



PRELIMINARY PROGRAM



## NOTE FROM OMSSA'S PRESIDENT



*On behalf of OMSSA's Board of Directors and staff, I'm excited to share our 2023 Exchange Conference program.*

*Coming to you in-person from May 9-10, our Conference brings together hundreds of human services professionals from front-line employees to service managers, and community organizations, from across Ontario to exchange knowledge, best practices, and creative solutions.*

*As we emerge from a lengthy period of disruption due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the silver lining for our Association has been found in a adaptation and new ways of thinking related to how we deliver services for clients, professional development and sharing information. We took great care to ensure the 2023 OMSSA Exchange Conference offers something for everyone in our sectors. I'm confident that you will find valuable sessions that pique your interest and give you a compelling reason to participate.*

*Consider what you learn at our annual Exchange Conference as enhancing your key skills and competencies on your immediate team and as training to become a volunteer leader within OMSSA and human services.*

*Hear from experts, partners, and members about timely and relevant information and practical take-aways. This includes insights into issues like national child care service delivery, hybrid workplaces, workplace equity, mental health and resiliency, health and human services, enhancing Indigenous relationships, and so much more!*

Many thanks to our conference planning committee, who helped to ensure that we could build a program focused on today's realities and tomorrow's big questions:

- Tod Duncan, *OMSSA (Chair)*
- Doug Ball, *OMSSA*
- Kimberly Brathwaite, *City of Toronto*
- Tyler Campbell, *City of Greater Sudbury*
- Jennifer Dombroskie, *County of Renfrew*
- Christie Herrington, *OMSSA*
- Rob Kirsic, *OMSSA*
- Sharifa Liburd, *Regional Municipality of Halton*
- Brian Mark, *Cochrane District Social Services Administration Board*
- Andrea McLean, *City of London*
- Meena Mullur, *City of Cornwall*
- Geoffrey Rao, *City of Ottawa*
- Nalisha Sankrecha, *OMSSA*

*I encourage you to take a closer look at the 2023 Exchange Conference program, and I look forward to welcoming you from May 9-10.*



## THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS AND PARTNERS

### **ONE HUMAN SERVICE NETWORK**

OMSSA is very pleased to announce [One Human Service Network \(OneHSN\)](#) as our Exchange Conference Event Sponsor! Thank you to OneHSN for your support of our upcoming event.



### **NOSDA**

OMSSA is very pleased to announce the [Northern Ontario Service Deliverers Association](#) as our Exchange Conference Event Partner! Thank you to NOSDA for your support of our upcoming event.



### **PROSPER CANADA**

OMSSA is very pleased to announce [Prosper Canada](#) as our Exchange Conference Event Partner! Thank you to Prosper Canada for your support of our upcoming event.



# OMSSA EXCHANGE

Where Human Services Professionals and Ideas Meet

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- [Session Descriptions and Speakers](#)
- [Awards Recipients](#)
- [Conference Fees and Registration](#)

We look forward to seeing you virtually!



## SCHEDULE-AT-A-GLANCE

MONDAY, MAY 8, 2023				
6:00 – 8:00 PM	WELCOME RECEPTION ROOM: 106 F/G			
TUESDAY, MAY 9, 2023				
8:00 – 9:00 AM	Breakfast & Registration			
9:10 – 10:10 AM	OPENING REMARKS: Henry Wall, Chief Administrative Officer Kenora District Services Board  PLENARY: Client Stories: Successes and Opportunities Room: 118 A/B/C/D			
10:10 – 10:40 AM	KEYNOTE: Senator Ratna Omidvar Room: 118 A/B/C/D			
10:40 – 10:55 AM	BREAK			
10:55 – 12:25 PM	BREAKOUTS			
	A	B	C	D
	Delivering Digital Equity: Bringing Digital Resources to Remote, Rural, and Urban Settings  Room: 106 C	Encampment Charter Litigation: Learnings from British Columbia  Room: 106 A/B	From Pain to Purpose: Mobilizing a Community in Crisis  Room 106 D	De-Escalate with Confidence: Guidelines for Managing Emotional Situations  Room 118 E
12:25 – 1:25 PM	LUNCH ROOM: TBD			
1:25 – 2:55 PM	E	F	G	H
	Person-Centric Case Management in Practice  Room 106 A/B	Building Community Responses to Racism and Discrimination  Room 106 D	Expanding Access, Inclusion, and Collaboration in EarlyON  Room 118 E	Supporting Indigenous Staff in OMSSA Workplaces: Moving from Allyship to Action Room 106 C
2:55 – 3:10 PM	BREAK			
3:10 – 4:00 PM	KEYNOTE: LEILANI FARHA ROOM: 118 A/B/C/D			
6:00 PM	2022 AWARDS BANQUET ROOM: 118 A/B/C/D			

WEDNESDAY, MAY 10, 2023				
8:00 – 9:00 AM	Breakfast & Registration			
9:00 – 10:45 AM	<b>OPENING REMARKS PLENARY</b> Opening Remarks: Doug Ball, OMSSA Executive Director  Local Municipal Champions: Addressing Needs Through Integrated Services  Room: 118 A/B/C/D			
10:45 – 11:00 AM	BREAK			
11:00 – 12:30 PM	BREAKOUTS			
	<b>I</b> Finding Solutions in Early Childhood Educator Recruitment and Retention  Room: 106 A/B	<b>J</b> The Personal is Political: A Workshop on Trauma, Oppression and Healing  Room 106 C	<b>K</b> Early Success and Opportunities in Employment Services Transformation  Room 118 E	<b>L</b> Rapport Talk, Not Report Talk: Navigating Complex Case  Room 106 D
12:30 – 1:30 PM	LUNCH			
1:30 – 3:00 PM	<b>CLOSING PLENARY</b> Room: 118 A/B/C/D			

## Session Descriptions & Speakers

**TUESDAY, MAY 9**

**OPENING REMARKS & PLENARY**

### **Client Stories: Successes and Opportunities**

**Room: 118 A/B/C/D**

With overwhelming caseloads, complex housing needs, recruitment and retention issues, and insufficient resources, it can feel like the work being done by the human services is just a "drop in the bucket." However, it is important to remember that all efforts have definite impacts to the lives of service users, and that every action is a crucial part of a larger continuum of care. In this plenary, you will hear from current and former service users who will speak about successes and opportunities related to support they received for employment and income, housing, and child care. This session aims to underscore the value of the important work being done by OMSSA Members and demonstrate the impact on the lives of service users.

