





# LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The land on which OMSSA operates is the traditional territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Ojibwe, the Haudenosaunee, the Wendat, and it is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit, and Métis. We also acknowledge that our Members span an area known as the Province of Ontario which is covered by 46 treaties and agreements.

Our goal as an Association is to develop and enhance strong partnerships with Indigenous organizations, especially as we increase opportunities for members to build their understanding and relationships with Indigenous communities across Ontario. As OMSSA implements its Strategic Plan, our goal is to ensure the insights of our Indigenous partners is considered in much of what we do moving forward within this plan.

# A MESSAGE FROM OMSSA'S PRESIDENT HENRY WALL



On behalf of the OMSSA Board, I'm pleased to share the Ontario Municipal Social Services Association's 2023 Annual Report. By supporting, connecting, and advocating for our members across Ontario, as a collective, we are committed to tackling society's most significant challenges. We have put a foundation in place for proactive connectedness and growth to respond to local and national needs, and to ensure that our Members are not left behind.

The impacts that OMSSA's membership has on the lives of individuals, families, and seniors in communities across the Province can not be overstated. For many families, their first interaction with our services starts with their children. We are a starting point on a pathway for many families in need of other social services, early intervention for children with special needs, and broader issues such as food insecurity and support for asylum seekers. Or receive supports through the housing continuum – from pre-natal supportive housing to affordable housing to supportive seniors housing - OMSSA Members play a fundamental role in creating inclusive and supportive communities.

Our membership is responding to the housing crisis, and the growing homelessness crisis, by developing bridge housing and other tailored supportive housing solutions. This challenge will take a sustained effort over several years and will require creative solutions to get us to a better place. In partnership with the Province, we are revitalizing how employment and income supports are delivered in Ontario. We are moving to a new model that redefines how OMSSA Members work with clients to help them develop local and tailored solutions to their circumstances. This year, we reached out to international sources to take a glimpse beyond our province to better understand the national and global state of human services, and how to approach common challenges collectively.

OMSSA continues to strengthen partnerships with like-minded organizations in key areas such as mental health and addictions and Indigenous relations to ensure Members can achieve their collective mission of delivering the best human services outcomes for Ontario's communities. We launched our Human Services Certificate Program designed for first-line staff, supervisors, and managers in all program areas of human services. The program focuses on developing knowledge and skill application in their current roles as well as future career aspirations.

As I reflect on my first year as OMSSA President, I want to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to OMSSA Members, and our dedicated Staff and Executive Director, for their continued support of me in my role. I also want to thank my colleagues on the OMSSA Board and the 47 Leads for their steady support of the forward-thinking direction the Association is heading.

This report features a small sample of the work undertaken by the Association and our membership. Please read this report and help celebrate our 2023 achievements that positively contribute to the delivery of human services in Ontario.





# ABOUT OMSSA



## HERE FOR ONTARIO'S COMMUNITIES

The Ontario Municipal Social Services Association (OMSSA) is a non-profit association whose members are Ontario's 47 Service System Managers who oversee systems planning and manage the delivery of local human services in a way that is integrated, people-focused and outcomes-driven. This includes critical services that Ontarians rely on every day, from affordable housing, homelessness services and prevention, to income and employment supports, child care, and early years services.



## HERE FOR OUR MEMBERS

OMSSA exists to serve the interests of its Members. By supporting, connecting, and advocating for Ontario's 47 Service System Managers, we help them to achieve their collective mission of delivering the best human services outcomes for Ontario's communities.

