure of being placed with Information Services, who make Assembly information accessible to Members and the public.

He is also Co-Chair of the Partnerships Committee.

MPP PLACEMENTS

Ayesha and MPP Deepak Anand



For my first placement, I was placed with MPP Deepak Anand who represents Mississauga—Malton and was Parliamentary Assistant to the Associate Minister of Small Business at the time. Under his wing, I assisted in preparation of his Private Member's bill on children's eye health, and produced research-based materials such as briefs, speeches, and essays. Visiting Mississauga—Malton was a highlight as it allowed me to appreciate the uniqueness of the riding. Thank you, MPP Anand!

Ayesha and MPP Doly Begum



For my second placement, I worked with MPP Doly Begum, who represents Scarborough Southwest, is Official Opposition Critic for Public Transit, Equity and Anti-Racism, and is the Deputy Leader for the Official Opposition. In her office, I helped organize events, aided in drafting a Private Member's Bill, and produced various materials. It was a pleasure to visit the riding where I assisted in serving the constituency and shadowed her during meetings. Thank you, MPP Begum!

Caitlin and MPP Adil Shamji



For my opposition placement, I had the privilege of interning for MPP Adil Shamji, the Member for Don Valley East and Liberal Critic for Health, Housing, and Northern Affairs during the 43rd Parliament. I gained firsthand experience in the diverse responsibilities of political staff, including constituency casework, legislative writing, social media management, and liaising with journalists. I also enjoyed working on the health profile, learning from MPP Shamji's expertise as a medical doctor. Thank you, MPP Shamji!

Caitlin and MPP Steve Pinsonneault



For my government placement, I had the privilege of working with MPP Steve Pinsonneault, Member for Lambton—Kent—Middlesex. In the current Parliament, he serves as Deputy Government Whip and Parliamentary Assistant to the Ministers of Emergency Preparedness and Response and Rural Affairs. I had the opportunity to assist MPP Pinsonneault and his staff in legislative work such as research efforts and media engagement. Thank you, MPP Pinsonneault!

Annie and MPP Laura Smith



For my government placement, I was grateful for the opportunity to work with MPP Laura Smith of Thornhill, the Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services and a member of the Standing Committee on Social Policy and on Government Agencies. I enjoyed supporting the legislative work of the office and learning about the unique issues of GTA ridings in the constituency office. Thank you, MPP Smith!

Annie and MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam



For my opposition placement, I had the honour of working with MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam, the representative for Toronto Centre and Official Opposition Critic for the Attorney General with responsibility for 2SLGBTQIA+ issues. Visiting their constituency office provided invaluable insight into the issues of highly urban and diverse ridings, as well as the importance of community connection as a representative at Queen's Park. Thank you, MPP Wong-Tam!

MPP PLACEMENTS

Sayyidah and MPP Bhutla Karpoche



I was fortunate to be placed with the MPP for Parkdale—High Park, Bhutla Karpoche for my first Member's placement. MPP Karpoche served as a Member of the Official Opposition, and Critic for Affordability and GTA Issues. She was also Deputy Speaker for the 43rd Parliament of the Ontario Legislature. I worked on legislative tasks including research, speech writing, communications, and preparations for MPP Karpoche's Private Member's bill. Thank you, MPP Karpoche!

Sayyidah and MPP Steve Clark



For my government placement, I was pleased to be placed with MPP Steve Clark, the Member for Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes. MPP Clark also serves as the Government House Leader and Parliamentary Assistant to the Premier. Through this placement, I was grateful to learn about the procedural and legislative responsibilities of a Government House Leader, in addition to the work they do in serving their constituents and the province. Thank you, MPP Clark!

Nika and MPP Matthew Rae



This fall, I had the privilege of being placed with MPP Matthew Rae, Member for Perth—Wellington and then Parliamentary Assistant for the Ministry of Municipal Affairs of Housing. Highlights from my time in MPP Rae's office include contributing to the passing of Bill 186, the *Growing Agritourism Act, 2024*, and attending the Rural Ontario Municipalities Association's annual conference. Thank you MPP Rae for an excellent placement!

