

ONTARIO ENGLISH
**Catholic
Teachers**
ASSOCIATION

**BETTER
TOGETHER**

**UNITED
WE STAND**

**EDUCATING FOR THE
COMMON GOOD CONFERENCE**

PROGRAM



**BETTER
TOGETHER**

**UNITED
WE STAND**



AUGUST 16, 17 & 18, 2021
virtual

MONDAY, AUGUST 16

7:00 – 9:00 pm
Pre-Conference Event
Love in the First Degree

TUESDAY, AUGUST 17

9:00 – 9:15 am
Land Acknowledgement,
Prayer & Pledge
President’s Welcome

9:15 – 10:15 am
Keynote - Desmond Cole

10:15 – 10:30 am
Break

10:30 am – 12:00 pm
Workshops: Session A

12:00 – 12:45 pm
LUNCH

12:45 – 2:15 pm
Workshops: Session B

2:15 – 2:30 pm
Break

2:30 – 3:30 pm
Keynote - Al Etmanski

3:30 pm
Closing Remarks
Prizes

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 18

9:00 – 9:15 am
Opening Remarks

9:15 – 10:15 am
Keynote - Dr. Kris Wells

10:15 – 10:30 am
Break

10:30 am – 12:00 pm
Workshops: Session C

12:00 – 12:45 pm
LUNCH

12:45 – 2:15 pm
Workshops: Session D

2:15 – 2:30 pm
Break

2:30 – 3:30 pm
Keynote - Michelle Good

3:30 pm
Closing Remarks
Exit Survey
Prizes

Monday, August 16
7:00 - 9:00 pm

Love in The First Degree Virtual Event

Join us for an exciting evening event called **Love in The First Degree** Virtual Event



PLEASE CLICK ON THE IMAGE ABOVE TO WATCH THE VIDEO

This virtual event is for Educating the Common Good delegates and will be organized in teams of 8 to 10 people.

Participants will receive an official invite closer to the event.

Please only select if you are able to fully participate.

Keynotes Speakers



AL ETMANSKI

Al is a community organizer, social entrepreneur, and author. He's been a parent activist in the disability world since his daughter Liz was born. He led the closure of institutions and segregated schools in British Columbia, and founded Canada's first Family Support Institute. In 1989 he co-founded Planned Lifetime Advocacy Network (PLAN) with his wife Vickie Cammack. While at PLAN he lobbied into existence the world's first Disability Savings Plan.

Al is a global Ashoka fellow and a member of John McKnight's Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) network. He has received many awards for his activism including the Order of Canada and the Big Picture award from his peers in the disability movement.

Al's reputation as a speaker and convener comes from his ability to explore difficult topics with tremendous honesty, warmth, and humor. He is a thought-leader, researcher, and storyteller with the rare ability to both inspire audiences and leave them with actionable change strategies.



DESMOND COLE

National bestseller winner of the 2020 Toronto book award

A bracing, provocative, and perspective-shifting book from one of Canada's most celebrated and uncompromising writers, Desmond Cole. *The Skin We're In* will spark a national conversation, influence policy, and inspire activists.

In his 2015 cover story for Toronto Life magazine, Desmond Cole exposed the racist actions of the Toronto police force, detailing the dozens of times he had been stopped and interrogated under the controversial practice of carding. The story quickly came to national prominence, shaking the country to its core and catapulting its author into the public sphere. Cole used his newfound profile to draw

insistent, unyielding attention to the injustices faced by Black Canadians on a daily basis.

Both Cole's activism and journalism find vibrant expression in his first book, *The Skin We're In*. Puncturing the bubble of Canadian smugness and naive assumptions of a post-racial nation, Cole chronicles just one year—2017—in the struggle against racism in this country. It was a year that saw calls for tighter borders when Black refugees braved frigid temperatures to cross into Manitoba from the States, Indigenous land and water protectors resisting the celebration of Canada's 150th birthday, police across the country rallying around an officer accused of murder, and more.

The year also witnessed the profound personal and professional ramifications of Desmond Cole's unwavering determination to combat injustice. In April, Cole disrupted a Toronto police board meeting by calling for the destruction of all data collected through carding. Following the protest, Cole, a columnist with the *Toronto Star*, was summoned to a meeting with the paper's opinions editor and informed that his activism violated company policy. Rather than limit his efforts defending Black lives, Cole chose to sever his relationship with the publication. Then in July, at another police board meeting, Cole challenged the board to respond to accusations of a police cover-up in the brutal beating of Dafonte Miller by an off-duty police officer and his brother. When Cole refused to leave the meeting until the question was publicly addressed, he was arrested. The image of Cole walking out of the meeting, handcuffed and flanked by officers, fortified the distrust between the city's Black community and its police force.

Month-by-month, Cole creates a comprehensive picture of entrenched, systemic inequality. Urgent, controversial, and unsparingly honest, *The Skin We're In* is destined to become a vital text for anti-racist and social justice movements in Canada, as well as a potent antidote to the all-too-present complacency of many white Canadians.