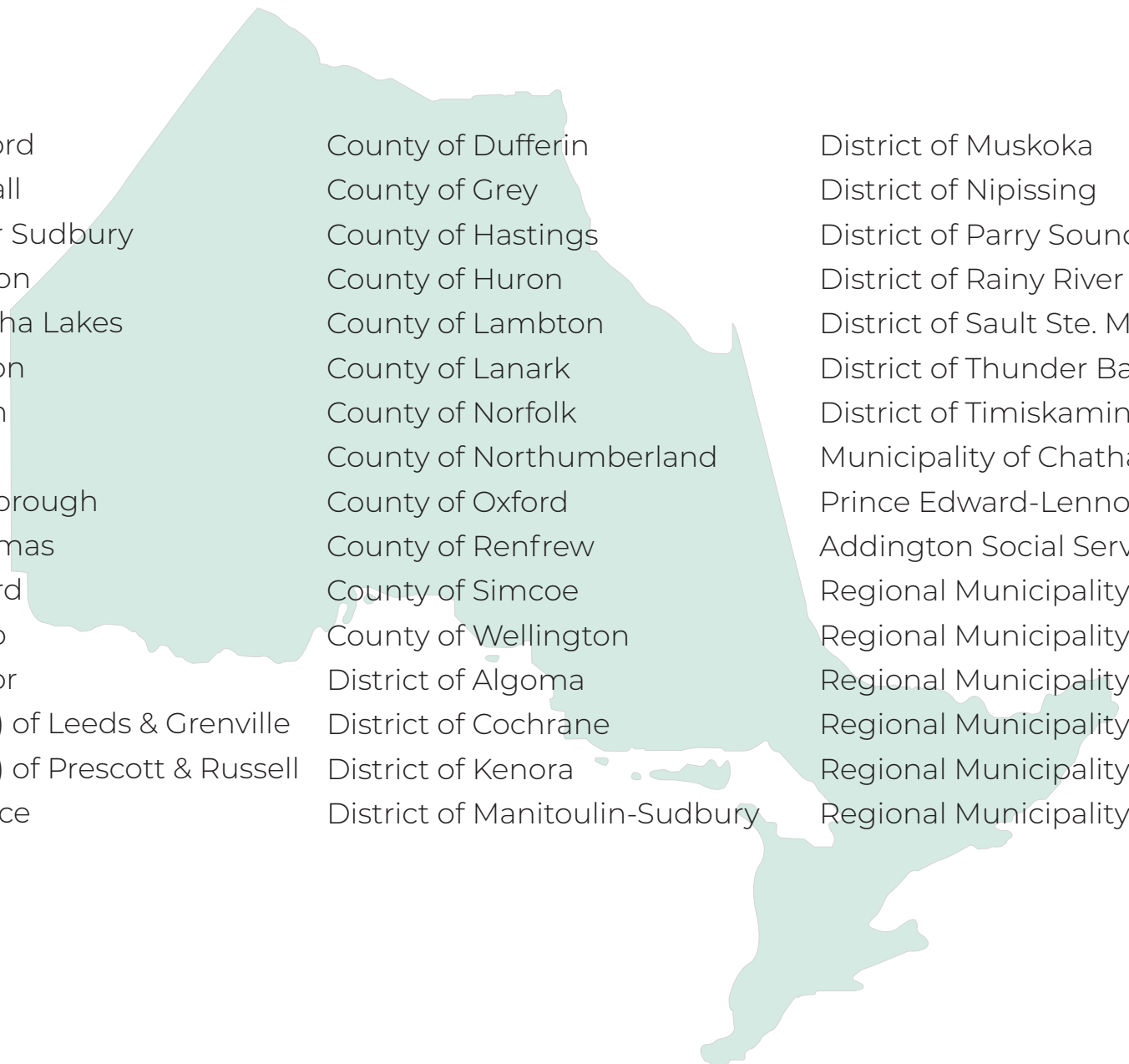


# WHEN SERVICES ARE PLANNED, COORDINATED, AND DELIVERED AT THE LOCAL LEVEL BY EXPERIENCED SERVICE SYSTEM MANAGERS:

- ▶ **People remain at the centre**, with a focus on the whole spectrum of a person's needs.
- ▶ **People can access a variety of services in one place**, in the communities where they live.
- ▶ **Services meet the different needs of Ontario's unique communities** (urban, rural or suburban, large or small, north or south) by leveraging Service System Managers' in-depth knowledge of their communities.
- ▶ Services are **planned, coordinated, and delivered in a streamlined and integrated way**, in coordination with local community supports.
- ▶ Services continuously improve through **innovation, partnership and collaboration with local leaders** in the health, education, justice, Indigenous, community development sectors and more.
- ▶ As accountable orders of government, municipalities work to ensure that taxpayer-funded **services are managed with a focus on transparency, quality assurance and strong outcomes**.



# OUR MEMBERS



City of Brantford  
City of Cornwall  
City of Greater Sudbury  
City of Hamilton  
City of Kawartha Lakes  
City of Kingston  
City of London  
City of Ottawa  
City of Peterborough  
City of St. Thomas  
City of Stratford  
City of Toronto  
City of Windsor  
Counties (U/C) of Leeds & Grenville  
Counties (U/C) of Prescott & Russell  
County of Bruce

County of Dufferin  
County of Grey  
County of Hastings  
County of Huron  
County of Lambton  
County of Lanark  
County of Norfolk  
County of Northumberland  
County of Oxford  
County of Renfrew  
County of Simcoe  
County of Wellington  
District of Algoma  
District of Cochrane  
District of Kenora  
District of Manitoulin-Sudbury

District of Muskoka  
District of Nipissing  
District of Parry Sound  
District of Rainy River  
District of Sault Ste. Marie  
District of Thunder Bay  
District of Timiskaming  
Municipality of Chatham-Kent  
Prince Edward-Lennox and  
Addington Social Services  
Regional Municipality of Durham  
Regional Municipality of Halton  
Regional Municipality of Niagara  
Regional Municipality of Peel  
Regional Municipality of Waterloo  
Regional Municipality of York



# WHAT WE'RE ABOUT



## Mission

To support Members in achieving the best human services outcomes.



## Vision

Human services that create better lives for all Ontarians.



## Value

An indispensable forum to collaborate and lead in advancing human service issues, reflecting the will of Members.

## 2023-2027 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

OMSSA's 2023–2027 Strategic Plan outlines a clear path for the Association to raise the bar as an organization recognized as a leading voice and support for human and social services efforts across Ontario. OMSSA's time, effort and resources will be focused on achieving goals across four key areas of activity:

### POLICY AND ISSUES MANAGEMENT

Create and influence evidence-based policy impacting human services in Ontario.

### EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Be the leading provider of education and professional development in the province offering an accessible and timely suite of ongoing professional development to staff at all levels.

### ENGAGEMENT AND MEMBER COMMUNICATIONS

Facilitate sharing of information, knowledge and best practices to leverage expertise and resources to ensure meaningful engagement and knowledge exchange.

### PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION

Build honest and authentic partnerships and collaborate in order to further enable OMSSA's ability to foster and influence positive human services outcomes for Ontarians.

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The OMSSA Board of Directors reflects a complimentary mix of skills, knowledge and expertise. OMSSA is committed to recruiting candidates for the Board that reflect the diversity of its membership as well as the communities they serve.

Members are elected to the 10-member Board at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Association for a two-year term of office. The following individuals serve on OMSSA's Board of Directors and lead the strategic direction of our Association over the 2023-2024 year.



**Henry Wall**  
**PRESIDENT**

Chief Administrative  
Officer  
Kenora District Services  
Board



**Stella Danos-  
Papaconstantinou**  
**VICE-PRESIDENT**

Commissioner, Social  
Services  
Regional Municipality of  
Durham



**Mike Nadeau**  
**TREASURER**

Chief Executive Officer  
District of Sault Ste.  
Marie Social Services  
Administrative Board



**Sutha Balasingham**  
**SECRETARY**

Director, Employment  
and Social Services  
City of Toronto



**Cathy Cousins**  
**PAST-PRESIDENT**

Director of  
Homelessness and  
Community Engagement,  
Community Services  
Regional Municipality of  
Niagara



**Stu Beumer**  
**MEMBER AT LARGE**

Director of Ontario  
Works  
City of Hamilton



**Satinder Klair**  
**MEMBER AT LARGE**

Director, Children's  
Services  
Regional Municipality of  
Niagara



**James Lapierre**  
**MEMBER AT LARGE**

Deputy Chief of Staff,  
Strategy and  
Integration, City  
Manager's Office  
City of Toronto



**Andrew Scavarelli**  
**MEMBER AT LARGE**

Director, Ontario Works  
County of Simcoe



**Polly Smith**  
**MEMBER AT LARGE**


Director of Employment  
and Social Services  
Municipality of  
Chatham-Kent





THANK YOU OMSSA  
MEMBERS





Ontario's human services sector, including all 47 of Ontario's Consolidated Municipal Service Manager (CMSM) and District Social Services Administration Board (DSSAB) Members of OMSSA, continue to have a critical role in responding to the local needs of communities across the province. The scope of the work done by OMSSA Members has a profound impact on our communities.

OMSSA would like to thank and recognize Ontario's human services staff who continue to go above and beyond to support their communities through their professionalism, dedication, and care, continuing to show the value of human services and helping those in their time of need.



# MEMBER ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Ontario is the only jurisdiction in Canada where municipalities are responsible for the delivery of social services. OMSSA Members are entrusted with public funds to provide human services for the most vulnerable in our communities. This unique mandate provides an environment of solutions and outcomes that are tailored to each community's needs.

Here are a few examples of the valuable projects and initiatives OMSSA Members have accomplished in 2023:

## CHILDREN'S SERVICES



- The **City of Hamilton** provided a work force grant to retain Early Childhood Educators working in the early years system. Over 450 participated and reported that the grant increased feelings of professional respect, supported their family well-being, reduced household debt, and inspired them to stay in their career.
- **Hastings County's** Children's Services program partnered with Loyalist College to create the Hastings County Early Childhood Education (ECE) Scholarship.

This will support current and future students enrolled in the College's ECE program. The scholarship will create a new pathway of opportunity for the next generation of ECEs and strengthen the future of the region's early years workforce.

- **Nipissing District's** Children's Services proactive approach to recruitment of early years and child care workers includes developing a variety of micro-credential programs at select Northern colleges along with an extensive marketing campaign and financial incentives to promote this profession and to address the ECE shortage. The campaign includes recognition of the profession as part of retention efforts.
- The Language and Mentorship Program (LAMP) allows caregivers who are representative of our diverse linguistic community to contract with the **Region of Waterloo's** Licenced Home Child Care program to provide quality child care in their home. The program is designed for Caregivers that have lower levels of English. They receive support from interpreters and mentors and focus on providing care to children from their language community. Caregivers in the LAMP program are supported to continue with their English language learning, and receive interpretation until no longer required.

PHOTO COURTESY OF HASTINGS COUNTY

# MEMBER ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME SUPPORT

- ▶ The Ontario Works team has successfully launched community-based drop-in information and resource clinics throughout **Haldimand and Norfolk Counties**.
- ▶ The **City of Hamilton** invested \$169,000 in implementing an online application, benefit approval and payment system for City-funded benefits. Low-income residents can apply online for a wide range of health-related benefits, a snow removal subsidy and Hamilton's newly approved Fare Assist transit discount.
- ▶ **Hastings County** staff designed Rent Connect, a platform aimed at connecting prospective landlords and community members seeking rental opportunities. This was launched internally and used by Ontario Works staff to match members of the public to available rental units. The tool is updated daily by staff and monitored for successful outcomes and ongoing improvements.
- ▶ The **Region of Peel** invested \$1.9 million dollars to the Wellness Response and Assistance Program (WRAP). This funding supports 21 agencies and one mental health portal project in Peel to offer counselling and education programs focused on addressing addiction and/or mental health issues for Ontario Works recipients.
- ▶ The **Region of Waterloo** is investing more than \$26 million in a Waterloo Region Housing building at 416 Kingscourt Drive, which will have 73 units. The project is also part of the Region's pilot Community Benefits program, which will provide workforce development opportunities for members of equity-deserving groups to gain experience and employment in the construction trades. Project completion is expected to be in February 2025.