Nika and MPP Chris Glover



For my spring placement, I had the pleasure of being placed in the office of MPP Chris Glover, the NDP Member for Spadina—Fort York and the Official Opposition Critic for Sport, with additional responsibilities for Technology, Innovation and Democratic Reform. Thank you to the whole team for welcoming me into the office. Learning about a different part of Toronto was an absolute pleasure! Thank you, MPP Glover!

James and MPP Jamie West



MPP Jamie West (Sudbury) is a member of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs and the Official Opposition Critic for Labour, Training and Skills Development and Mining. In his legislative office, I was involved in constituency work, legislative research and writing, communications, and media relations. My constituency visit to Sudbury provided a unique opportunity to learn about challenges facing northern Ontario including healthcare and transportation. Thank you, MPP West!

James and MPP Rudy Cuzzetto



MPP Rudy Cuzzetto (Mississauga—Lakeshore) is the Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Energy and Mines. During my constituency visit, I toured various organizations in the riding and learned about local initiatives to strengthen community. In his Queen's Park office, I contributed to speech writing, engaged with stakeholders, and attended meetings. I also learned more about energy policy and mining thanks to MPP Cuzzetto's ministerial role. Thank you, MPP Cuzzetto!

Massimo and MPP Hardeep Grewal



For my first placement, I had the fortune to work for MPP Hardeep Singh Grewal, PC Member for the riding of Brampton East and Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Gaming. I aided the creation of legislative speeches, as one of my passions is public speaking, and also went to the constituency office in Brampton, helping Chief of Staff, John Chatha, with community engagement. Thank you, MPP Grewal!

Massimo and MPP France G  linas



For my second placement, I had the pleasure of working for MPP France G  linas, NDP Member for the riding of the Nickel Belt and Official Opposition Health Critic. I am passionate about health policy and was incredibly lucky to work on multiple different files across the Health Critic portfolio, aiding with the formation of Private Member's bills and media engagement related to healthcare initiatives. Merci, MPP G  linas!

MPP PLACEMENTS

Madeline and MPP Laurie Scott



For my government placement, I worked in the office of MPP Laurie Scott, of Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock (HKLB). MPP Scott also held the role of Chair of the Standing Committee of Infrastructure and Heritage Policy. The highlights of my placement included visiting the HKLB riding, and working closely with MPP Scott on a motion for protecting the rights of victims of deep fake pornography in Ontario. Thank you, MPP Scott!

Madeline and MPP Sol Mamakwa



With the Opposition, I supported the office of MPP Sol Mamakwa (NDP Deputy Leader), of Kiiwetinoong. His Critic portfolios include Indigenous and Treaty Relations, and Northern Economic Development and Growth. The most impactful aspect of my placement was learning about the challenges in Ontario's northern and First Nations communities, through research on the social determinants of health, the Ring of Fire, and Indigenous language rights. Thank you, MPP Mamakwa!

Megan and MPP Steve Clark



For my government placement, I had the honour of being placed with MPP Steve Clark. MPP Clark is the Member for Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes and the Government House Leader. I enjoyed being placed in the Government House Leader's office, particularly as it is always busy with activity! Thank you to MPP Clark for being so welcoming and for being a long-time supporter of OLIP.

Megan and MPP Chandra Pasma



For my opposition placement, I had the pleasure of working in MPP Chandra Pasma's office. Elected to represent Ottawa West—Nepean, MPP Pasma is the NDP Education Critic and Deputy Opposition House Leader. I learned about education's countless policy topics in my placement, including mental health, labour, language rights, and more. I appreciated working with MPP Pasma and am grateful for the opportunity to explore different tasks and skills. Thank you, MPP Pasma!