Presenters:

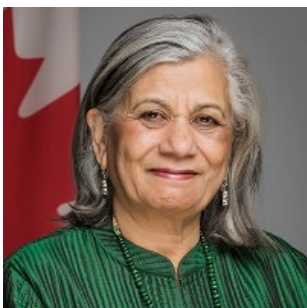
- Carolina Izaguirre-Campos, Senior Administrative Assistant, Employment and Social Services, Community and Social Services Department, City of Ottawa
- Kaitlynn Kavanagh

### **KEYNOTE**

### **Keynote Speaker: Senator Ratna Omidvar**

**Room: 118 A/B/C/D**

The Honourable Ratna Omidvar, C.M., O.Ont.



Ratna Omidvar is an internationally recognized voice on migration, diversity and inclusion. In April 2016, Ms. Omidvar was appointed to the Senate of Canada as an independent Senator representing Ontario. Currently, Senator Omidvar is the Chair of the Senate's Social Affairs, Health and Technology Committee and the Vice-President of the Canada-Germany Interparliamentary Group. She previously served as Deputy Chair of the Special Senate Committee on the Charitable Sector.

Senator Omidvar is a Director at the Century Initiative, a Councillor on the World Refugee and Migration Council, a Founding Committee Member of Lifeline Afghanistan and Chair Emerita for the Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council. She is also a Juror for the Global Centre for Pluralism's annual Pluralism Award.

Previously at Toronto Metropolitan University, Senator Omidvar was a Distinguished Visiting Professor and founded the Global Diversity Exchange. Senator Omidvar received a Honorary Degree, Doctor of Laws, from Toronto Metropolitan University in 2018 and from York University in 2012.

Senator Omidvar is co-author of *Flight and Freedom: Stories of Escape to Canada* (2015) and co-editor of *Five Good Ideas: Practical Strategies for Non-Profit Success* (2011).

Senator Omidvar was appointed to the Order of Ontario in 2005 and became a Member of the Order of Canada in 2011, with both honours recognizing her advocacy work on behalf of immigrants and devotion to reducing inequality in Canada. In 2014, Senator Omidvar received the Cross of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany in recognition of her contribution to the advancement of German-Canadian relations.

### Opening Keynote Description

According to the Federal Government's 2023–2025 Immigration Levels Plan, Canada is set to welcome approximately 1.5 million new immigrants over the next three years. Effective settlement and integration will be essential to ensure these newcomers are well positioned to contribute to Canadian communities and the economy. In regard to these anticipated settlement needs, Ontario's municipal social services providers will play an outsized role in enabling immigrants to prosper.

Drawing on her own experiences of international migration and her expertise in settlement, integration, and diversity and inclusion, Senator Ratna Omidvar will discuss the role that municipal social services can play in supporting recent immigrants and asylum seekers to become engaged citizens. She will also provide insight into how Ontario's municipal social services providers can best be prepared to support this influx of new Canadians.

## BREAKOUT SESSIONS

**A** **Delivering Digital Equity: Bringing Digital Resources to Remote, Rural, and Urban Settings**

**ROOM: 106 C**



A key challenge OMSSA Members are faced with is ensuring their most vulnerable service users have access to the resources and services that are available to other members of society. Whether it's being able to attend appointments with medical professionals, participate equally in virtual hearings, or to communicate with family, access to digital resources is a fundamental component of an equitable society. In these presentations from the District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board, Wellington County, and the City of Ottawa, we will learn how each of these OMSSA Member Organizations has approached addressing the digital equity needs of their communities in remote, rural, and urban settings.

### **Bridging the Digital Divide in Northern and Southern Ontario: How Wellington and Thunder Bay are Helping Clients Connect**

The rapid shift to virtual services across all sectors during the pandemic highlighted the necessity of reliable access to the internet and to digital devices. This shift also revealed the existence of a digital divide in our communities: the gap between those who can access and use information and communication technologies in their daily lives and people who cannot. With essential supports such as medical appointments, court hearings, and training programmes shifting to hybrid or virtual delivery, the need to address digital equity in our communities has become a clear imperative. Digital equity is described as a state where individuals can readily and effectively access and use technology to participate in society. For those in our communities who are unsheltered, living in poverty, and facing complex challenges, the pandemic closures of public spaces such as libraries further reduced access to computers, Wi-Fi, and other digital devices critical to accessing healthcare and social supports. Accessing essential services and supports online also poses challenges to residents of northern and rural areas, where high-speed, reliable, and affordable internet access may not be readily available. TBDSSAB and County of Wellington Ontario Works were amongst the first service managers to undertake direct initiatives to address the digital divide for residents in their respective urban and rural areas. Our experiences delivering these programs can be shared so that digital equity programs can be scaled and implemented across other CMSMs in Ontario.

#### **Presenters:**

- Dunja Lukic, Social Planning and Policy Analyst, Ontario Works, County of Wellington
- Michelle Wojciechowski, Manager Intake & Eligibility, District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board

## Innovative Solutions in Digital Equity

Working cross-departmentally within the municipal structure, the City of Ottawa has committed to creating innovative and sustainable solutions to persistent and complex needs of its equity deserving residents across multiple areas of focus. Recognizing entrenched barriers to digital connectivity and the widening gap of the digital divide exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, intrinsic partnerships between internal and external stakeholders has allowed the City of Ottawa to work collaboratively to develop innovative pilot and distribution programs. These initiatives have resulted in the facilitation of \$1.3M in funding for free public access Wi-Fi, a change in bylaws to allow the sole source sale of City hardware, and a robust digital lending initiative, all of which have worked to counter hardware and connectivity barriers.

