



Ontario Society of Senior Citizens Organizations
La Société des Organisations des Citoyens Aînés de l'Ontario

OUTREACH



**Annual Report
Edition
2014-2015**



A Message from the Chair and Executive Director

Dear Friends,

With an intensive 2-day planning session in August, our board identified new strategic priorities based on future trends, our strengths and the value added we want to offer to the seniors' community. Our message to our members is clear: As a network of organizations, OSSCO enables Ontario's aging population to enhance their quality of life through education, consultation and influencing policy makers.

In this year's **Outreach Annual Report Edition** our committee's accomplishments and the work that still needs to continue is highlighted. It was refreshing to learn from our new auditors that our policies and controls need no improvements. This does not mean that we will wait until gaps in policies and procedures or a lack of controls are pointed out. The board created a schedule for all policy reviews. A Human Resources Volunteer dedicated their time to do a thorough review this year of our HR Handbook, as well as the nominating process.

OSSCO's pro-active work continues to be recognized at both the provincial and federal levels. The Minister Responsible for Seniors, Mario Sergio, opened our My Home, My Community: Safety Starts Here conference. We participated in numerous consultations including: Ministry of Health & Long Term Care on hospital parking lot costs; Patient, Volunteers, Caregivers Focus Group Palliative Engagement; Elderly Persons Act; elder abuse prevention; City Planner Boot Camp; Ontario Drug Benefits program; and, the Premier's Special Advisor and Advisory Group on Community Hubs. Our input into the *Empowering Homecare Patients Act* resulted in a new legislative bill which benefits all Ontarians, regardless of age.

We are proud of the contributions each and every board member has made. We would like to acknowledge and thank outgoing Board of Directors for their hard work, dedication and ongoing commitment: Khamy Ganeshathasan and Judith Wheeler. We could not have accomplished as much as we did without the dedication and commitment of our staff - Cheryl Lochnan, Rob Lorruso, Mariama Leblanc - volunteers and program contributors.

Marg Muir
Chair

Elizabeth Nykorowytch Macnab
Executive Director

**Ontario Society of Senior Citizens Organizations'
Volunteers and Program Contributors**

Board of Directors

Sam Ashroff
Shirley Erkila
Claude Hould
Ghazy Mujahid
Fenrick Peters
Evelyn Theriault
Anna Zachariah

Larry Duffield
Khamay Ganestahasan
Marg Muir
Amy Nelson
Frank Springer
Judith Wheeler

Program Volunteers

Mary Allen Aremiento
Aminata Cisse
Father Choly
Persibal DeVera
Kathleen Gordon
Julianne Li
Narissa Khan
Loy Manning
Mitra Mohammedzadeh
Lisa Mudie
Shirlon Primus
Supradha Rajalinga
Valda Russell
Jane Teasdale
Ted Wheeler

Olivia A. Boukydis
Judy Debourg
Pat Douglas
Monique Eyenga Boteko-Nkoi
John Lindsay
Ted Kingdon
Keith Macnab
Rodelita Maturingam
Ismay Murray
Galina Pislari
Sarah Qidwai
Rick Rochon
Hazel St. Pierre
Maja Vukosavic

Program Contributors

Charlotte Burchett
Marissa Di'Nardo
Georges Gauthier
Sharon Gold
Lezlie Lee Kam
Susan Knisch
Mimi Lee
Maria Lindgren
Julia Migounova
Manon Thompson

Catering Volunteers: Sts Cyril & Methodius

West Neighbourhood House: Health Action Theatre By Seniors

Jeyasingh David
Patricia Fleischmann
Isabelle Girard
Katie Giles
Robyn Knezic
Sylvie Lavoie
Rose Leung
Rob Mackenzie
Jane Teasdale
Ashely Van Dorn
Natalie Zabolotski