The image shows two screenshots of websites. The top screenshot is for the 'RENT CONNECT PROGRAM' by Hastings County. It features a header with the title and a photo of hands holding a family silhouette. Below the header, there are four main sections: 'ARE YOU LOOKING FOR ACCOMMODATIONS?', 'WE CAN HELP! TRY OUR ONLINE TOOL WHERE LANDLORD'S CAN POST LISTINGS!', 'IN WHAT WAYS CAN I USE RENTCONNECT?', and 'SELF-SERVE OPTION' with a website link and contact information. At the bottom, there is a section for emergency homeless situations with contact numbers and a 'SCAN ME' QR code. The bottom screenshot is for the 'City of Hamilton Subsidy and Support Programs Application Website'. It has a navigation bar with 'Home', 'FAQ', 'Register', and 'Sign In' buttons. Below the navigation bar, it says 'Welcome to the City of Hamilton Subsidy and Support Programs Application Website' and has 'Register' and 'Sign In' buttons. The main content area is divided into two columns: 'About the Special Supports Program' and 'About the HSR Fare Assist Program'. The 'Special Supports Program' section mentions that it offers residents of Hamilton who are recipients of Ontario Works, the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) or low income with access to essential health-related benefits. The 'HSR Fare Assist Program' section mentions that it offers Hamilton residents who are recipients of Ontario Works, the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) or have household incomes below the Low Income Measure, a 30% discount on current single-ride PRESTO fares for themselves and their family.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF HASTINGS COUNTY (TOP) AND THE CITY OF HAMILTON (BOTTOM)



# MEMBER ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## SENIORS AND LONG-TERM CARE

- ▶ **Halton Region** is developing a 52-unit seniors supportive housing property with a 10,000 sq ft Community Wellness Hub at 265 Kerr Street in Oakville. Seniors from the Region's assisted housing and coordinated access waitlist will be housed in the units. Halton Region has invested \$24 million. The project includes \$11.9 million in Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative and \$9.3 million in Rapid Housing Initiative funding. This is Halton's first Passive House Certified assisted housing project. Occupancy is anticipated in Winter 2024.
- ▶ **Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board**'s first build in 24 years opened in Little Current. Fielding Place is a brand-new senior's facility with 12 units, including one-bedroom and two-bedroom units. Residents are close to waterfront parks, local shops, banking, and community activities. This accomplishment wouldn't be possible without a land donation, Federal, Provincial and Municipal funds.
- ▶ With \$527,000 in new provincial funding for Nurse Practitioners in Long-Term Care (LTC), the **City of Toronto's** Seniors Services and Long-Term Care now have strong contingent of these independent practitioners working as part of the care team to assess, diagnose, prescribe medications, monitor, and provide education to 2,600+ LTC residents and their loved ones.

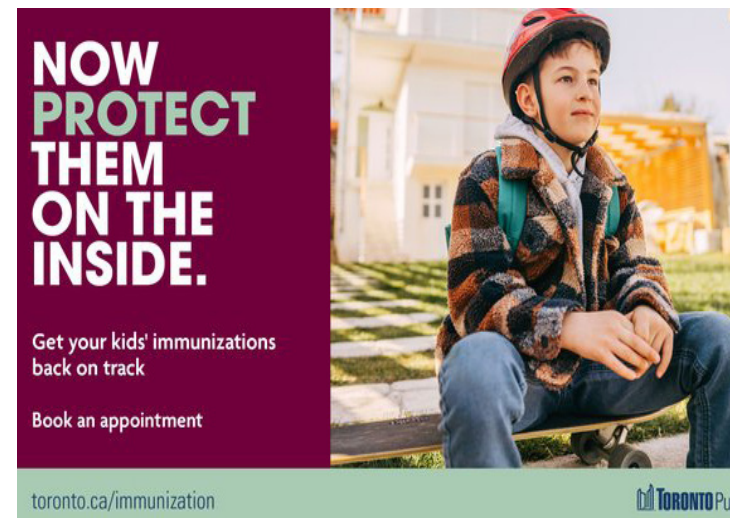


PHOTOS COURTESY OF MANITOULIN-SUDBURY DSSAB (TOP) AND CITY OF TORONTO (BOTTOM)

# MEMBER ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## PUBLIC HEALTH AND COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