### Presenters:

- Jennifer McCabe, Strategic Procurement Advisor, Supply Services, City of Ottawa
- Chris Simmons, Program Manager, Technology Services, Ottawa Public Library
- Connor Bell, Program Coordinator, Integrated Neighbourhood Services Team, City of Ottawa

## **B** Encampment Charter Litigation: Learnings from British Columbia Room: 106 A/B

On January 27, 2023, Justice M. J. Valente of the Ontario Superior Court rejected the Regional Municipality of Waterloo's application for an injunction to evict individuals who were encamped on Region-owned property due to those individuals being in breach of a local by-law prohibiting such actions. While the Justice praised the valuable work that the Region has already done to address homelessness, he nevertheless denied the injunction on the basis that the by-law violated the homeless residents' Charter right to life, liberty, and security.

While the impacts of the Waterloo decision on the work of OMSSA Members is still not fully known, municipal colleagues in British Columbia have been adjusting to similar Charter rights decisions for several years. The panel brings together experts from B.C. who will provide insight into how Charter litigation related to encampments has affected their approaches to engaging the unhoused population, by-law enforcement, and developing shelter, supportive, and permanent housing solutions.

### Presenters:

- Iain Dixon, Lawyer, City of Vancouver
- Dave LaBerge, Director of Bylaw Services, City of Nanaimo

## **C Breakout C – From Pain to Purpose: Mobilizing a Community in Crisis** **Room: 106 D**

On June 6, 2021, Canada gained international attention following the Islamophobic terror attack that took the lives of members of a visibly Muslim family and devastated the London community. Within days, politicians from every level of government and from across the country attended a vigil in honour of Our London Family. They talked about the need to rid ourselves and our communities of Islamophobia and they promised change. The Muslim community also spoke up. They demanded action - not words. City of London Council directed their staff to engage with the local Muslim community and key community partners to take action to eliminate Islamophobia on a local level. This session will discuss how a community in crisis came together to find purpose within their pain and commit to creating change through the creation of "A London for Everyone: An Action Plan to Disrupt Islamophobia."

### Presenters:

- Rumina Morris, Director, Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression, City of London
- Ahmer Khan, Muslim Community Liaison Advisor, City of London

## **D De-Escalate with Confidence: Guidelines for Managing Emotional Situations** **Room: 118 E**

It is quite common for us to tense-up and get thrown off balance when faced with an emotional situation involving another person. When this happens, our first reactions are how to make it stop, how to calm down the other person and how to ensure our own safety. The topic of de-escalating tense encounters pushes us toward wanting to know "how" to do it. However, if we first understand "what" is occurring and "why" it is occurring, we will have a better path to figuring out "how" to manage the occurrence.

In this workshop we will explore interpersonal situations and, specifically, how our brain creates predictable patterns of behaviour that result in escalated conflicts. Knowing this can unlock the steps we need to take and alter tension into compassion. By the end participants will walk away feeling confident in their ability to keep a bad situation from getting worse and being able to better manage their own emotional reactions in the process.

Presenter:

- Sharad Kerur (Q. Med, C.C. Med, CCMC, ACC, CDP, WFI) CEO, Resolution Pathways

## **E** Person-Centric Case Management in Practice

### **Room: 106 A/B**

As a result of the challenging housing, mental health, and addiction needs of service users, this session will look at how specific OMSSA Member organizations have transformed the delivery of Ontario Works. You will hear from Case Managers from Durham Region and Norfolk County about the shift towards a holistic, integrated, and person-centric approach that meets service users at their needs. They will also share their experiences of building community partnerships that help to provide wraparound services oriented towards stability supports.

## **Using Human-Centered Design and Coordinated Access Approaches to Support Clients with Urgent Financial Needs**

Since 2015, Prosper Canada has been using a structured, human-centered design process to work with municipal governments and Financial Empowerment Champions to help identify, design and integrate financial supports into Ontario Works case management and other municipal programs. EBO Financial Education Centre is a community organization that has been empowering economically vulnerable residents in Ottawa since 1979. In this presentation you will hear about the centralized referral system used by the City of Ottawa's Employment and Social Services (ESS) to connect OW recipients in precarious financial situations with EBO services, as well as ESS and EBO's co-location experience. Speakers will share what this cross-sectorial service design approach looks like as well learnings and opportunities derived out of their current collaborative work with Prosper Canada, which aims to empower many more ESS users by embedding impactful Financial Empowerment (FE) interventions into ESS service delivery to enhance stability support goals.

Presenters:

- Laura Masson, Partnership Coordinator, Employment and Social Services, Community and Social Services, City of Ottawa
- Nandita Bijur, Senior Officer, Prosper Canada
- Marc D'Orgeville, Executive Director, Centre d'Éducation Financière EBO

## **Social Assistance Modernization Challenges and Strategies: Shifting from Employment Case Manager to Life Stabilization Case Manager**

Andrea Personnic and Christopher Kindy both work as Case Managers for Haldimand & Norfolk Social Services. In their presentation they will outline how, since the start of the pandemic and the arrival of the Employment Services Transformation, the role of the caseworker has changed drastically from an employment coach to an integrated caseworker, navigating challenges like housing, homeless, mental health, and addiction. Drawing on their experiences as Case Managers and mental health workers, Andrea and Christopher will provide insight on what worked for Haldimand & Norfolk, as a pilot site for EST, and what were some of the challenges that frontline staff faced. They will reveal what training helped in their work and will provide tips and suggestions for improving actions plans, as outcome measures shift towards being based on achieving goals with the client.