Alex and MPP Mike Schreiner



I had a wonderful experience working in MPP Mike Schreiner's office for my opposition placement. Since MPP Schreiner is the representative for Guelph and leader of the Green Party of Ontario, I had the opportunity to write briefs and participate in stakeholder meetings regarding a wide range of issues, and also performed background research for a Private Member's bill and helped with case work in the constituency office. Thank you, MPP Schreiner!

Alex and MPP Andrew Dowie



For my government placement, I had the honour of working with MPP Andrew Dowie, member for Windsor—Tecumseh and Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Environment, Conservation, and Parks. I got to work many tasks in MPP Dowie's office relating to his legislative responsibilities and Ministry portfolio. Thank you, MPP Dowie!

SPOTLIGHT: *LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR*



In March, we had the privilege of meeting with the Honourable Edith Dumont, Ontario's 30th Lieutenant Governor and the King's Representative in the province. In Canada's parliamentary democracy, the head of state—the Crown—holds supreme authority on behalf of the people and delegates it to the government of the day. In her role, the Lieutenant Governor aims to increase public understanding of the constitutional monarchy system and her role within it.

We were welcomed into the Lieutenant Governor's suite at the Legislative Assembly for a thoughtful discussion on Her Honour's role in supporting communities in Ontario. We also discussed the Lieutenant Governor's efforts to represent francophones, her extensive background in education, and her diplomatic work on behalf of Ontario and Canada. We especially appreciated learning about her efforts to listen and engage with Indigenous communities and young people across the province.

Her Honour shared insightful reflections, encouraging us to confidently take up space by speaking in our mother tongue and engaging in experiential learning opportunities alongside traditional lecture-based education.

We would like to thank Her Honour for the warm welcome and inspiring conversation!

LEADERSHIP OF THE LEGISLATURE

Speaker Hon. Ted Arnott, Clerk Trevor Day, Sergeant-at-Arms Tim McGough

It's easy to find yourself caught up in the hustle and bustle of Queen's Park, especially as an intern. With passionate debate ringing through the House, political staffers rushing about, and leaders establishing the future of the province, the Ontario Provincial Parliament feels larger than life. Yet, when we met three key leaders of the institution, they were personable, calm, and kind. Clerk Trevor Day insisted that we have a coffee, and to make ourselves comfortable before even considering starting the meeting. Sergeant-at-Arms Tim McGough was candid and insightful, offering his guidance as we learned to navigate our roles in the Legislature.



It was an absolute pleasure for all of us to meet the three figures responsible for the upkeep of Ontario's preeminent democratic institution. After getting to know them, it's easy to see why everything runs so smoothly during all the political clash and professional vigour of Queen's Park. The Ontario Legislature's procedure, administration, and security are in good hands.



The Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, the Honourable Ted Arnott, was genuinely interested in hearing our thoughts and learning about our backgrounds and our lives. These efforts may seem small to the outside observer, but to a group of 20-something year olds, many of whom were not only making their debut in politics but also in the professional world more generally, their gestures were very meaningful.



Donna Skelly was elected as the new Speaker on April 14, 2025. We have not had the opportunity to meet Speaker Skelly yet, but would like to congratulate her on her recent election to the role.

Thank you, Mr. Day, Mr. McGough, and Mr. Arnott, not only for meeting with us, but also for everything you do for Ontario. Finally, to Mr. Arnott, whose time in the Ontario Legislature drew to a close during our cohort year, thank you for your years of service to the province; we are grateful to have been able to meet you before you go.

RESPONSIBILITY AND SUPPORT

Independent Officers of the LAO



The OLIP cohort had the pleasure of meeting with the seven Independent Officers of the Legislative Assembly. These include the Integrity Commissioner, the Information and Privacy Commissioner, the Auditor General, the Financial Accountability Officer, the Ombudsman, the Chief Electoral Officer, and the Ontario Poet Laureate. We also had the opportunity to meet with the French Language Services Commissioner, as part of our visit to the Ombudsman's office.