MICHELLE GOOD

Michelle is of Cree ancestry, a descendent of the Battle River Cree and a member of the Red Pheasant Cree Nation. She has worked with indigenous organizations since she

was a teenager and at forty decided to approach that work in a different way obtaining her law degree from UBC at 43. She has practiced law in the public and private sector since then, primarily advocating for Residential School Survivors.

She graduated from UBC with a Master of Fine Arts Degree in Creative Writing MFA in 2014 where her novel *Five Little Indians* first started taking shape. Her poetry, and short stories have appeared in a number of **publications**. Her first novel, **Five Little Indians** won the HarperCollins/UBC Best New Fiction Prize and her poetry has been included in Best Canadian Poetry in Canada 2016 and Best of the Best Canadian Poetry in Canada 2017. Michelle is currently working on her second novel.



DR. KRISTOPHER WELLS

Dr. Wells specializes in sexual and gender minority youth, education, health, sport and culture. He is one of the driving forces behind the creation of many ground-breaking

initiatives including **Pride Tape** and **NoHomophobes.com**, which has been featured across the world in more than 50 publications including the *Economist*, *Atlantic*, *Independent* and *Guardian*. Dr. Wells is a frequently invited national and international speaker on sexual and gender minority youth issues. He has served as an expert scientific consultant to the Federal Government of Canada, Canadian Senate, Canadian Museum of Human Rights, Canadian Teachers' Federation, RCMP, Public Health Agency of Canada, UNESCO, World Health Organization and many provincial and municipal governments across Canada. Currently, Dr. Wells serves as the co-editor of the *International Journal of LGBT Youth*, which is the world's leading research publication on LGBT youth. His early career work has been recognized with over 50 scholarly and community awards and recognitions including the Alberta Teachers' Association's Public Education Award, University of Alberta's Alumni Horizon Award and an Alberta Centennial Medallion.



STRONGER TOGETHER

UNITED WE STAND

Tuesday, August 17
10:30 am - 12:00 pm

Session A

TITLE	DESCRIPTOR	AUDIENCE
<h3>A1</h3> <p>Mental Health and Wellness: The Importance of Caring for You</p> <p>Shannon Hogan, Nina March and Malisa Mezenberg</p>	<p>A teacher is always “on”, whether in the classroom or the grocery store meeting a child you’ve taught. Dealing with unprecedented pressures and the ongoing ability to pivot have become necessary skills since March, 2020. This mental health workshop will provide you with strategies and resources to nurture your own mental wellness. If your vessel is empty you will have little left to share with others; family, friends, students, colleagues. This practical session will provide you with take-aways that you can access for yourself, your family and your students. We look forward to sharing this time with you.</p>	All teachers
<h3>A2</h3> <p>“We Are One” – Answering Our Call to Stewardship</p> <p>Alana Cernjul</p>	<p>Finding inspiration from the encyclical, Laudato Si: On Care For Our Common Home, this workshop will explore major themes of stewardship that emerge from this document written in 2015 by our Holy Father, Pope Francis. Using the Dialogue Guide produced by the Jesuit Forum for Social Faith and Justice, we will discuss how each theme can be integrated across the curriculum, with a focus on intermediate and senior divisions. The infographic developed by OECTA’s Catholic Education and Curriculum Committee will be used to focus our discussions and guide us in working together to generate tangible ideas that can be used in our classrooms, while deepening our own theological understanding of how to live in solidarity with the world.</p>	All teachers
<h3>A3</h3> <p>The Collective Agreement and You</p> <p>Tom Doyle</p>	<p>This workshop will introduce teachers to the fundamentals of a collective agreement: how an agreement affects individual teachers, and how individual teachers can improve their collective agreement through active participation in the process.</p>	All teachers

A4

Social Justice in the Elementary Classroom, K-8

Ashley Fung Fook

In this session, educators will have the opportunity to explore social justice issues with elementary learners. Discover how to make cross-curricular connections for our youngest learners using social justice topics that are relevant and meaningful for this age group. Educators will have the opportunity to collaborate and create experiences that incorporate social justice and the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations into their classes.

Elementary teachers

A5

The Legacy of Hope Foundation

The Legacy of Hope Foundation (LHF) is a national, Indigenous-led charitable organization that has existed for 20 years. This workshop will educate and raise awareness about the ongoing intergenerational impacts of the Residential School System, the Sixties Scoop and the initiatives taken by Survivors and communities to heal and the steps needed to eliminate racism and foster meaningful relationships with allies. The workshop will focus on working toward Reconciliation initiatives in your community, profession or organization.