### Presenters:

- Chris Kindy, Case Manager, Haldimand Norfolk Health Unit Health and Social Services Division, Norfolk County and Mental Health Worker, Canadian Mental Health Association
- Andrea Personnic, Case Manager, Haldimand Norfolk Health Unit Health and Social Services Division, Norfolk County and Mental Health Worker, Canadian Mental Health Association

## **Rethinking Casework: Supporting Clients on Their Path from Homelessness to Home**

Developing the Transitional Support Team (TSP) in Durham was a direct response to our homeless crisis, which was both highlighted and exacerbated by the COVID pandemic. Creating a team of frontline Ontario Works staff to provide intensive case management support to those in need, regardless of their income source, was something new and innovative to Durham Region. The TSP built their caseload through a Coordinated Access and By-name list, and work with those who have been homeless the longest and have highest acuity. Following a housing first methodology, they also work from a stages of change perspective and a trauma-informed approach to remain client-centered and mindful of needs. This team has built relationships and pathways with community partners such as mental health agencies, addiction support programs, community medical programs, and other housing-first-focused teams. We developed a working relationship with our local ODSP office to support our now mutual clients and their specific needs and generate quick and efficient responses to requests. This holistic approach allows the setting and meeting of goals, securing and maintaining safe

housing, along with building local community relationships, all of which are pivotal for success.

Presenters:

- Jocelyn Siciliano, Supervisor, Social Services, Regional Municipality of Durham
- Katie Hill, Supervisor, Social Services, Regional Municipality of Durham
- Erin Valant, Area Manager, Income and Employment Support Division, Social Services, Regional Municipality of Durham

## **F** Building Community Responses to Racism and Discrimination Room: 106 D

For municipalities and community organizations, a key component of fighting racism and discrimination is work devoted to effectively engaging the community. Whether this community is the broader public, staff within an organization, or specific equity-seeking groups, the success of these necessary endeavours will often succeed or fail based on how well they reach their target. In this session we will hear from City for All Women Initiative, County of Simcoe, and City of Ottawa on initiatives that tackle community engagement head-on.

### **#ITSTARTS: A Public Education Campaign to Reduce Racism and Discrimination**

As EarlyON programs recover from the pandemic, the need for continued innovative and inclusive programming was recognized. Through collaborations with community partners, York Region has developed is delivering new innovative and inclusive programming to expand programming and meet community needs. This presentation will highlight the initiatives, outcomes achieved, lessons learned, and best practices from three unique partnerships.

Partnership with Toronto Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) recognizing the importance of adapting service delivery to include four seasons outdoor programming from an Indigenous land-based learning and Ojibwe pedagogy.

Partnership with Triple P Canada to support families with children's mental health by piloting and adapting the Fear-Less Triple P Parenting program for families with young children from 2-6 years. This ground-breaking pilot collaboration supports increased mental health supports for very young children.

Partnership with Seneca College to increase the knowledge of Early Childhood Educators about EarlyON programs and the supports they can provide to families. York

Region staff provide presentations with the goal of increased collaboration amongst service providers and expanded employment options for graduates.

- Presenter: Sandra Lee, Manager, Community Services, County of Simcoe

## **The City of Ottawa Anti-Racism Strategy 2023-2025**

The City of Ottawa will present lessons learned from the process of developing the City's first Anti-Racism Strategy 2023-2025, focusing on best practices to engage the community and follow the principle of intersectionality.

Presenters:

- Sawsan Al-Refaei, Acting Program Manager, Anti-Racism & Women, Gender Equity, City of Ottawa
- Pei-Ju Wang, Anti-Racism Specialist, City of Ottawa

## **The City For All Women Initiative**

Presentation description coming soon.

Presenter:

- Morissa-Dalia Ellis, Programs Director, City for All Women Initiative

## **G Expanding Access, Inclusion, and Collaboration in EarlyON**

### **Room: 118 E**

EarlyON Programs are a vital part of every community and offer support to families around Ontario. This session will focus on innovative and inclusive programs that are meeting evolving community needs. Speakers from York Region and the City of Greater Sudbury will discuss partnerships that have allowed for the development of new supports and learning opportunities for individuals with young children. This breakout will also highlight Local Municipal Champion Award recipient York Region and their work building a Children's Services Portal that can be used by other Consolidated Municipal Service Managers/District Social Service Administration Boards (CMSMs/DSSABs) to increase access to available programs and make it easier for families to find and register for programs.

## **Building Partnerships and Innovative Programs to Expand EarlyON Programming**

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partners, York Region has developed is delivering new innovative and inclusive programming to expand programming and meet community needs. This presentation will highlight the initiatives, outcomes achieved, lessons learned, and best practices from three unique partnerships.

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#### Presenters:

- Kathy Lucky, Manager EarlyON Programs, Regional Municipality of York
- Lisa Whitney, Community Program Coordinator, EarlyON Programs, Regional Municipality of York

#### **Local Municipal Champion: York Region Children's Services Portal**

In April 2022, the York Region Ontario Child Care Management System (OCCMS) team in partnership with the York Region EarlyON Child and Family programs team implemented a system-wide, centralized online registration platform for EarlyON programs. The platform was developed in collaboration with EarlyON agencies and other Consolidated Municipal Service Managers/District Social Service Administration Boards (CMSMs/DSSABs), to increase access to available programs, make it easier for families to find and register for programs across the Region (which expanded parent choice), and enable data collection and integration, which will support future program planning. The platform was first launched in the Regional Municipality of York (York Region) and is now being used by seven CMSMs/DSSABs across the province. From April 1 to October 30, 2022, a total of 6,913 families have used the registration portal in York Region.

#### Presenter:

- Nadia Boismier, Supervisor – Child Care Services, Social Services, Community and Health Services, Regional Municipality of York



## EarlyON Child and Family Centres and Integration of Community Services

The value of EarlyON Child and Family Centres is essential in our communities. EarlyON services are not stand alone. Collaboration with early learning partners and professionals in the community provides access to family supports and enhance inclusion opportunities within EarlyON Centres.