- ▶ The **City of Hamilton** expanded its Menstrual Products Pilot Program to provide free menstrual products at all City of Hamilton recreation facilities and municipal services centres in the City. In addition, the City provided \$91,000 in funding to Hamilton Food Share to distribute free menstrual products through the emergency food network.
- ▶ **Hastings County** Community Response Team partnered with Centennial Secondary School's Grade 9 Geography class, the Grace Inn Shelter and the John Howard Society, to complete an i-think challenge on Homelessness. The students started the challenge with a walking tour of services provided and continued with a full week of classes dedicated to finding a local solution to homelessness. The Challenge wrapped up by picking a solution, presenting the pros and cons, and celebrating their success.
- ▶ At its March 2023 meeting, the **County of Renfrew** passed a resolution declaring intimate partner violence and violence against women an epidemic following the jury recommendations resulting from the inquest into the murders of Carol Culleton, Anastasia Kuzyk and Nathalie Warmerdam.
- ▶ To better care for residents living outdoors, **York Region** expanded its Community Paramedic Outreach Response Team (CPORT) by 10 staff in 2023. CPORT provides mobile multi-disciplinary intensive supports to vulnerable residents, including people living unsheltered, in encampments and elsewhere. As of October 31, CPORT supported 325 new people through 1,407 interactions in 2023.
- ▶ **Toronto Public Health** (TPH) offers free lifesaving hepatitis B, HPV, and meningococcal vaccines to Grade 7 and 8 students. Vaccination rates significantly decreased after the pandemic. A 2022/23 catch-up strategy involved 150,000 letters to families, vaccinations at TPH fixed-site vaccination clinics, and extra school clinics including all high schools.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF CITY OF TORONTO (CENTRE) AND YORK REGION (RIGHT)



# MEMBER ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS

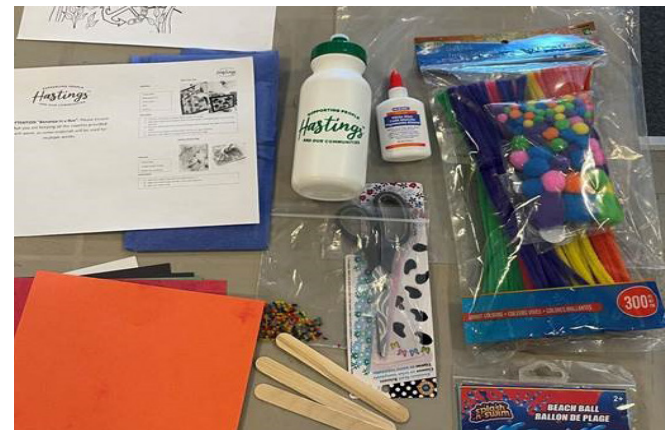
- ▶ The **City of Brantford** began transforming Lucy Marco Place, previously a 28-unit student residence into a 41-unit affordable housing development. Concurrently, construction started at 174 Trillium Way, Paris, ON which will add 49 affordable housing units. Both these initiatives contribute to the overall goal of 506 municipally-developed units by 2030, with 220 (43%) already built or in progress as of December 2023. Federal and Provincial grant funding totaling over \$3,700,000 has been secured for these two projects.
- ▶ The **Region of Durham** announced \$7.45 million to support the development of two affordable housing projects in Oshawa and Pickering, which are expected to create 88 affordable units to accommodate residents and a growing population. These commitments are outlined in [At Home in Durham, the Durham Housing Plan 2014-2024](#) and the [Master Housing Strategy](#).
- ▶ The **County of Grey** purchased a building at 396 14th Street West in Owen Sound to create a supportive housing centre. Renovations were completed to create twelve independent living units, administration space, and a shared programming area with housing, on-site mental health and addictions support, skills training, and connections to other community supports available.
- ▶ The Homeless Prevention Program has expanded both the number of front line staff and service delivery options for those experiencing homelessness throughout **Haldimand and Norfolk Counties**.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE CITY OF BRANTFORD

# MEMBER ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ▶ Through funding from Rapid Housing Initiative Round 3 of \$10.898 million, City Investment and Ontario Priority Housing Initiatives (OPHI) of \$2.5 million for capital build, the **City of Hamilton** has approved funding for two projects totaling 168 new affordable housing units for construction.
- ▶ **Hastings County's** Housing Services Community Relations Program supported 204 children living in community housing with at home camp packages this past summer. In total, 1,632 camp packages were distributed. In addition, 898 weekly meal boxes were delivered to 15 neighbourhoods. This funding has been dedicated to children in community housing through municipal funds.
- ▶ **Lanark County** officially welcomed its first tenants to a new community housing building at 188 Chambers Street in Smiths Falls in June 2023. The five unit building features all barrier free units, two of the units are equipped with additional accessibility features specific to the needs of the occupants; a metal roof (energy efficient and long term durability); upgraded insulation; and electrical heat pumps.
- ▶ To better align the need in the community with community housing, **Niagara Region** Housing and Homelessness divisions collaborated to update their local group's centralized waitlist policy. This improvement now ensures homeless status is aligned with Niagara's By-Name list and coordinated access to match individuals experiencing homelessness with community housing.
- ▶ Phase 2 of Northern Pines, the **District of Nipissing's** innovative transitional housing complex in North Bay, recently reached occupancy, with Phase 3 expected to open in 2024. The three phases of this campus model, totaling 60 units, offer varying levels of housing and health supports on-site, including an Assertive Community Treatment Team and Rapid Access to Addictions Medicine clinics.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF HASTINGS COUNTY (TOP), LANARK COUNTY (MIDDLE), AND DISTRICT OF NIPISSING (BOTTOM)