These positions are created through legislation at the Legislative Assembly. Their purpose is providing independent oversight mechanisms for the government of the day, including for its Members, processes, programs, and policies. In speaking with each of the officers about their roles, it was no surprise that they were incredibly insightful regarding the health of Ontario's democracy and the



importance of non-partisan accountability within the province's political arena.

We also acknowledge the service of Integrity Commissioner J. David Wake, who served in this position since his appointment in 2016. Commissioner Wake was the first meeting we had with a statutory officer, and he provided a great introduction to the cohort regarding the role of the statutory officers in Ontario. OLIP thanks Commissioner Wake for his dedication to the health of Ontario's democracy, congratulates him on his retirement, and wishes him all the best in his future endeavors.



This year, the programme's relationship with the statutory officers of Ontario was particularly enhanced, because several of their offices were gracious enough to host OLIP interns during the writ period of the 2025 general election. Two interns were placed with Elections Ontario, two were placed with the Auditor General's office, and three were placed with the Ombudsman's office, with one specifically working with the French Language Services Commissioner.



A sincere thank you to all of the statutory officers for your service to the province, and for your contributions to OLIP!

LEADERS OF ONTARIO

Previous Premiers of the Province

The OLIP interns had the distinct pleasure of meeting with former Premier David Peterson. Mr. Peterson and our Quebec counterparts, the interns from the Fondation Jean-Charles Bonenfant, engaged in a fruitful discussion about Mr. Peterson's life in politics. He shared great perspectives on his time in politics, including forming the accord with the New Democratic Party, which established a Liberal minority government in 1985.

We had an engaging discussion about his support for creating and promoting the Meech Lake Accord. With the Quebec interns present, our conversation explored the relationship between Quebec and Ontario and its evolving dynamics over different periods. Thank you so much, Mr. Peterson, for being so generous with your time in meeting with the interns!



The interns were thrilled to meet with former Premier Dalton McGuinty. Mr. McGuinty provided valuable insights into the values that should guide individuals in political life, essential ways to orient yourself as a strong citizen, and what it means to be a good politician across party lines. It was fascinating to learn more about Mr. McGuinty's career in provincial politics, as well as his life after politics.

Currently, he serves as a senior fellow for the fall semester at Harvard University's Weatherhead Center for International Affairs and has focused his energy on publishing. We enjoyed hearing Mr. McGuinty's perspective on Ontario politics, including the differing dynamics between minority and majority governments. Thank you to Mr. McGuinty for taking the time to meet with us!



The cohort was excited to have the opportunity to meet with former Premier Kathleen Wynne. We had a robust discussion about pressing issues of the day and her experiences across policy areas. We discussed various angles of Ms. Wynne's career, from her start as a trustee for the Toronto District School Board to the various cabinet positions she held. It was fascinating to hear about her experience serving as an MPP after the 2018 election, providing unique insights into leadership transitions within political parties. We also were excited to hear about some of the topics Ms. Wynne covers in her public policy course at the University of Toronto. It was incredible to have the chance to meet with her, and we thank you, Ms. Wynne, for your time!



LEADERS OF THE PARTIES

Premier Doug Ford, Mike Schreiner, Marit Stiles and Bonnie Crombie

During our ten months at Queen's Park, we will have had the opportunity to meet with all the leaders of Ontario's main political parties. We first had the pleasure of meeting Premier Doug Ford, leader of the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario, after leading his party to a third majority government in February of this year.



Next, we were fortunate to meet MPP Mike Schreiner, leader of the Ontario Green Party, whose colleague Aislinn Clancy became the second Green MPP to secure a seat in an Ontario general election.

In April, Bonnie Crombie graciously shared with us insights from her career and her time as leader of the Ontario Liberal Party.