All teachers

A6

101: Building Capacity in Catholic Schools for 2SLGBTQI+ Student Inclusion and Well Being

Kevin Welbes Godin

OECTA, especially through its local provincial Units, have been forerunners in 2SLGBTQI+ inclusion for students and staff. Through a Catholic lens and firmly situated in the Catholic Social Teachings of dignity and solidarity, the 101 foundational workshop, Safer Catholic School Communities: 2SLGBTQI+ Inclusion, will provide participants with an introduction to 2SLGBTQI+ identities, familiarize the concepts of gender identity, gender expression, assigned sex at birth and sexual attraction, and emphasize the importance of validating, affirming, and celebrating queer youth as integral and valuable members of the school community. The session will also look at the current realities facing 2SLGBTQI+ students in Catholic schools. We will explore how to be more inclusive and offer safer spaces for full belonging. Practical strategies will be explored so that teachers can feel more comfortable and competent in their support of 2SLGBTQI+ students.

All teachers

Wednesday, August 18

12:45 - 2:15 pm

Session B

TITLE	DESCRIPTOR	AUDIENCE
B1 Changing Perspectives: From Me to We Terry Dubroy	Through storytelling and humor, this entertaining workshop, taught by a seasoned Experiential Trainer, hopes to provide educators with new insights to deepen their professional self-awareness. We will explore strategies that foster safe and positive classroom environments so that we are able to invite the best from our students (mind-body-spirit) and challenge their own perceived limitations.	All teachers
B2 Introduction to MH LIT: Student Mental Health in Action, a series of Mental Health Literacy and Help-Seeking Lessons for Secondary Students Joyce Erogun and Susan Sweet	Are you looking for ready-made lesson plans to help support your students' mental health and well-being? This workshop provides an introduction to MH LIT: Student Mental Health in Action, an exciting new resource for secondary students. This four-part lesson series focuses on mental health and mental illness, signs of mental health problems, strategies to support mental health and well-being, and how/where students can access help for themselves and their friends, when needed. Educators will also have the opportunity to explore a number of supportive resources, including educator preparation suggestions and family materials. Join us to build your familiarity, comfort, and confidence with the lessons and share ideas about how you might use them this fall.	Secondary teachers
B3 Incorporating Indigenous Perspectives into Secondary Social Sciences Clare Caza and Tesa Fiddler	This workshop will share best practices for incorporating Indigenous perspectives into secondary level social sciences in the Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board. Clare Caza and Tesa Fiddler, teachers in the TBCDSB, will discuss opportunities, resources, and protocols for respectfully including Indigenous-focussed content in curriculum. They will also discuss inquiry opportunities for studying contemporary and historical events and issues which have impacted Indigenous peoples.	Secondary teachers

B4

Communicating with Parents and Guardians: Understanding and Honouring Diversity

Tia Duke and
Brenda Golden

We communicate with parents and guardians for a variety of reasons, ranging from reporting incidents to reporting on progress to voicing concerns, and many more. In these conversations, we want always to be professional and succinct. If difficult discussions arise, we need to readily and confidently implement communication strategies that help us find common ground so that we can continue to develop healthy learning environments for students and strengthen school-home partnerships. We also want to build our communication strategies using anti-oppression frameworks so we can be more responsive to diverse family structures. In this session, we will reflect on our communication skills, explore communication techniques, and look very closely at how to navigate when communication becomes difficult. Teachers will leave feeling confident and prepared to talk to parents so that we can continue to support students in our classrooms while fulfilling our professional responsibilities.

All teachers

B5

101: Building Capacity in Catholic Schools for 2SLGBTQI+ Student Inclusion and Well Being

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All teachers

B6

Fostering Male Allyship to End Gender-based Violence and Sexual Exploitation

David Garzon

In this session, White Ribbon will work with educators to foster understanding about the root causes of gender-based violence and ways male-identified individuals can prevent it. This workshop will explore the history and work of White Ribbon, introduce approaches to building male allyship in our classrooms, and share White Ribbon's new resource for secondary educators on the prevention of sexual exploitation and sex trafficking wrprevent.ca

Secondary teachers

Wednesday, August 18

10:30 am - 12:00 pm

Session C

TITLE	DESCRIPTOR	AUDIENCE
<p>C1</p> <p>Learning to Say No</p> <p>Don Garant and Bob Giasson</p>	<p>This workshop will highlight situations that may cause teachers to overload their schedules at the expense of their health and professional duties. Participants will learn how to handle themselves in the wake of increasing demands from students, parents and administrators.</p>	<p>All teachers</p>
<p>C2</p> <p>What is Reconciliation?</p> <p>Anne Parkhill</p>	<p>With the release of the Calls to Action by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Canadians across the country have been called to educate themselves on the true history of our country and the impact of colonization on the First Nations of this continent. As Catholics we are called to pursue social justice for all, including the First Nations. Teachers will familiarize themselves with the history of our country that is not written in our textbooks and acquire some basic understanding of what it means to be an ally in this new age of reconciling with the original peoples of this land.</p>	<p>All teachers</p>
<p>C3</p> <p>Bridge Building for Teachers</p> <p>Karl Fernandes</p>	<p>Schools have sometimes been likened to islands. Fenced in from the neighbourhood, secured by locked doors to control entry, enclosed by walls around each classroom, schools seem to exist in isolation from their surroundings. What can teachers do to challenge this limiting view? We can build bridges.</p>	<p>All teachers</p>

C4

Better Together–United We Stand Catholic Teachers–Together– United.