# MEMBER ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ▶ To address the need for transitional housing in the **District of Parry Sound**, the DSSAB is converting three duplexes scheduled for renovations into six individual units. Two will be folded into the Rent-Geared-to-Income portfolio, and four will be converted into transitional housing to support those on the By-Name List by providing supports such as mental health and addictions, Ontario Works, food security and life skills. Move-in dates are scheduled for February 2024.
- ▶ **Region of Peel** approved \$6.5 million to maintain access to health care services provided to people experiencing homelessness (PEH) during the pandemic, while staff lead a co-design process with 20+ community partners and PEH to develop a community-based health model. Peel is taking an innovative approach to integrate housing and other social supports.
- ▶ The **City of Peterborough** opened a Modular Bridge Housing Community at 210 Wolfe Street to provide shelter for 50 people experiencing unsheltered homelessness, as well as on-site program support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The Modular Bridge Housing Community operations will be funded using provincial funding from the Homelessness Prevention Program.
- ▶ The **City of Peterborough** broke ground on a 53-unit affordable housing project at 681 Monaghan Road made possible through Federal, Provincial and Municipal funding. Indigenous peoples, Black Canadians, women and children fleeing violence, people with physical disabilities and those at risk for homelessness will be prioritized for these units.
- ▶ The **County of Renfrew** undertook its first expansion of housing construction with the development of nine affordable housing units in the City of Pembroke. New tenants will be welcomed during the spring of 2024. Each new unit added helps to address housing needs and creates momentum for future development projects.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE CITY OF PETERBOROUGH



# MEMBER ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ▶ The **City of Stratford** hosted their Housing and Homelessness Symposium in November providing professional development for leaders that are instrumental in these fields and involved expert panels and two keynote speakers: Dr. Carolyn Whitzman and Dr. Andrew Boozary. Community consultation was held to engage the public on the following evening.
- ▶ The **City of Stratford** completed another affordable housing project: Britannia 2. An open house was held for both invested partner agencies and members of the public which included a tour of the structure. Move-ins are underway as the project moves to fruition.
- ▶ The **City of Windsor's** Housing and Homelessness Help Hub (H4) has expanded on site justice Support by collaborating with Probation and Parole and the John Howard Society Bail Verification program. This has reduced returns to custody for people who are justice involved and experiencing homelessness significantly. Probation has diverted over 180 breaches and John Howard Society is preserving the bail of 4-6 people per week.
- ▶ In February 2023, **York Region** expanded a seasonal shelter to operate year-round as a 25-bed emergency housing facility while another extended cold weather operations by 11 weeks with increased capacity of 30 beds.
- ▶ Using \$2.8 million from provincial Social Services Relief funding, **York Region** completed construction of eight new transitional housing units in summer 2023. These units, owned by Housing York Inc. and operated by the Salvation Army, provide independent living options and wraparound supports for youth experiencing or at risk of homelessness.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE CITY OF STRATFORD (TOP) AND YORK REGION (MIDDLE AND BOTTOM)

# RECOGNIZING EXCELLENCE

Our sector is strong because of the dedication, hard work and talent of the people within it – and that's something worth recognizing and celebrating. OMSSA's Awards and Recognition Program honours individuals and teams who have made outstanding contributions to both OMSSA and their communities, recognizing their commitment to planning, managing and delivering quality human services in Ontario. In 2023, OMSSA was honoured to recognize the following outstanding individuals and teams:



**DAVID THOMAS**

***Champion of Human Services Award***

*In recognition of exceptional and effective efforts in fostering a positive environment for the development and investment in human services*



**FERN DOMINELLI, NOSDA**

**LAURA LEPINE, COUNTY OF RENFREW**



***Patti Moore Human Services Integration Award***

*In recognition of exceptional leadership in the development of the theory and practice of human services integration, both within OMSSA and across Ontario*



**DOUGLAS BARTHOLOMEW-SAUNDERS**

***Lifetime Achievement Award***

*In recognition of exceptional and long-standing contribution to OMSSA, municipal human services, and the people and communities of Ontario*

***Local Municipal Champion Award***

*In recognition of outstanding contributions in advancing excellence in human services integration and service system management*

- BUILD BELONGING: INCLUSIVE EARLYON PROGRAMMING, **CITY OF BRANTFORD**
- CATHERINE STREET COMMUNITY SERVICE HUB, **CITY OF OTTAWA**
- ASYLUM CLAIMANT TEAM, **CITY OF WINDSOR**
- LOCAL IMMIGRATION PARTNERSHIP UKRAINIAN RESPONSE, **COUNTY OF SIMCOE**
- ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES: INNOVATIVE PARTNERSHIPS AND HOUSING STABILITY, **REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF DURHAM**
- INDIGENOUS-LED RECE TRAINING PROGRAM, **REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF NIAGARA**
- **BETTER TOGETHER 2023**





# POLICY AND ISSUES MANAGEMENT



# POLICY AND ISSUES MANAGEMENT

In 2023, OMSSA built on the foundation of dialogue, meaningful engagement, and consultation between the Province, OMSSA Members and key partners in the following ways:

## Association Engagement

- ▶ Host six OMSSA Board of Directors and four OMSSA Leadership Table meetings discussing key provincial updates and emerging issues in human services.
- ▶ Convene 12 Sector Lead meetings in Children's Services, Income and Employment, and Housing and Homelessness to allow for more direct consultation amongst senior leads in each of our Members' core service areas.
- ▶ Host 22 Committee and Network meetings to allow for greater collaboration and discussion of implementation, challenges and opportunities at the local level within each service area.
- ▶ Provide analysis of the 2023 Ontario and Federal Budgets for OMSSA's Knowledge Exchange Blog.
- ▶ Set up a meeting between Service Managers and the Canada Mortgage Housing and Housing Corporation (CMHC) to provide consultation on the National Housing Strategy and federal programs.
- ▶ Hosted an information session between Service Managers and Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada to provide more information on refugee and asylum seekers and immigration policy.
- ▶ Support Members through the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC), Social Assistance Renewal, Community Housing Renewal, Employment Services Transformation implementation and work.
- ▶ Engage extensively with our Leadership Table, Sector Leads and Networks to bring forward Members' priorities to influence policy via five submissions including:
  - ▶ [OMSSA Letter to the Province on 2024 Funding Formula](#)

- ▶ [Call to Action: Homelessness Open Letter to Premier Ford](#)
- ▶ [2023 Ontario Budget: Pre-Budget Submission](#)
- ▶ [2023 Federal Budget: Pre-Budget Submission](#)
- ▶ [Human Services Integration Report](#)

## Provincial Engagement

- ▶ Work with the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) to ensure urban, suburban, rural and Northern Members were represented on provincial tables and working groups.
- ▶ Engage in discussions at several committees including the Provincial-Municipal Social Assistance and Employment Committee about co-design with the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS) for the modernization of social assistance and Employment Services Transformation.
- ▶ Participate in discussions with the Ministry of Education, through the Provincial Municipal Early Years and Child Care Technical Table, on the RECE labour shortage and national child care deal, including early years and child care funding.
- ▶ Provide advice to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing on community housing renewal, supportive housing, homelessness encampments, and the pandemic response in shelters and community housing.
- ▶ Meet regularly with MCCSS on human services integration, Ontario's poverty reduction strategy and human trafficking.
- ▶ Meet with individual ADMs discussing Special Priority Guidelines, Refugee and Asylum seekers, and Emergency Shelter and Encampment issues.

# POLICY AND ISSUES MANAGEMENT

## Building Strong Partnerships

In 2023, OMSSA continued its commitment to building strong partnerships with all levels of government and key organizations so the Association can extend its presence across the broader human services sector in the following ways:

- ▶ Sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) Ontario.
- ▶ Hold weekly policy meetings with the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres to discuss policy issues and opportunities for both organizations to work together.
- ▶ Policy coordination on several key human services policy issues with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, AMO, Urban Commissioners and the Northern Ontario Service Deliverers Association.
- ▶ Meet regularly with municipal association partners including AMO, Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario, Municipal Finance Officers' Association of Ontario and the Ontario Municipal Human Resources Association.
- ▶ Meet with housing partners including Ontario Non-Profit Housing Association, Co-Operative Housing Federation of Canada (Ontario Region), Housing Services Corporation, Habitat for Humanity and the Ontario Aboriginal Housing Corporation.
- ▶ Regularly meet with the Association of Native Child and Family Services Association of Ontario to determine areas of collaboration.
- ▶ Attend the Rural Ontario Municipal Association Conference and Ontario Native Welfare Administrators Association Conferences.
- ▶ Presentations to the CUPE Ontario Social Services Workers Conference, Ontario Emergency Managers Association, Catholic Health Association of Ontario and the CMHA Ontario CEO table.







# EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In 2023, OMSSA continued to offer Members access to a variety of professional development opportunities, along with our Conferences and Forum, in virtual and in-person formats to enhance the sharing of best practices, knowledge exchange, and the development of key skills and competencies. Some of this year's highlights include:

- ▶ Host **1,216 attendees** across all OMSSA programming, including **56 Non-Members**.
- ▶ Deliver over **590 hours** of interactive learning in **76 professional development workshops** to **686 human services professionals** across the province.
- ▶ Launch our **Human Services Certificate Program** equipping learners with knowledge and skill application in their current roles as well as future career aspirations.
- ▶ Launch our **Non-Member Education Membership** encouraging individuals and organizations to participate in professional development opportunities.
- ▶ **Introduce five new workshops:** OW Directives and SAMS Introduction: The Basics, Building Your Conflict Management Competencies, Difficult Conversations Series, Managing Emergency Social Services, and Trauma-Informed Leadership to complement our existing roster of workshops.
- ▶ Launch our **Speakers Series** webinars to bring timely and relevant content covering key topics and issues in human services.

Here's what staff of OMSSA Member organizations have said about our workshops and professional development:

*"The facilitator was engaging and insightful. I felt with the sessions I attended, I could apply what I have learned to my daily work."*

*"Loved the small group, it allowed for great conversation and the presenter provoked a lot of reflective thinking."*





# 2023 EXCHANGE CONFERENCE



**OMSSA EXCHANGE**  
May 9-10, 2023 | Ottawa

# 2023 EXCHANGE CONFERENCE

## From May 9-10, OMSSA hosted over 330 people from across Ontario and beyond for our 2023 OMSSA Exchange Conference in Ottawa.

Over two mornings, the [Exchange Conference](#) focused on engaging in dialogue and exchanging ideas and practices to address the most pressing issues facing human services.

Topics included several important professional development topics geared towards enhancing work from across children's services, housing and homelessness, and employment and income supports. It also included examples of innovative work around Early Childhood Educator recruitment and retention, integrated Ontario Works case management, responses to racism and discrimination in the community, evaluating the hybrid workplace, and much more.