At the time of publication, we enthusiastically anticipate our meeting with the returning Leader of His Majesty's Loyal Opposition and Ontario NDP Leader, MPP Marit Stiles of Davenport.

Each of the leaders had lessons to teach us about the responsibilities of leading their parties through the various issues facing Ontario. Party leaders must represent their own constituencies and speak for Ontarians across the province.



It was particularly fascinating listening to the leaders describe their experiences in the 2025 winter election; traveling to ridings across the province to help their candidates succeed by knocking on doors, making speeches, and talking to the press. We also had the fortune to discuss the leaders' debate, an integral event that required a great deal of preparation and thought.

We are incredibly grateful to the leaders for taking time out of their busy schedules to meet with us. We learned many lessons about leadership, parliamentary democracy, and Ontario's party system. Premier Ford, MPP Stiles, Ms. Crombie, and MPP Schreiner have our sincerest thanks for their support for the programme.



CABINET AND MEMBERS

Ministers and MPPs

This past year, the OLIP interns had the pleasure of meeting with several current and former Ontario Ministers of the Crown. Though the content of these meetings varied, what remained consistent was each Minister's commitment to serving their constituents for the betterment of Ontario.

In the fall, the interns were lucky enough to meet with two former Ministers: Nathalie Des Rosiers, Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry during the Wynne government, and Gerard Kennedy, Minister of Education during the McGuinty government. These two meetings illustrated how the Legislature has evolved over the past two decades. Both Mme. Des Rosiers and Mr. Kennedy spoke passionately about the impact they were able to make while in office, and the challenge of taking on such massive ministerial files.



Nathalie Des Rosiers

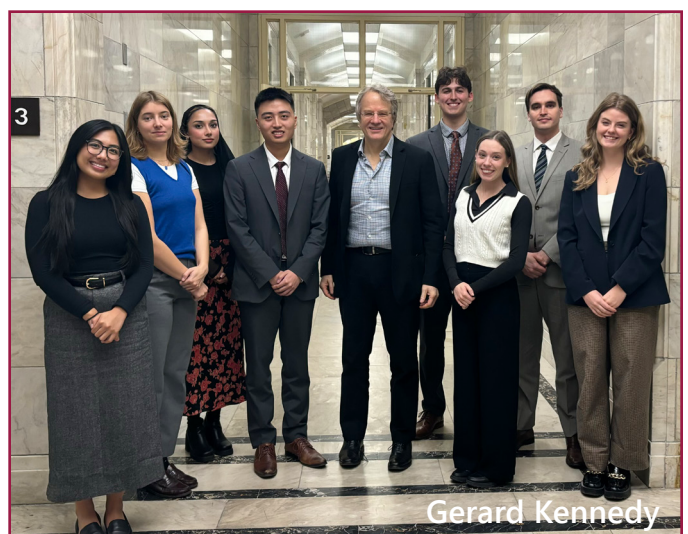
Finally, we had the pleasure of speaking with Mayor of Vaughan Steven Del Duca, former Minister of Transportation in the 41st Parliament and former leader of the Ontario Liberal Party. Our conversation with Mayor Del Duca ranged across all his time in public life, touching upon the challenges of campaigning in a provincial election during a global pandemic and his transition into municipal government.

We would like to thank all the current and former MPPs who took the time to meet with the OLIP interns. Your insights into the challenges of governing have allowed us to expand our understanding of the role of Ministers and the functioning of the Legislative Assembly.



Steven Del Duca

In January, we had the chance to meet with Minister Doug Downey, Attorney General and Member for Barrie—Springwater—Oro—Medonte in the 42nd and 43rd Parliaments. Our conversation with Minister Downey opened our eyes to the complexities of the Attorney General's portfolio. Minister Downey talked us through some of the most pressing challenges facing Ontario's justice system, and how his background as a lawyer prepared him for the role.



Gerard Kennedy

OUTSIDE QUEEN'S PARK

Media and External Stakeholders



Members of the media serve an important role in the democratic process, and we were fortunate enough to meet many of them.