“We cannot live in a world that is not our own – in a world that is interpreted for us by others.”

Hildegard of Bingen

Shannon Hogan

As Catholic teachers, and not just teachers who happen to be Catholic, we stand in a unique place in the landscape of provincial education.

We are written about, talked about and investigated by all forms of news media and political commentators who claim to understand the core of Catholic education. They interpret who we are to the world – and even attempt to interpret who we are to us...without the benefit of the slightest understanding of the Catholic worldview – “and God saw that it was good”- which permeates every aspect of our vocation as Catholic teachers. There are times when we can begin to allow others to interpret our lives for us – which leads to a world that is not our own.

The focus of this session is on the clarity of Catholic teaching – what it actually teaches – apart from the interpretation of the newsfeed. It is a focus on who we are – and who we are not. It is a chance for us as Catholic teachers to ask honest questions about Church teaching – and where we stand in the midst of it. It is an opportunity to examine the places of our strength and our unity.

The goal is to interpret, for ourselves, who we are, and to proclaim that world view as our own. In this, we can say unequivocally, that we are better together when we stand united.

All teachers

C5

Journey to Human Rights: Virtual field trips at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights

Graham Lowes and
Lise Pinkos

Our live virtual field trips allow students from across Canada to take part in the Museum’s human rights education programs, in English or French. This 45-minute session will include a live virtual field trip of the Museum’s galleries and an overview of our programs. There will be an opportunity for questions and a brief look at other digital resources available for your classroom. Our program interpreters are ready to talk to your students about foundational human rights concepts, what it means to be an upstander, the Supreme Court of Canada and how historic violations have shaped our view of rights today. Visit humanrights.ca/education to learn more.

All teachers

C6

Addressing Anti-Oppression

Celine Duguay and
Janine Ruhinda

As educators, we strive to create learning environments where children/youth, families and colleagues can thrive - free from racism, sexism, homophobia and other forms of marginalization. The pandemic continues to illuminate social injustices in our society that were present before current circumstances. This COPA workshop will explore and help add resources to your toolbox to understand, name and act to disrupt inequities, in turn creating positive social change. We will focus on the jointly created OTF/COPA Safe@School resources - all of which are free, online, in English and French

All teachers

Wednesday, August 18

12:45 - 2:15 pm

Session D

TITLE	DESCRIPTOR	AUDIENCE
D1 School Mental Health Ontario Resources for Students and Teachers Judith Desjardin, Gail Lalonde and Deborah Shackell	This workshop will explore the many resources developed by School Mental Health Ontario in support of teacher and student learning. The session will equip teachers with a roadmap to start the school year off with resources, lessons and every day mental health practices that will support student mental health and well being and help develop social emotional learning skills.	All teachers
D2 Addressing Anti-Oppression Celine Duguay and Janine Ruhinda	As educators, we strive to create learning environments where children/youth, families and colleagues can thrive - free from racism, sexism, homophobia and other forms of marginalization. The pandemic continues to illuminate social injustices in our society that were present before current circumstances. This COPA workshop will explore and help add resources to your toolbox to understand, name and act to disrupt inequities, in turn creating positive social change. We will focus on the jointly created OTF/COPA Safe@School resources - all of which are free, online, in English and French.	All teachers
D3 Dancing in the Dark – lessons learned (and not learned)... Inconvenient truths and “the next normal” Katrina Wheaton	In late 2019, a novel coronavirus emerged in Wuhan, China. On March 17th 2020 a State of Emergency was declared in Ontario. This workshop will provide a retrospective of the other “unprecedented times” in Ontario marked by the SARS and H1N1 crises. Then we will fast forward to the 2020 COVID era, the lack of a cohesive pandemic plan, the repercussions of the government’s abandonment of the Precautionary Principle and the decision to ignore the advice of their own Science Advisory Table. We have survived Wave 1, Wave 2 and Wave 3 complete with half truths, lies and “pivots, pivots, pivots” from the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Labour. The result? - A year of fear and frustration in Ontario and for us, a year of “pandemic teaching” as we struggled to make sense of conflicting demands in the Education Sector. Be ready to engage in an interactive discussion on how we find our path to go forward together as the long ‘pause’ slowly lifts and we return to our daily lives and prepare for the “next normal”.	All teachers

D4

Communicating with Parents and Guardians: Understanding and Honouring Diversity

Tia Duke and
Brenda Golden

We communicate with parents and guardians for a variety of reasons, ranging from reporting incidents to reporting on progress to voicing concerns, and many more. In these conversations, we want always to be professional and succinct. If difficult discussions arise, we need to readily and confidently implement communication strategies that help us find common ground so that we can continue to develop healthy learning environments for students and strengthen school-home partnerships. We also want to build our communication strategies using anti-oppression frameworks so we can be more responsive to diverse family structures. In this session, we will reflect on our communication skills, explore communication techniques, and look very closely at how to navigate when communication becomes difficult. Teachers will leave feeling confident and prepared to talk to parents so that we can continue to support students in our classrooms while fulfilling our professional responsibilities.