Training Consultants

Samanatha Adebyi
Ann Chan
Jordan Green
Lisa Hems
Gemmel Nielson
Gisele Simard

Phyllis DePoe
Gerald Gauthier
Roslyn Harris
Linda Hutson
Frank Remiz

Total number of volunteer and contributor hours: 2127



Linda Hutson, Natasha Bridgmohan
Board member Claude Hould at Appreciation
Gala in Vaughan



Sts Cyril & Methodius Volunteer, Elizabeth
Macnab, Father Choly at Elder Abuse: The
Universal Challenge in St. Catharines

BOARD OF DIRECTOR COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Committee: Treasurer Anna Zachariah

Members: Larry Duffield Amy Nelson

Mindful of future obligations, the Finance Committee addressed the issue of our office lease expiring August 2015 and undertook an extensive search for alternate premises. After discussions with the current landlord, the board agreed to remain in the current premises and renovate (at no cost to our organization) the physical space for better educational programming. It was more fiscally prudent to remain than to move.

Our new auditor reviewed our finances and commented that he had no recommendations to improve our current financial policies and controls. We continue to lose revenues through Break Open Tickets and adjusted our expenditures accordingly, leaving OSSCO with a surplus for two consecutive years. We have been successful during this fiscal year in obtaining 2 grants for educational programming. Funds continue to be earmarked for 2015-15 for cancer screening awareness workshops across the Province as well as computer training to seniors.

Human Resources & Compensation Committee: Chair Claude Hould

Member: Fenrick Peters, Evelyn Theriault

Performance Management Processes were in place for incumbents, and served as the basis for evaluation. There were some staff changes in 2015 including the Education Program Assistant which is a contract position as one employee resigned to pursue employment elsewhere. The next Education Program Assistant was hired part time to fulfill the focus of the Elder Abuse Awareness Conference, cancer screening education program and computer training.

Staffing of the Communications & Program Specialist position proved challenging during the fiscal year. One incumbent resigned and was replaced through a fairly rigorous interview and selection process. Unfortunately that individual did not dedicate the required time to the function and was subsequently released. A second recruiting, interview and selection process resulted in our current Communications & Program Specialist, Rob Lorusso.

Since June 2015, the committee was pleased to have Volunteer Mitra Mohammedzadeh, a HR professional, commit 5 hours a week to assist us with policy and compensation reviews. Human Resources and Compensation Policies were the subject of the annual review and found to meet our current needs and governance standards. Our compensation reviews were based on a survey of comparable not-for-profit/charitable organizations, and adjustments were within the range provided within similar organization.

An outcome of the reviews was updating the Human Resources Handbook to include AODA legislation requirements and knowledge training on health and safety for all new employees.

Education & Research Committee: Fenrick Peters
Members: Ghazy Mujahid, Sam Ashroff, Judith Wheeler

Educational programming is an extensive part of OCSCO's activities and energy. The diversity of the seniors attending our educational programs is noted. This year our educational programs were ambitious and delivered in multiple languages which is new for us. After this year's Strategic Planning session, our educational programming for 2016 will be provided to seniors as well as organizations that provide services to and/or for seniors.

Our educational plan is based on the calendar year. Each educational experience is planned with the needs, interests and to encourage full participation and active involvement of seniors.

This Committee ensured that learning experiences are also taking place in other communities. With a staff of 2.8 full time equivalents plus training consultants and volunteers, we delivered training programs in St. Catharines, London, Leamington, Windsor, Cambridge, Orillia, Sault Ste Marie, Sudbury, and various locations across Toronto.

Computer Training: What started as a pilot program at the Jamaican Canadian Association (JCA) site has expanded to 4 locations across Toronto - JCA, OSSCO, Loyola Arrupe and John Paul the Great. Through these locations we delivered 102 weeks of computer classes and had an average of 63 students per week.

Each class is 2 hours, offered on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. Our program is different. After 6 weeks of basic instruction, 60% of the students are proficient. After completing basic level 1, 90% of the students include technology in their everyday lives.