Colin D'Mello, President of the Queen's Park Press Gallery, Queen's Park Bureau Chief at Global News Toronto and host of *Focus Ontario*, explained how he undertakes the responsibility of being the public's eyes and ears at Queen's Park. We learned the significance of the press gallery in "touching the fabric of society" and being a "fundamental pillar of democracy."



TVO's Steve Paikin visited for a fascinating conversation about his reflections on the changing landscape of media and the relationship between media and politicians. Most notably, we talked about the value of reporting in a non-partisan way in that it allows the audience to form their own opinions.

We also had the privilege to meet with award-winning journalist Robert Fisher. Mr. Fisher spent decades covering Queen's Park for the CBC and as Global Television's first Bureau Chief at the Ontario Legislature, making him a well-known figure among former politicians. Mr. Fisher shared many interesting anecdotes from his long career at Ontario Legislature.

Desmond Cole, a Toronto-based journalist, radio host, and activist who is known for his work exploring systemic issues, shared powerful insights from his book, *The Skin We're In*. During our conversation, Cole emphasized the vital role of journalism in capturing and documenting the lived experiences of marginalized communities.



We also met with Jeff Gray, the *Globe and Mail's* Queen's Park reporter. He has worked at the *Globe and Mail* for 26 years, covering transportation, financial crime, Toronto municipal politics, and more. We learned about the challenges facing the journalism industry, including the ways journalists are adapting to the decline of the traditional newspaper business model.



A commonality shared by these diverse media professionals is the desire to keep the people of Ontario informed about politics. We thank them for being the watchdogs of our democracy.



THE OLIP ODYSSEY

OTTAWA & QUEBEC CITY

From November 18–22, we travelled to the Parliament of Canada in Ottawa and the National Assembly of Quebec in Quebec City. We met with politicians from across the political spectrum, as well as journalists, civil servants, and procedural experts. We also had the chance to meet our intern counterparts. In Ottawa, we met the 11 members of the Parliamentary Internship Programme, and in Quebec City, we met with the five interns from the Fondation Jean-Charles Bonenfant. We are so grateful for their hospitality.



At the Parliament of Canada, we met with current Members of Parliament, including Helena Jazcek (Liberal), Eric Duncan (Conservative), and Lindsay Mathysen (New Democrat). We also had the chance to meet the Clerk Janse and the Speaker Fergus, whose discussions on parliamentary procedure provided useful perspective when we watched Question Period. We also toured the House of Commons, the Senate, and the Supreme Court. Other highlights were our meetings with Robert Fife, where we discussed the journalism industry, and with Dr. Jonathan Malloy, an OLIP alumnus and Professor of Political Science at Carleton University. Finally, we also had the pleasure of hosting an alumni event.



In Quebec City, we met with Members of the National Assembly, including Sol Zanetti (Québec solidaire), Albert A. Morin (Parti libéral du Québec), and Minister Jean-Pierre Forgues (Coalition Avenir Québec). We also toured the National Assembly and learned more about their distinctive blend of French and British parliamentary tradition. We also had the unique privilege of watching Question Period



en français, and then meeting the President of the Assembly, Nathalie Roy (Coalition Avenir Québec). We were also formally introduced in their House. To wrap up our time in “La Belle Province,” we met with Cathy Senay of Radio-Canada and explored the old city.

Overall, the OLIP interns broadened our intellectual horizons on this study tour, through comparing provincial and federal governance and critically discussing features of the Quebec and Ontario systems.



BACKYARD BOREALIS

YELLOWKNIFE

One of our most distinctive OLIP opportunities was our annual study tour to Yellowknife, in the Northwest Territories (NWT). We made our journey up to Canada's north from February 10–14, for an excellent five-day trip full of meetings, critical thinking, and time in the cold but beautiful natural environment. We are so appreciative of the Legislative Assembly of the NWT for generously hosting our cohort, with special thanks going to Mr. Michael Ball for helping the study tours committee coordinate our itinerary.