All teachers

D5

Empower Yourself, Empower OECTA

Filomena Ferraro and
Peter MacDonald

Learn the fundamentals of the Government Relations Department. Explore your political savvy and how you can impact the next provincial election. We plan to highlight the importance of unions and collective action, along with a brief recap of the historical impact unions had on worker rights and publicly funded education. As beginning teachers, you know firsthand how the political climate has impacted your working conditions and personal life for the past two years. Hear about how you can get ready for the next election: strategies, OECTA's election plan, and local unit involvement. Your role could be anything from a conversation with a friend to canvassing. You are at a pivotal point in your career to lead, make and activate real and lasting change.

All teachers

D6

Fostering Male Allyship to End Gender-based Violence and Sexual Exploitation

David Garzon

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Secondary teachers

Presenters Bios



CLARA CAZA

My name is Clare Caza and I have been teaching for 20 years. I was born and raised in Thunder Bay. I am a creative, passionate and fun-loving teacher. On top of being

a teacher, I am a wife and a mom to three busy, wonderful children. I have taught a wide range of subjects during my 20 year career, but most recently I have been teaching Law, Civics, History, and World Religions. I am very passionate about incorporating Indigenous perspectives and content into my practice and courses of study.



ALANA CERNJAL

St. Francis of Assisi's teaching to "preach the gospel at all times, and when necessary use words," has motivated Alana during her 21 years in Catholic education.

As a passionate teacher, Department Head, and current secondary school Chaplaincy Leader, Alana is a passionate advocate for education that is rooted in faith, charity, justice and hope. After leaving her hometown of Thunder Bay in 1999 to pursue teaching opportunities in Dufferin-Peel, Alana enhanced her professional and personal development by pursuing a Master of Religious Education degree.

Throughout her career, Alana has been actively involved in OECTA as a long-time AQ instructor of Religious Education courses; a member of local Human Rights and Political Action Committees; a member and chair of the Provincial Catholic Education and Curriculum Committee; a voting delegate at many AGMs; and staff/SAAC rep. She has presented at several local board PD sessions, and has worked as a curriculum developer and reviewer with the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board as well as Nelson-Novalis publishing. Alana is a proud (hockey) Auntie to Jenna and Taylor; dog-mom to Tiko and Tango; partner to a Camaro-driving-RV-loving businessman; daughter and sister in a tight-knit, European family; fan of Pope Francis, the Toronto Maple Leafs and Bon Jovi; and overall blessed woman whose vocation has always been to be kind, spread love, and live in Christ.



TOM DOYLE

Tom is currently serving as the Department Head of OECTA's Bargaining and Contract Services (BCS) Department, as well as Benefits Officer, for the

Association. He has a wealth of expertise in the area of collective bargaining, which he utilizes for bargaining at both the central and local level. In the most recent round of central bargaining, Tom served as lead negotiator.

Tom has served OECTA both provincially and locally, and taught in the secondary panel, for more than 10 years. Prior to coming to the OECTA provincial office, he served as both Grievance Officer and President in the Algonquin Lakeshore Unit.



TERRY DUBROY

Terry currently teaches high school in North Bay where he founded an innovative outdoor leadership and environmental studies program.

The program has a strong focus on environmental ethics, personal development and spiritual growth. The S.O.L.E. program is among the most innovative programs in the province, combining traditional academic studies, high-level wilderness skills, leadership training, community-building, and the opportunity for students to challenge their own perceived limitations. Terry is a passionate presenter and storyteller. Participants will delight in hearing interesting stories and interacting with each other during the presentation.



CÉLINE DUGUAY

Céline has been a close collaborator of COPA since 1996. She is currently a facilitator and project officer for the Settlement Worker program at COPA. Céline's

commitment to social justice and individual and community capacity building motivates her to pursue a mandate of awareness and education in order to promote human rights, especially those of children and of those most vulnerable to

discrimination and violence. She is a mother of four and is involved in several community groups that support families and youth in her community.



TIA DUKE

Tia Duke is a Catholic educator who has worked for the Dufferin-Peel CDSB for 15 years. In her time as a Secondary teacher, she has had the pleasure of working in

both Mississauga and Brampton; she is currently Department Head of English, ESL, and Library at St. Marguerite d'Youville C.S.S. Tia is passionate about equity work, focusing specifically on anti-racist and anti-oppressive curriculum development. On World Teachers Day 2017, Tia Duke was featured in a Toronto Star article for earning an honourable mention for the Teacher of the Year Award. Tia's grade 9 class of that same year was featured in a video on the virtue of respect by the Ontario English Catholic Teachers Association in their "Lessons for Life" series.