This presentation will showcase some of the community partnerships such as NEO Kids, Wordplay Speech and Languages Services to support families navigating specialized services. How EarlyON Child and Family Centre can be utilized as a community hub for child, parent/caregiver services like Healthy Babies Healthy Children and Indigenous teachings provided by Indigenous led EarlyON's. As well as highlighting the work with local CMSM's and DSSAB.

Presenters:

- Melissa Pitfield RECE, Supervisor, EarlyON, CCR Connect

## **H** Breakout H - Supporting Indigenous Staff in OMSSA Workplaces: Moving from Allyship to Action

**Room: 106 C**

OMSSA Member organizations have made a number of positive steps towards bringing Reconciliation to the workplace: special efforts have made to increase the number of Indigenous staff, improve cultural awareness, and build partnerships with Indigenous organizations. However, more still needs to be done to support Indigenous staff in their work.

We have heard from Indigenous OMSSA Members that the challenge they are often faced with is the responsibility for leading an organization's anti-racism and anti-discrimination efforts. Additionally, these staff often feel "tokenized" when they are expected to initiate and lead initiatives that are meant to build and support their communities. And while Indigenous staff are often honoured with taking on these important responsibilities, it can often be mentally and physically taxing without the right supports.

It is not just the responsibility of Indigenous staff to do this work.

In this session, we will look at how Indigenous allies can become stewards that advocate and act alongside their Indigenous colleagues. This stewardship is not only oriented towards how they act towards each other, but also in their responsibility to Creation.

Speakers will explore the ways in which they can increase collective awareness and to build paths forward, towards stronger relationships and better workplaces.

The following priorities will be discussed in this session:

- Encouraging and supporting Indigenous Peoples in the workplace;
- Recruiting and retaining Indigenous Peoples in the workplace;
- Addressing bias, racism, discrimination and harassment, and improving cultural competence;
- Addressing learning, development and career advancement concerns expressed by Indigenous employees;
- Recognizing Indigenous Peoples' talents and promoting advancement to and within the executive group; and
- Supporting, engaging and communicating with Indigenous employees and partners.

Presenters:

- Shelly Hill, Manager, Indigenous Relations, Healthy and Safe Communities, City of Hamilton
- Jessica Chase, Director, Children's and Community Services, City of Hamilton

## KEYNOTE

**Keynote Speaker: Leilani Farha**

**Room: 118 A/B/C/D**



Leilani is the Global Director of The Shift, an international movement to secure the right to housing, and the former UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Housing (2014-2020). The Shift was launched in 2017 with the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and United Cities and Local Government. It works with multi-level stakeholders around the world, including with several city governments in North America and Europe.

Leilani's work is animated by the principle that housing is a social good, not a commodity. She has helped develop global human rights standards on the right to housing, including through

her topical reports on homelessness, the financialization of housing, informal settlements, rights-based housing strategies, and the first UN Guidelines for the implementation of the right to housing. She is the central character in the award-winning documentary PUSH regarding the financialization of housing, directed by the Swedish filmmaker Fredrik Gertten. PUSH is screening around the world and, to continue its momentum, Leilani and Fredrik now co-host a podcast – PUSHBACK Talks - about finance, housing, and human rights.

Session description to come shortly.

## 2022 Awards Banquet

**Room: 118 A/B/C/D**

As part of the Exchange Conference festivities, OMSSA is pleased to announce the Awards Banquet will return for 2023. The Awards Banquet is an opportunity to recognize our OMSSA Awards recipients (see more information below) and to gather for an evening to celebrate as a sector.

## WEDNESDAY, MAY 10

### OPENING REMARKS & PLENARY

**Room: 118 A/B/C/D**

#### Local Municipal Champions: Addressing Needs Through Integrated Services

This year the work of a number of the Local Municipal Champions award recipients have notably featured an integrated approach bringing together local human services in one location or teams to assist service users with their specific needs. In response to urgent circumstances such as COVID 19, these programs adapted their service management approach due to a heightened need for children services, income, housing, mental health, and addiction supports. In this session, four of this year's award recipients will tell the story of the programs that were developed for their communities, with particular emphasis on the successes they have seen and the challenges they have overcome. With the hope that other OMSSA Members can learn from their experiences, this session's presenters will discuss County of Lambton's Integrated Homelessness Prevention Team, City of Windsor's Housing Hub, District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board's Community Resource Centres, and City of Ottawa's Outreach and Mobile Services Team.

## **City of Ottawa: Outreach and Mobile Services Team**

In the fall of 2020, as non-essential services were being scaled back, essential human services were needed more than ever; COVID-19 was creating new and exacerbating existing inequities in our community. A team of Employment and Social Services staff at the City of Ottawa developed an innovative solution to bring wholistic, wraparound services and supports directly to residents who were living in poverty, socially isolated, experiencing homelessness or precariously housed and at greatest risk during the pandemic. The Outreach and Mobile Services Team (OMST) initiated their outreach services to individuals and families accessing the City of Ottawa's COVID-19 Physical Distancing and Respite Centres. Not only did the team provide streamlined and simplified access to employment, financial, childcare and stability supports, they provided system navigation by leveraging their experience, knowledge, and relationships with community partners to connect residents to other needed services and supports. In their work the OMST fosters a sense of safety, inclusion, and respect for the diversity and worth of every individual. Their client-centric approach and unwavering commitment to working together across programs and services is breaking down barriers and helping people when and where it is needed the most. Positive feedback from residents, community partners and the team themselves has resulted in the OMST's continued expansion and effective work into our community.