Over the course of the study tour, we met with elected members and civil servants. Our discussions with Clerk Glen Rutland, Michael Ball, Speaker Shane Thompson, and Executive Director of Legislative Affairs Kelly McLaughlin encouraged us to think critically about the NWT's system of non-partisan, consensus government. We also met with Ministers MacDonald, Semmler, Kuptana, McKay, and Wawzonek, and Principal Secretary Joe Dragon. They gave us insight into the role of Executive Council and their ministerial portfolios. Our meetings with Stephen Dunbar, Chief Electoral Officer, and Krista Carnogursky, Ombudsman and Language Commissioner, provided useful perspective on issues



in the broader NWT. Finally, we were graciously introduced in the House, and watched proceedings, including the Committee of Accountability and Oversight, the Speaker's Procession, and Question Period. These viewings complemented our theoretical discussions as a pragmatic demonstration of consensus government in action.

The cohort also had the opportunity to explore beyond the walls of the Legislative Assembly. We ventured through the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Museum, met with the Native Women's Association, and visited City Hall to converse with Yellowknife's mayor, Rebecca Alty. We also had the chance to check out several of Yellowknife cultural landmarks, including Bullock's Bistro, the Dettah Ice Road, and the Bush Pilot's Memorial/Lookout. In a memorable conclusion to our study tour, we participated in the once-in-a-lifetime experience of dogsledding to a northern lights viewing cabin, where we took in the beautiful auroras.



Thank you once again to the Assembly of the Northwest Territories for hosting us. Our study tour to Yellowknife is a journey that we won't soon forget!

ELECTION TIME IN ONTARIO

In February, the provincial election brought an early end to the interns' first MPP placements. Given the non-partisan nature of OLIP, we were unable to remain in candidate offices as they campaigned during the election period. As a result, the interns enjoyed what we referred to as "bonus" or interim placements with independent offices of the Legislature, branches of the Legislative Assembly, and one of our Programme partners.



Our respective placements provided invaluable opportunities to view the role and the work of the government from unique vantage points we otherwise would not have the chance to witness. These experiences both deepened and broadened our understanding of the work of independent, impartial bodies and how they hold the government of the day accountable to ensure sound governance.



Sayyidah and Megan were placed with the Office of the Auditor General; Annie, Ayesha, and Massimo were placed with the Office of the Ontario Ombudsman; James and Nika were placed with Elections Ontario; Caitlin was placed with Legislative Research; Madeline was placed with Parliamentary Counsel; and Alex was placed with Canada Nickel Company.



Many of us enjoyed the experience of moving from broader, high-level work to more specialized projects focused on specific areas or sectors. Whether this looked like supporting Election Ontario's command centre which monitored and responded to voting disruptions across the province on election day or learning about the impact assessment process and the critical mineral industry's place in Ontario's economy, our placements served to both supplement our learning and impart new knowledge.



We would like to extend our sincerest thanks to all our generous hosts for graciously welcoming us into their offices and for facilitating this unique learning opportunity. We are grateful for the well-rounded experiences that these placements offered us, and we will certainly carry the knowledge acquired into our future careers and endeavours.

THANKING OUR PARTNERS



In February, the interns were welcomed to the AMAPCEO headquarters in downtown Toronto. We had the opportunity to chat with AMAPCEO President David Bulmer, Vice-President Cynthia Watt, Strategic Advisor to the Vice President and CEO Grant Burns, and District Director and Vice Chair of the Board Jennifer Harewood.

A valued partner of OLIP, AMAPCEO is a union for Ontario's professional employees, representing over 17,000 professionals working in the provincial public interest. AMAPCEO prides themselves on being member-driven and providing outstanding representation to its many members, among other services.