Photo: Everton Gordon, interim Executive Director, Jamaican Canadian Association, presents certificate of completion to Computer Student



Elder Abuse Awareness Programs: With funding from New Horizon for Seniors' grant, an educational Conference project was developed culminating in **My Home, My Community: Safety Starts Here**. This program was developed with an Advisory Committee comprised of volunteers whose age ranged from 60 - 89 to raise awareness of elder abuse and potential elder abuse situations for seniors who are living in or are considering living in retirement home settings.

To create this Conference, OSSCO made multiple educational workshops and gathered feedback/input from seniors. The educational component was presented to seniors at Chartwell Oakpark LaSalle, West Toronto Support Services, LumaCare - Wilson and Northwood Campuses, Bernard Betel Centre and Club Beersheba, Na'Amat Canada. The comments and feedback into the materials presented and this project were invaluable.

This helped refine for the Advisory Committee what was important and how to best educate older persons who are considering or are living in retirement communities for safe living. The conference was delivered in both English and in French, with more than 100 attendees. An informational pamphlet was produced and published in both English and French. Three thousand copies were produced and distributed.



Photo: The Honorable Mario Sergio, Minister Responsible for Seniors and Advisory Committee Volunteer, Mary Allen Armiento at My Home My Community: Safety Starts Here Conference.

Employment Networking Group: Although OSSCO facilitated the Employment Networking Group (ENG) for the Human Resources Professional Association of Ontario, Toronto Chapter, for 2 years, we declined to renew our commitment beyond August 2015 based on our own programming demands. We appreciated the opportunity to work with ENG, to assist older workers to find employment and thanked the Toronto Chapter for including OSSCO in this educational opportunity. It made us realize that there are no funded retraining programs for older persons or for those returning to the workplace.



Photo: Anne Bloom, HRP Toronto Chapter Board member, former OSSCO employee Cheryl Lochnan, Elizabeth Macnab

ESL: We learned there is a need for a "pre-quel" for immigrant seniors who feel they are "too old" or not confident to enroll in ESL classes or LINC programs. We are piloting a 6 week "Introduction to Canadian English Experience" at John Paul the Great to give older immigrants an opportunity for independence by providing them with functional English language activities. A second pilot is planned for 2016.

Seniors Interactive Fair and Conference: OSSCO annually hosts a Seniors' Conference and Information Fair. This event presents products and services to Ontario's largest growing demographic. The Conference is made up of speakers presenting information of interest on senior's health and age friendly communities. There is also a large exhibit area with products and services of interest to older adults.

This is the only seniors' conference of its size in Ontario, offered without charge to attendees and provides opportunity to access programs and services for seniors with fixed or low income.

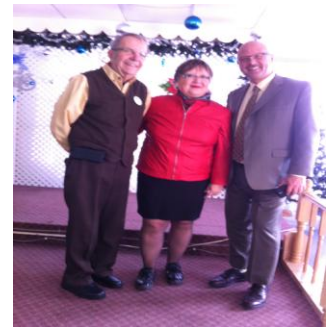


Photo: Mulraj Sethi and members of the York Region Seniors Club at the 2014 Seniors Conference and Information Fair

Speaker's Bureau: A Speaker's Bureau program was created and is available to the public on our website. Educational workshops are offered in select areas in the province, with some presented in the French language.

We were invited to make 8 presentations in addition to the *What's Your Why* education workshop this year in Sudbury, Windsor, Leamington, Toronto, St. Catharines, and Cambridge.

Photo: John Lindsay, Elizabeth Macnab, Pat Douglas in Sudbury at Roadmap for Informed Decision Making workshop



Tuesday Seniors Series: This program was rebranded in the spring in response to seniors interests as **Tuesdays with OSSCO**. We piloted new template concepts with topics that can be used by other seniors groups and organizations across Ontario. The rebranded programming engaged seniors in physical activities that brought joy and laughter, challenged their inner Picasso as well as grew their knowledge of horticultural in an activity which combined socialization opportunities, learning and walking.