### **Presenter:**

- Kristine Haines-Chiarello, Manager (A), Employment and Social Services Central, Community and Social Services, City of Ottawa

## **County of Lambton: Integrated Homelessness Prevention Team**

To support integration efforts and meet the needs of the increasing number of Individuals and Families experiencing homelessness due to the Pandemic, the County of Lambton developed an Integrated Homelessness Prevention Team. Made up of staff from both the Ontario Works and Homelessness Prevention Departments, the integrated team utilizes an intensive case management model to assist people in exiting the emergency shelter system, provide stability supports and secure housing. Individuals and Families are being linked to numerous support services within the community including but not limited to primary health care, harm reduction services and mental health supports. The Integrated team has been successful at developing a quality By-Name List using HIFIS and in supporting Community Partners in using these valuable tools as well. Relationships and communications were enhanced both internally and with key Community Partners, and the integrated team was successful in transitioning over 230 people into safe, affordable, and permanent housing. The creation of this integrated team not only resulted in a significant reduction in those experiencing homelessness but was part of a catalyst in working to make tremendous

gains in the service system that supports the homelessness sector. This successful initiative has demonstrated that an integrated approach to Service System Management can improve the lives of the Individuals and Families we provide services to within our communities.

Presenter:

- Ian Hanney, Supervisor, Homelessness Prevention and Social Planning  
County of Lambton

### **City of Windsor: Housing Hub**

At the beginning of COVID, the closure (for day programming and limited numbers) at local homeless shelters, created a situation whereby the City of Windsor's Homelessness team created in very short order the H4 Centre (Housing and Homelessness Help Hub). The purpose of this program was to create a safe, low barrier place for the homelessness population to access multiple support services in one location during daytime hours. Partnerships included CMHA, Income Supports (OW/ODSP), Housing First support, justice involvement and addiction resources. The H4 Centre was able to build trust with the population being served which has led to positive outcomes in housing, health, addictions, and mental health. Even with the lifting of many Covid restrictions, the H4 Centre has still been seeing a significant amount of clients on a daily basis, 7 days per week. H4 has seen a steady increase in the volume of program participants accessing the service. As of June 2022, H4 has welcomed over 2,200 unique clients, with 59,654 visits. The program averages attendance between 110-150 unique visitors per day on most days, and often reaches capacity shortly after opening the doors. The Housing Hub model is rooted in best practices for reducing community homelessness by focusing on both housing loss prevention, creating pathways to housing and other support services, and serving those that are actively experiencing homelessness. As new people use the service, it helps to inform and validate the region's By Name List for homeless individuals. Due to the success achieved in providing this ad hoc model, Windsor City Council has authorized the exploration of creating a new permanent Housing Hub model, that will include permanent supportive housing, and the support services identified in the H4 model. If a permanent center is created, this will become a regional asset that will help support homelessness efforts in our community.

Presenters:

- Kelly Goz, Coordinator, Housing Admin & Development, City of Windsor
- Whitney Kitchen, Coordinator - Housing Administration & Development, City of Windsor

### **The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board: Community Resource Centres**

Over the past five years TBDSSAB has worked to create community resource centres for

tenant and clients, creating centralized access for neighbourhood enhancement. The resource centre is a dedicated unit within the neighbourhood that provides a variety of services and supports to the households in the area. On a scheduled basis, staff from the Integrated Social Services team--including Social Assistance, Housing, and Child Care--attend at the resource centres and meet with clients/tenants with the goal of delivering integrated supports to tenants close to home. Additional services include life skills sessions, community kitchens, community gardens, access to computers, printers and the internet, and provision of space for community partner organizations to offer services. Other services offered through community partners include medical access via a nurse practitioner, local health unit support, healthy kids sites, harm reduction supplies and support referrals for mental health and addictions programming, cultural programming opportunities and employment supports. Feedback from individuals accessing the resource centres has been overwhelmingly positive, with many stating they appreciate the convenience of being able to access supports without needing to travel to the TBDSSAB office.

Presenter:

- Jennifer Lible, Manager, Social Assistance Programs, District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board

## BREAKOUT SESSIONS

### **I Finding Solutions in Early Childhood Educator Recruitment and Retention**

**Room: 106 A/B**

It's abundantly clear that the primary mechanism to improve the recruitment and retention of Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) is stable, predictable funding to improve ECE wages and benefits. A solution needs to be found here in order to maintain stable and affordable child care under the Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) program. Outside finding ways to increase remuneration, OMSSA Members have developed other approaches to help solve some of these concerns. This session will include presentations from the City of Greater Sudbury, the Regional Municipalities of Halton, Durham, and Peel, and the City of Toronto about the programs they have developed to improve recruitment and retention locally.

### **Pedagogical Mentoring Program: Pilot Project for Leadership Capacity in Child Care**

The Pedagogical Mentoring Program made funding available to each Licensed Child Care Agency to support the cost of one full time Pedagogical Leader to provide hands-on

pedagogical mentoring and support for supervisors and educators, to strengthen pedagogical practices and improve employee well-being. This project was built on best practices in the sector and building on innovation practices in our community. The overarching goal of the program is to strengthen the workforce by directly supporting leaders/mentors/companions and indirectly supporting team members to connect with the meaning and value in their work.

Presenters:

- Laura Urso, Quality Coordinator, Early Years Programs, City of Greater Sudbury

### **GTA ECE Recruitment and Retention Consortium**

Recruitment and retention of Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) has been a long-standing provincial issue. Staff at the City of Toronto, Region of Peel, Regional Municipality of Durham, and the Regional Municipality of Halton worked together with seven Greater Toronto Area (GTA) post-secondary institutions, George Brown College, Durham College, Centennial College, Sheridan College, Mothercraft College of Early Childhood Education, Seneca College and Humber College, to increase the number of ECEs across the GTA. Through a collaborative effort, staff worked with the colleges to implement a fully funded fast-tracked ECE program for 210 additional graduates by 2023. Staff also worked with the post-secondary institutions to implement stabilization grants to fund additional expenses for almost 1,900 students in the accelerated and existing ECE programs. The partnership also allows for individualized local community characteristics of the post-secondary institutions to ensure the diversity of students is incorporated and respected in the program choices. This will directly address the recruitment and retention issues identified by local child care operators across the four municipalities, and support increased child care spaces, and high-quality care for families. The initiative was based on existing relationships but has sparked further collaboration between municipal partners and post-secondary institutions across the GTA in support of addressing the sector-wide recruitment and retention issues. The relationships can be leveraged to support collaborative opportunities in other sectors e.g., Social Assistance stability supports, employment services, etc.