AMAPCEO represents a wide range of those working in the public interest, from policy analysts to educators, and is a non-partisan organization. We sincerely thank David, Cynthia, Grant, and Jennifer for their generous hospitality. We are grateful to AMAPCEO for their long-time support of OLIP and for helping to educate cohorts past and present about the role of unions.

Thank you, AMAPCEO!



In December, the interns had the pleasure of meeting with Clint Thomas and Pat Dalzell from longtime OLIP partner, Bruce Power. Clint is the Director of Government and Stakeholder Relations, after having worked as Director of Communications at the Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade and the Ministry of Finance. Pat, whose current role at Bruce Power is Vice President, Corporate Affairs and Market Development, also serves as Chairperson of the Association of Power Producers of Ontario and Board Member at the Canadian Nuclear Association.

Bruce Power is Canada's only private sector nuclear generator, producing 30 percent of Ontario's power annually with zero net emissions. Not only does Bruce Power provide us with their incredibly generous support as a Purple Trillium partner, but they also gave us the fantastic opportunity to visit the Bruce Power Generating Site in the Bruce Peninsula, which is the largest operating nuclear site in the world.

Thank you, Bruce Power, for your generous support of OLIP!



THANKING OUR PARTNERS



INSURANCE BROKERS ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO

In December, the OLIP interns had the privileged opportunity of meeting with Colin Simpson, CEO of the Insurance Brokers Association of Ontario (IBAO).

The IBAO is a non-profit association which represents the interests of over 15,000 Ontario brokers to industry stakeholders and all levels of government. It is also the largest provincial broker association in the country. As a Purple Trillium partner, they are a generous supporter and friend of OLIP.

The IBAO advocates on a variety of matters, including environmental issues and industry modernization. It also practices nonpartisanship to collaborate on initiatives within and between the provinces.

A massive thanks to Colin Simpson for taking the time to meet with us to discuss some of the major issues that are important to the IBAO, brokerages, and policyholders in Ontario. We are incredibly grateful to the IBAO for their ongoing support, and their partnership with OLIP is deeply appreciated!



ONTARIO POWER GENERATION

In November, the OLIP interns had the opportunity to meet with Rachel Thompson and David Donovan from Ontario Power Generation (OPG). Rachel is Senior Manager of Provincial Affairs, and David is the Vice President of Corporate Business Development & Strategy. David was an OLIP Intern in the 2008-2009 cohort, and it was exciting for us to connect with one of our alumni!

It was extremely valuable to better understand OPG's role in producing over 50% of Ontario's electricity. To make a fantastic partnership even more special, we later had the privilege of visiting their Darlington Nuclear Power Generation Site, where we were able to see first-hand the facilities they use to provide their valuable service to Ontario.

It was a unique opportunity that helped to deepen our understanding of the process of nuclear power generation as well as the production of integral medical isotopes.

Thank you again to the OPG for their ongoing support of the OLIP programme. Your longstanding partnership with OLIP is deeply appreciated!





The Ontario Real Estate Association (OREA) represents real estate brokers and agents across Ontario. OREA's mission is to help Ontario realtors succeed in building stronger communities.

We had a great discussion about how OREA provides resources, tools, and information to help Ontarians achieve the dream of owning a home. As young professionals, we appreciated hearing about their tireless and urgent efforts to work with the government to make homeownership more affordable in Ontario.

This work spans a range of initiatives, including providing standard forms, advocating on key issues with the government, and offering professional development and wellness programs, all aimed at supporting realtors and strengthening communities across the province.

Our heartfelt thanks to OLIP alumnus, Jason Lagerquist, Head of Government Relations, and Dia Mukherjee, Government Relations and Communications Specialist, for taking the time to meet with us. Thank you for treating us to a delicious lunch and providing the opportunity to attend the OREA conference.

Your support for professional development and OLIP as a Purple Trillium partner is deeply appreciated!



TIME CAPSULE

Remembering our year



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