TERESA EDWARDS

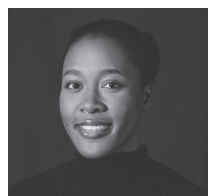
Teresa Edwards is a member of the Listuguj Mi'gmaq First Nation in Quebec. Her ceremonial name is *Young Fire Woman*, a name that she strives to fulfill through her

work as an International Human Rights Lawyer. Teresa is a mother to three amazing souls – Ashley, Dakota and Derek, and the grandmother (Giju) to Alivia, who all inspire her to work towards bringing equity to Indigenous Peoples by improving socio-economic conditions and their overall well-being. For over 30 years, she has been a strong advocate for Indigenous Peoples by championing changes in programs, policy and legislation from within government and while working with National Indigenous Organizations such as the Assembly of First Nations, Native Women's Association of Canada and from within her own legal practice for Indigenous clients.

Teresa has taken on numerous leading roles, but has focused on addressing the plight of Indigenous women and their rights. She is passionate about

improving the lives of Indigenous women by encouraging and supporting social change such as addressing human trafficking, sexual exploitation, as well as ending the tragedy of Missing and Murdered Indigenous women and girls. Her work in management and as Legal Counsel both nationally and across the globe at the United Nations, while representing various organizations have allowed her to participate in groundbreaking partnerships and agreements that benefit Indigenous Peoples and increase visibility and actions that address the ongoing injustices in Canada.

Teresa has been the Executive Director and In-House Legal Counsel for the Legacy of Hope Foundation (LHF) for more than 4 years. The LHF is a national Indigenous-led charitable organization founded in 2000 with the goal of educating and raising awareness about the history and existing intergenerational impacts from the Residential and Day School System, Sixties Scoop and other colonial acts of oppression. Through the development of educational resources and exhibitions, the LHF supports the healing for generations of Residential and Day School Survivors, their families as well as Sixties Scoop Survivors, as part of its evolving mandate. The LHF works to build empathy, understanding, and to inspire positive action that addresses racism and injustice to ultimately foster Reconciliation in Canada.



JOYCE EROGUN

Joyce has long brought her passion for health promotion and knowledge exchange to her work, in roles both in community engagement and now in education.

Joyce holds a Bachelor's degree in Psychology and Health Studies, and a Master's degree in Public Health, where her studies focused on the mental health outcomes of young migrants. Currently, she is the Student Engagement Team Lead at School Mental Health Ontario. In this role, Joyce helps to amplify student voices to inform and direct provincial strategies for mental health promotion in three key areas: student engagement in mental health, equity and mental health, and mental health literacy.



KARL FERNANDES

Karl Fernandes is a seasoned teacher with the Toronto Catholic District School Board where he has assumed numerous leadership roles. Karl has worked closely

with many community groups and international organizations. He encourages his students to take on leadership roles in their community and to think as global citizens. Karl has instructed at York University and is a Professional Development Network facilitator and course instructor for OECTA. He has presented to OCTs at conferences across Ontario and is involved with mental health and natural health initiatives.



DON GARANT

Don Garant has been a teacher for over 20 years and holds qualifications at both the elementary and secondary level, having taught Grades 3 through 8

and Special Education. He is currently working at the OECTA Provincial Office in the Bargaining and Contract Services Department.

Prior to coming to the Provincial Office he advocated on behalf of teachers as Windsor Essex Elementary OECTA Unit President and Chief Negotiator. He has had many experiences helping teachers deal with difficult circumstances surrounding their relationships with students, parents, colleagues and administrators.



FILOMENA FERRARO

Filomena, a secondary teacher taught History, Law and Civics at York Catholic District School Board for 15 years. She was elected as a York Unit release officer in

2012 and become President in 2018. Filomena is currently a Staff Officer in the Government Relations Department at OECTA.



DAVID GARZON

David Garzon is the Team Lead, Community Engagement at White Ribbon. He is responsible for the management and delivery of several key initiatives across

White Ribbon, together with the program staff team. David has worked in Bolivia, Guatemala, and Colombia delivering workshops and implementing projects on gender equity, masculinities, LGBTQ+ rights, gender-based violence, feminism, and youth empowerment.



TESA FIDDLER

Tesa Fiddler is Anishinaabekwe, a mother of two children, and has been an educator for over 20 years. Born and raised in Northwestern Ontario, she considers Onigaming

and Muskrat Dam First Nations home. Her family also has historical connections to Kitchinuhmaykoosib Inninuwug territory. She currently lives in Thunder Bay with her family and is the Coordinator of Indigenous Education with the Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board. Tesa has experience teaching all grades and ages- from kindergarten to post secondary education.



BOB GIASSON

Bob has been a Staff Officer with the Bargaining and Contract Services Department for the last three years. Prior to his joining the provincial staff he was a release

officer with the Algonquin-Lakeshore Unit for nine years serving as Unit Grievance Officer and President. Bob points out that learning to say no effectively is one of the most important tools any young teacher can possess.



ASHLEY FUNK FOOK

Ashley Fung Fook is a passionate educator with a variety of teaching experiences in Ontario and overseas. These experiences have allowed Ashley to understand

the importance of differentiated instruction and meeting each child where they are. Ashley has presented at a variety of OECTA conferences and Summer Institutes.