Presenters:

- Donette Philips, Manager, Direct Children's Services, Regional Municipality of Halton
- Tracy Barclay, Advisor, Regional Municipality of Durham

- Olivia Nunes, Acting Director, Early Years and Child Care Services Division, Regional Municipality of Peel

## **J** The Personal is Political: A Workshop on Trauma, Oppression, and Healing

### **Room: 106 C**

Experienced Social Worker, trauma therapist, consultant, and educator, Karine Silverwoman will lead an interactive workshop on trauma, vicarious trauma, and trauma-informed practice from a social justice lens. This workshop is designed to give you a greater understanding of the fundamentals of trauma (brain, body, nervous system) from an anti-racist, anti-oppression perspective, with the goal of building your confidence in working with persons and communities that have experienced trauma. We'll explore how our own lived experiences impact our work and how structural oppression intersects with trauma-informed practice. We'll introduce trauma-informed approaches and tools to use in our work (whether for ourselves, our clients, or our communities). You will learn to consider the connections between social justice, oppression, and trauma, while also building on service users' strengths instead of their perceived weaknesses. With a focus on social justice, this session will benefit both those who have prior training in trauma-informed care, as well as those who are new to this approach.

Presenter:

- Karine Silverwoman, Social Worker and Trainer

## **K** Early Successes and Opportunities in Employment Services Transformation

### **Room: 118 E**

The rollout of the Employment Services Transformation over several years combined with the use of different Service System Managers (SSM) has meant that OMSSA Members have sometimes had starkly different experiences with the project. For instance, Bruce County and its partners were the first municipal SSM in the province, whereas Hamilton has worked closely with a non-profit organization as its SSM. This session will delve into what has been learned in these two experiences, with a focus on their initial successes and how they have adjusted and adapted as new opportunities have arisen. We will also hear from a Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development counterpart, Alissa Savage, who will provide insight into the work that the Employment Services Transformation Secretariat is doing to



continuously improve the program.

## **Municipal SSMs: Integration of Employment and Social Assistance**

Bruce County (in partnership with Grey County, Huron County, and the City of Stratford serving Perth County) is implementing the Employment Service System Manager model supporting the transformation of Employment Ontario. Bruce County is the first municipal Service System Manager selected in the province and is using this opportunity to take innovative approaches to delivering outcomes for the citizens of the Stratford Bruce Peninsula. Through a co-design approach Bruce County is engaging Social Assistance, Employment Services, Economic Development, and other strategic partners across the four counties to develop an outcome focuses and locally responsive employment system. The approach is intended to develop a client pathway that is client centric, support the nonlinear journey to employment, addresses local employer needs, and strengthen human service integration. This approach builds on the incredible collaboration in the catchment area. This session will explore the structure of the Service System Manager, the co-design approach being used, and early findings based on the work done.

### Learning Outcomes:

1. Understanding community engagement in system stewardship.
2. Exploring co-design is human service delivery.
3. Understanding the municipal approach to employment service system management.

### Presenter:

- Aaron Stauch, Regional Manager Employment Services, Planning and Development, Corporation of the County of Bruce

## **Our Journey so Far, the City of Hamilton's EST Experience – Lessons, Opportunities, and Growth**

Representatives from the City of Hamilton will share some of the EST experiences and insights they have gathered during the first two years of their EST implementation.

### Presenter:

- Meredith Mandryk-Kelly, Manager, Ontario Works – Program Supports, Healthy and Safe Communities, City of Hamilton

- Tim Begin, Human Services Supervisor, Ontario Works, City of Hamilton

## **Overview of Experience with the Employment Services Transformation**

This presentation will cover how the Co-Design process with prototype municipalities was used to determine client pathways. We will also describe how we have sought to work collaboratively across ministries. Finally, we will address the lessons that we have learned specifically around improving the onboarding process and the importance of engaging with Service System Managers early and often. We are excited about the opportunity to engage with stakeholders to improve the model.

Presenters:

- Alissa Savage, Senior Manager, Transformation Secretariat, Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training, and Skills Development
- Santina Macri, Senior Manager, Delivery Support, Employment Services, Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training, and Skills Development

## **L Rapport Talk, Not Report Talking: Navigating Complex OW Cases: A Case Study Session**

**Room: 106 D**

As CMSMs and DSSABs move towards stability supports, the interpersonal communication skills required to develop a rapport and improve relationship building starts with very different questions and outcomes than the verification interviews of the past. What are the key questions that help to build a relationship and trust? How do you mitigate the complexities of positional power? In this session, we will examine several complex cases through the lens of local practices, and we will break down commonly encountered barriers into small achievable steps. Emphasis will be placed on the role of honest dialogue between case managers and service users, with a specific focus on the priorities of the service user.

Presenters:

- David Thomas, OMSSA Facilitator
- Chris Kindy, Case Manager, Haldimand Norfolk Health Unit Health and Social Services Division, Norfolk County and Mental Health Worker, Canadian Mental Health Association
- Gynette Moise, Budget Counsellor, EBO Financial Education Centre

## CLOSING REMARKS & PLENARY

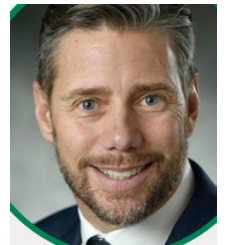
**Room: TBD**

Session description to come shortly.

### 2022 Award Recipients

#### Lifetime Achievement Award - Greg Bishop, Count of Simcoe & Debbie Cercone, City of Windsor

Greg Bishop has been the General Manager, Social and Community Services Division at the County of Simcoe since 2015. This role includes leadership and oversight to the Social Housing, Community Services, Ontario Works and Children Services Departments.