The Civic Dialogue 3-part series was launched in September with Speaker Herb John, followed by an educational day to engage seniors using civic dialogue for community building. The result was workshops presented for the first time in Farsi and Mandarin. There was little interest in the Russian workshop which was cancelled. However, the Mandarin workshop was oversubscribed and opportunities with the Chinese community for educational programming are created. These multicultural, multilingual workshops were funded by the Ontario Seniors' Secretariat grant.

Joint Educational Programming:

Seniors Cancer Screening Awareness Program: OSSCO continues its' a commitment to offer a Cancer Screening Awareness program to Ontario. As project partners from the British Columbia Psychogeriatric Association, both Dr. MacCourt and Ms. Krowczyk helped create this program called "*What's Your Why?*" It is designed to raise awareness on cancer screening and early detection in older adults. This year only 1 French language workshop was offered in the Greater Sudbury area with workshops offered in Windsor (2), Leamington (2), Essex (1), London (1), GTA (4), Sudbury (2), Orillia (1), St. Catharines (1) and Toronto (5) for a total of 20 workshops.

North York Elder Abuse Network: In continuing to raise awareness on a topic which impacts on the quality of life of older adults, OSSCO, through its member organization Mosaic, participated in the development and delivery of a multicultural, multilingual elder abuse educational information day in June 2015. Training was offered in Farsi, Cantonese, Tagalog and Russian. This was truly a collaborative joint effort of 15 community organizations.

Communications Committee: Chair, Shirley Erkila
Members: Claude Hould, Evelyn Theriault

The Communications Committee identified a lot of projects which needed to be addressed. Some projects are still outstanding and require more focus to complete such as rebranding the website to better integrate it into the educational programming of the organization. Also outstanding is the development of a social media presence a goal which will be rolled into 2016. New domain names, OSSCO-SOCAO.org and OSSCO-SOCAO.ca, have been reserved for this activity. Our website has been reviewed to be AODA compliant.

Despite the fact that our staff Communication and Program Specialist was unavailable for part of the year, membership and community communications improved. A monthly newsletter educating more than a 1,000 readers on issues of importance to seniors and to enhance their quality of life is produced. This is in addition to the member's only quarterly newsletter. There is resource and educational information on our website. A regular schedule for e-blasts has been created.

The membership lists (database) were updated onto our mantis software. Members were surveyed twice this year: once as a general membership survey and the other on the subject of physician assisted death.

A tag line *Seniors transforming Ontario through wisdom, insight and experience to the board* was developed for the organization.

Nominating Committee: Chair, Anna Zachariah
Members: Judith Wheeler, Evelyn Theriault

This committee's work is based on strict timelines in accordance with our bylaws. Before the announcement to fill a board vacancy was sent out, criteria (priority skills) for incoming board members was identified at a board meeting. Nominations to the board were to be submitted in writing and received by October 23, 2015. We received 3 written submissions and 1 verbal expression of interest to join the board of directors.

The selection process and scoring mechanism was reviewed to ensure applicants could fit the future directions of the board and that they understand their commitment to the board. The questions and evaluation grid were vetted by a Volunteer.

This year, 2 interviews were conducted from the applications received. The areas of focus were in order of priority: Finance; Social enterprise development, revenue generation/fund development; Communications, website development, member newsletters; Public policy awareness and participation (civic dialogue) and Educational programming The outcome is increased understanding of incoming board members of the commitment required and governance responsibilities as well as new skill within the board.

COUNSELLING, INFORMATION AND REFERRAL

Although funding was reduced in this year's budget for this program, OSSCO continues to provide information, referral and counselling (mediated access) to seniors. As we are providing more information on line to educate seniors on resources and programming of interest, we have found that the number of clients per month has decreased. We attribute that decrease to better quality information to education the senior on their options. One way this was achieved was through the distribution of 4,000 copies of the Roadmap for Informed Decision Making: A starting point for help on the journey of life, an outcome of a New Horizon for Seniors grant.

The brochure has been reprinted twice since receiving initial funding. A 5th reprinting of 1,000 copies is budgeted for 2015-2016.