BRENDA GOLDEN

Brenda's teaching career includes teaching English both at the secondary and post-secondary level, a secondment to the Ministry of Education, numerous writing

projects for a variety of publishing houses, and her work on OECTA's PD Network. She is actively involved in her local Unit where she was the Worker Co-Chair of Joint Health and Safety and is presently the First Vice-President.



SHANNON HOGAN

For over 30 years, Shannon has contributed to Catholic education in many capacities – as a secondary teacher in English and Theology for 18 years; Chair

of a Theology Department, Chair of the Religious Education Department Heads Association, school Chaplain, Religious Education Consultant, Adult Faith Animator for the TCDSB, professor in the Pre-service Religious Education Program at York University, Staff Officer in the OECTA Provincial Office PD Department with oversight of the Religious Education Additional Qualifications Courses, and eventually with oversight of all Additional Qualifications Courses offered by OECTA in the province. She is currently a member of the Counselling and Member Services Department at OECTA Provincial Office.

Shannon has been a contributing writer and reviewer for publications of the Institute for Catholic Education, was lead writer of the provincially mandated renewal of Roman Catholic religious education courses for the province of Ontario, and for the World Religions course in the secular system. She has been a contributing writer for the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives.



GAIL LALONDE

Gail Lalonde is a registered Social Worker by profession, receiving both her BSW and MSW at King’s University College, Western University. Gail began her career

in education as a front-line social worker in direct practice with students within the Thames Valley District School Board. Over the course of her years at Thames Valley Gail held several system positions including Mental Health Lead for the board. More recently Gail has worked as Supervisor of Professional Support Services with responsibility for the social work, psychology, and speech and language pathology departments at the London District Catholic School Board. In her current role, Gail leads the mental health promotion team at School Mental Health Ontario. In addition to her work at SMH-ON, Gail is a Clinical Supervisor at the Child & Youth Clinic, at the Faculty of Education at Western University where she provides supervision to students in graduate training programs in social work and psychology.



GRAHAM LOWES

Graham Lowes is passionate about creating learning experiences for students that encourage critical thinking, are student driven and address “real world” problems in

authentic and tangible ways. A former classroom teacher, Graham began his work with the Canadian Museum for Human Rights as the Educator in Residence in 2017. He has developed a wide variety of education programs, focusing on reaching students and teachers through digital platforms. Graham loves spending time outdoors with his young family (Oliver, Theodore and Adaline), particularly when those adventures take them into the wilderness. He also dabbles in furniture design, has planted too many trees to count, and enjoys a good cup of coffee.



PETER MACDONALD

High school teacher in the publicly funded Catholic school system in Ontario since 1992. Release officer at the Dufferin-Peel Secondary OECTA unit from 2007 – 2017.

Represented 2,300 Catholic high school teachers in Peel Region, west of Toronto. As a release officer, I served as Teacher Welfare Officer and Chief Negotiator from 2007 – 2011. Elected as Local Unit President in 2011 and represented Dufferin-Peel Secondary members in that role until November 2017. During that time, I filed grievances, negotiated collective agreements, and assisted injured and ill members in filing workplace insurance claims and accessing benefits. Joined OECTA Provincial Office in December 2017 as a Staff Officer in the Government Relations department. Appointed Department Head in November 2020.



NINA MARCH

Nina March joined the teaching profession as an elementary teacher in 1994. She has worked for both the Niagara Catholic and the Halton Catholic District School

Boards.

In 2014, Nina formally became a teacher advocate as President of her OECTA Elementary local, where she represented more than 1700 members; both permanent and Occasional Teachers.

Nina recently joined OECTA's Provincial Office in the Counselling and Member Services Department working with and advising members across the province on employment related matters, including professional learning, Long Term Disability and pension. Nina has thoroughly enjoyed all aspects of her career, especially when she has opportunities to work with and learn from other women.



MALISA MEZENBERG

Malisa Mezenberg enjoyed teaching high school sciences, math and cooperative education with the Dufferin-Peel Catholic School Board for over 20 years.

Developing a keen interest in the professional learning of teachers, Malisa coordinated a variety of professional learning programs for teachers in her position in the Professional Development Department at OECTA Provincial Office and as Project Manager of the Ontario Teachers' Federation Professional Learning Project. She has had the opportunity to work with international teacher education programs in the Caribbean and Africa.

Malisa is currently working at the OECTA Provincial Office in the Counselling and Member Services Department. In addition to general counselling and advice to members on employment-related matters, she liaises with the College of Teachers and coordinates OECTA's Leadership Training Program.



ANNE PARKHILL

I started teaching in the elementary panel in 2002. Integrating the subjects into inquiry based projects has been a passion of mine for over a decade now. With the publishing of the TRC 94 Calls to

Action I have found another passion - to educate students and teachers about the true history of our country and to answer those Calls to Action by supporting Social Justice projects within various schools and groups such as the Celebration of Nations, Kinomaagaye Gamik Lodge and the Moccasin Project. I look forward to being able to share a brief introduction to this important subject and how we can answer the Calls to Action as Catholic educators.