Debbie began her career in 1990 with the Ministry of Community and Social Services where she held the positions of Team Social Worker, Program Analyst, Project Manager and Program Supervisor supporting individuals and families with disabilities, child and youth mental health, young offenders' violence against women and children's treatment centres.



#### Young Leader Award - Joseph Friedman Burley, City of Toronto

Joseph Friedman Burley is a public health professional with a background in 2SLGBTQI+ health research and policy, specifically in the areas of sexual health, harm reduction, and anti-violence.



#### Local Municipal Champions Award

We will recognize outstanding teams who have advanced excellence in service integration and service system management:

- City of Ottawa: Outreach and Mobile Services Team
- City of Windsor: Housing Hub
- County of Lambton: Integrated Homelessness Prevention
- Halton Region, Region of Peel, Durham Region, City of Toronto: GTA ECE Recruitment and Retention
- Region of Peel: Youth Caseworker Teams
- County of Simcoe: Community Services Department
- Stratford-Bruce Peninsula: Employment Service System Manager

- The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board:  
Community Resource Centres
- York Region: Children Services Portal

## CONFERENCE FEES

### MEMBER RATES

Registrations of 1 to 4 People				
	Member Early Bird Rate (By March 7)	Member Rate (After March 7)	Not-for-Profit/Student Fees (By March 7)	Not-for-Profit/Student Fees (After March 7)
Full Registration (May 9-10 with Awards Banquet) Includes Welcome Reception on May 8 at 6:00 PM	\$620+ HST	\$670+ HST	\$565+HST	\$615+HST
Full Registration (May 9-10 NO Awards Banquet) Includes Welcome Reception on May 8 at 6:00 PM	\$510+ HST	\$560+ HST	\$470+HST	\$520+HST
Daily: May 9 or 10	\$305+ HST	\$395+ HST	\$270+HST	\$320+HST
Registrations of 5 or More People* (Save 10%)				
	Member Early Bird Rate (By March 7)	Member Rate (After March 7)	Not-for-Profit/Student Fees (By March 7)	Not-for-Profit/Student Fees (After March 7)
Full Registration (May 9-10 with Awards Banquet) Includes Welcome Reception on May 8 at 6:00 PM	\$558+ HST	\$603+ HST	\$509+HST	\$554+HST
Full Registration (May 9-10 NO Awards Banquet)	\$459+ HST	\$504+ HST	\$423+HST	\$468+HST



Includes Welcome Reception on May 8 at 6:00 PM				
Daily: May 9 or 10	\$275+ HST	\$320+ HST	\$243+HST	\$288+HST

### NON-MEMBER RATES

Registrations of 1 to 4 People		
	Non-Member Early Bird Rate (By March 7)	Non-Member Rate (After March 7)
Full Registration (May 9-10 with Awards Banquet) Includes Welcome Reception on May 8 at 6:00 PM	\$800+ HST	\$850+ HST
Full Registration (May 9-10 NO Awards Banquet) Includes Welcome Reception on May 8 at 6:00 PM	\$655+ HST	\$705+ HST
Daily: May 9 or 10	\$390+ HST	\$440+ HST
Registrations of 5 or More People		
	Non-Member Early Bird Rate (By March 7)	Non-Member Rate (After March 7)
Full Registration (May 9-10 with Awards Banquet) Includes Welcome Reception on May 8 at 6:00 PM	\$720+ HST	\$165+ HST
Full Registration (May 9-10 NO Awards Banquet) Includes Welcome Reception on May 8 at 6:00 PM	\$590+ HST	\$635+ HST
Daily: May 9 or 10	\$351+ HST	\$396+ HST

### EXTRAS

	(By March 7)	(After March 7)
May 8 Welcome Reception (Included in Full Registration)	\$55+ HST	\$75+ HST
May 9 Awards Banquet (Includes four-course meal and entertainment)	\$100+ HST	\$125+ HST

## REGISTRATION

Online registration is available on our website at the link below. Please review the following information before completing your registration:

- One or more attendees from the same organization may be included in a single registration and invoice.
- Payment options include Credit Card, Cheque, or Electronic Funds Transfer.
- Credit Card payments are made online at time of registration.
- If you opt to pay by Cheque or Electronic Funds Transfer, an invoice will be provided to you by email upon completing your registration.

[REGISTER ONLINE NOW](#)

All fees are subject to HST.

All fees listed are per person.

Member rates are available to any staff member of an OMSSA member organization (one of the 47 CMSMs and DSSABs in Ontario). Full conference registration fee entitles delegates to attend all plenary sessions, concurrent workshops, the welcome reception, breakfast & lunch daily, all refreshment breaks.

All other registration fees entitle the delegate to attend plenary and workshop sessions, breakfast, lunch and breaks on the indicated days of attendance.

Daily registrants wishing to attend the Welcome reception, Awards banquet can purchase tickets separately.

Banquet includes a four-course plated dinner with a chicken, beef or vegetarian option. Dietary restrictions will be accommodated and can be documented at the time of registration.

Not-for-Profit and Student Pass (Not-for-Profit pass is for small, community-based agencies delivering human services. Student pass requires a valid, current student ID to be sent at time of registration.

## CANCELLATION POLICY

Requests for refunds to the event will be honoured, less a \$75.00 administration fee, provided a written notice of cancellation and request for refund is received more than ten (10) business days prior to the event (on or before April 24, 2023). No refunds will be issued within nine (9) business days of the first day of the event (on or after April 25, 2023). In the event a registered delegate is unable to attend, one delegate can be registered as a substitution for the purchased registration type. Conference registrations cannot be shared. Delegates who arrive on site to share a registration will be charged a \$75 administration fee to enter the conference.

OMSSA reserves the right to cancel the program at any time and will be responsible for refunding the registration fee only.

Email [education@omssak.com](mailto:education@omssak.com) with any general inquiries.