In 2014-2015, we provided up to 160 hours in total support through this program. The top 5 areas where assistance was sought dealt with: Healthcare Options and Access to programs; Housing Options - Affordable Housing; CCAC and entitlement; Elder Neglect /Elder Abuse, and Guardianship (Powers of Care and Property). We provided guidance regarding the best options in an older persons' community or redirected them to 211 providers or other service providers in their community.

ISSUES AND CONSULTATIONS

Ontario Seniors Secretariat Liaison Committee

OSSCO is an active member of the Ontario Seniors Secretariat Liaison (OSSL) Committee and Board members Evelyn Theriault and alternate Larry Duffield participated in a number of meetings during 2014-2015. This year the Seniors Secretariat also organized 2 consultations: a review of the Elderly Persons Act, and, consultation on elder abuse prevention which OSSCO Treasurer Anna Zachariah participated in as well as OSSCO staff.

Photo: Gerry Graham OSSL committee Member, Sandra Hughes, Elizabeth Macnab unveiling International Day of Older Persons Flag at Leamington & District Half Century Centre's Health and Wellness Fair



Consultations with a Seniors Lens

Governments are now starting using a seniors lens in consultations, feedback and civic dialogue, and OSSCO was present. We provided feedback to the Minister of Finance as part of the budget consultation process.

Treasurer Anna Zachariah represented the voice of seniors on a consultation on changes to the Ontario Drug Benefit program which affects seniors and persons with disabilities. As well, she represented OSSCO members in the Patient, Volunteers, Caregivers Focus Group Palliative Engagement.

Minister Mario Sergio's office invited Chair-elect Claude Hould to announcements on programs that improved the quality of life for seniors.

Chair Marg Muir participated in the City Transportation Planning consultation.

Former Board member, Roslyn Harris with OSSCO member organization Municipal Retirees Organization of Ontario provided feedback to the HealthForceOntario Strategy, an initiative of the Ministry of Health & Long Term Care.

This is in addition to: ongoing Ministry of Health & Long Term Care review of hospital parking fee, City Planner Boot Camp and the Premier's Special Advisor and Advisory Group on Community Hubs.

National Regional Seniors' Advisory Committee

OSSCO board member Larry Duffield, and alternate, Sam Ashroff, represented Ontario seniors by sitting at the Regional table on the National Seniors' Advisory Committee. By sharing what OSSCO members do, we continue to raise awareness at the federal level as to the impact of federal programming as well as gaps in services.



Former Board member Roslyn Harris in community consultation



Elizabeth Macnab and Civic Planning Boot Camp Mental Health Feedback Team



Claude Hould, Mark Adler, Doreen Benou, John Fedyna, Bill Russell at New Horizons for Seniors Grant Announcement

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

OCSCO would like to thank the following for their support during the past year:

- Advocacy Centre for the Elderly (ACE)
- Mark Adler, Member of Parliament, York Centre
- Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario
- BeFAIR Service
- Breckles Insurance
- Canadian Jamaican Association
- Centre d'accueil d'heritage
- c-Seven Media
- Delmanor, Northtown
- Elder Abuse Ontario, Eastern Ontario Region
- 519 Seniors Committee
- Legal Shield
- Monte Kwinter, Member of Provincial Parliament, York Centre
- New Horizons for Seniors Program
- Niagara Region Polices Services, Fraud and Elder Abuse Unit
- Niagara Region Social Services Department
- NYEAN
- Ontario Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (ONPEA)
- Ontario Retirement Communities Association
- Ontario Seniors' Secretariat
- Retirement Homes Regulatory Authority
- Royal Henley
- Seniors Advisory Committee, Ontario Region
- Sts Cyril and Methodius Church
- Break Open Ticket marketing companies:
 - Bazaar Marketing
 - Bingo Pro Inc.
 - Cedar Islands Sales and Services Ltd.
 - Nevada Man/ Nevada Ticket Services
 - Dr. Nevada
 - Party Novelties (Sudbury)