LISE PINKOS

Lise Pinkos is a proud Franco-Manitoban and holds a Bachelor of Arts degree and a Master of Education degree, both from the Université de Saint-Boniface.

Her studies focused on human rights education and how students can learn about human rights to become engaged in taking action for human rights. Lise was part of the inaugural team at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights and is currently the Manager of Education and Professional Programs. Throughout her career at the Museum, Lise has been privileged to have the opportunity to meet with Canadians from coast to coast to coast who generously shared their human rights stories with the Museum. In her current role, she oversees the development and implementation of human rights education programs onsite and online for learners of all ages. Lise is also the Vice President of the Board of Governors of the Université de Saint-Boniface and is maman to Marianne, 7 and Théodore, 2.



JANINE RUHINDA

Janine Ruhinda is a Programs Facilitator and Video Content Producer at COPA. She is also enjoying her second post-secondary endeavour, studying

Human Rights and Equity Studies at York University. She finds great joy in facilitating the workshops COPA provides, particularly because of the positive impact they have on the younger generation, by affirming their rights. She is a strong believer in creating space for all people groups to be heard, to learn and to grow with one another in hopes of creating more conscientious and safe communities throughout Ontario. Janine's passion for social justice and human rights also informs her work as a multimedia visual artist, with a focus on Black rights and social change.



DEBORAH SHACKELL

Deb Shackell is an educator on secondment at School Mental Health Ontario. Her experiences in education are unique and varied. Her career started with the Kativik

School Board teaching in the fly-in community of Kangiqsualujjuaq. This is where her passion for student-centered approaches to supporting student mental health and well-being started

to grow. Since then, she has been a classroom teacher for the Thames Valley District School Board, and the Simcoe County District School Board where she has also held several different teaching positions and leadership roles. She has taught every grade from K-8 and has supported educators in her role at the school board level as the Healthy Active Living Resource teacher for K-12, and more recently as a Resource teacher for Indigenous Education. Deb has also worked at the Ministry of Education in the Indigenous Education and Well-Being Division, where she helped inform the development and implementation of a provincial well-being strategy for students and staff. In addition to her work as an educator, she is a proud mama and an outdoor enthusiast who loves living in the town of Collingwood.



SUSAN SWEET

Susan holds a Ph.D. in clinical psychology and is registered as a psychologist with the College of Psychologists of Ontario. In addition to clinical psychology, she is also licensed for independent practice in the areas of school psychology, counseling psychology, and health psychology. Susan was the Mental Health Lead at the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School board for eight years prior to her secondment to School Mental Health Ontario, where she is currently serving as the Student Mental Health Literacy Coordinator.



KEVIN WELBES GODIN

Kevin is an exceptional educator and facilitator who has worked extensively with Catholic and public-school boards throughout Ontario, Alberta, Yukon, and Newfoundland. He worked as a Religion/Family Life Consultant with the TCDSB and DPCDSB for a combined thirteen years. He also was an annual instructor of the AQ Religion Course for 15+ years. Kevin was seconded by the Ministry of Education to Egale Canada where he trained Catholic administrators and educators across Ontario as the OECTA Coordinator of Diversity and Inclusion.

Kevin has keynoted major professional development events, presented at numerous conferences and Faculties of Education, and trained countless educators on matters of Inclusion, Equity and Diversity. Kevin currently teaches the AQ Course “Teaching 2SLGBTQI+

Students” for Queen’s University. He is adept at recognizing the sensitivity needed in working with delicate and challenging situations, especially within the Catholic school system. His commitment and passion for social justice throughout his career was recognized when selected as Teacher of the Year by Toronto Secondary Unit in 2012, and the Family Life Educator of the Year by the Catholic Association of Religion and Family Life Educators of Ontario (CARFLEO) in 2016.



KATRINA WHEATON

Katrina is a proud Nova Scotian and the Assistant Department Head of the OECTA Bargaining and Contract Services Department. She began her career in northern Ontario as an elementary teacher and served as a worksite steward with the Federation of Women’s Teachers’ Association of Ontario during the years of political protest. After 20 years in the classroom Katrina was elected Unit Vice-president and subsequently President of the Huron Superior local in Sault Ste. Marie. She joined the OECTA Provincial Office in 2015 as part of the team that bargained the extension of the 2014-17 Provincial Central Terms. She led the Thunder Bay Elementary Teacher strike in 2017. In addition to participation in the 2019-2022 central table teacher bargaining Katrina is assigned to the Association’s Provincial Health and Safety Committee and the Provincial Status of Women Committee. She has delivered provincial workshops on Leadership, Health and Safety, the Grievance/Arbitration Process, Collective Bargaining and Workplace Violence. Katrina was a delegate to the 63rd Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women 2019 in New York and she organized the OECTA inaugural Women in Leadership Conference Fempower. Katrina is also a member of the Provincial Working Group on Health and Safety.



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