### Highlights:

- ▶ Opening plenary discussing client stories, successes and opportunities.
- ▶ Opening keynote from Senator Ratna Omidvar discussing the role that municipal social services can play in supporting recent immigrants and asylum seekers to become engaged citizens.
- ▶ Closing keynote from then Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Karina Gould, discussing the benefits of the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care program.
- ▶ 2022 Awards Presentation recognizing several deserving individuals and teams for our Lifetime Achievement, Young Leader, and Local Municipal Champions Awards.
- ▶ In-depth breakout sessions focused on digital equity, encampment litigation, mobilizing community in crisis, managing emotional situations, person-centric case management, supporting Indigenous staff in workplaces, and many more topics.

***"It was wonderful to connect with peers across the Province. To hear about what is happening in their area, and to learn from one another. The speakers were all on point."***



# 2023 VIRTUAL FORUM

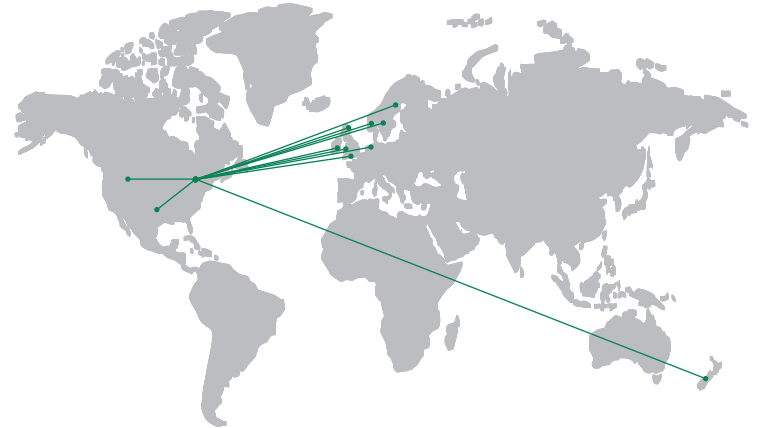
**From September 26-27, OMSSA hosted more than 360 people virtually from across Ontario and beyond for our 2023 Virtual Forum.**

Over two mornings, the [Virtual Forum](#) explored the planning and delivery of social services nationally and internationally to understand which practices can inform and corroborate the work being done by CMSMs and DSSABs in Ontario.

Speakers from Belgium, England, Finland, Ireland, New Zealand, Norway, Scotland, Sweden, United States, Wales, and many from across Canada, came together to discuss best practices and exchange knowledge in each of the human services sectors.

## Highlights:

- ▶ Opening keynote from Senator Wanda Thomas Bernard discussing how to create systemic change from within, breaking barriers, and creating braver spaces.
- ▶ Exploring the Trauma-Informed Wales Framework that is intended to help build a coherent, consistent, all-society approach to develop and implement a trauma-informed practice across Wales.
- ▶ Closing keynote on Day 1 on the importance of human services, social care, and health care integration.
- ▶ In-depth breakout sessions focused on supportive housing solutions, licensed nature-based early learning, digitalization of social services, exploring models of Indigenous housing first, expanding access to child care equitably, casework in a post-pandemic digital era, and rethinking emergency social services.



***"It was great to get to hear from a variety of perspectives from jurisdictions across the world. The more we can learn from others successes, the better!"***

OMSSA would like to thank Clark Communications for their generous support of our 2023 Forum.

**CLARK**  
SOFTWARE + COMMUNICATIONS + DIGITAL



# 2023 POLICY CONFERENCE



**POLICY**<sup>20</sup><sub>23</sub>  
OMSSA | CONFERENCE  
In Person | Nov 30 - Dec 1



# 2023 POLICY CONFERENCE

From November 30 to December 1, OMSSA hosted over 360 human and public services leaders from across Ontario for our 2023 OMSSA Policy Conference in Toronto.

Over two days, our 2023 [Policy Conference](#) focused on strategic conversations about the policy priorities into 2024 and beyond.

This includes key issues such as: social services provision, supporting human services delivery, creating pathways between housing and mental health supports, a human rights approach for municipalities, responding to human trafficking, housing solution lessons, harm reduction in a social services context, developing local solutions in employment services transformation, changing the narrative on homelessness, special needs resourcing, EarlyON, the social determinants of mental health.

## Highlights:

- ▶ Welcome Reception presentation from Davis Pier discussing “no more poverty” strategies and tangible approaches to improving the lives of the most vulnerable.
- ▶ Opening economic and policy panel providing insights into the policy implications of growing socio-economic inequity, increased immigration, child care expansion, housing affordability, and more.
- ▶ Opening panel with several Assistant Deputy Ministers from MCCSS, MMAH, and Education.
- ▶ Closing plenaries focused on anti-Black racism, community housing, and looking upstream at the social determinants of mental health.

*“The Conference included excellent topics that provided OMSSA Members with validation of the challenging times and the opportunity to see some good partnerships and insights.”*

OMSSA would like to thank York University and Clark Communications for their generous support of our 2023 Policy Conference



# HUMAN SERVICES CERTIFICATE PROGRAM



OMSSA launched its [Human Services Certificate Program](#). It is designed for first-line staff, supervisors, and managers in all program areas of human services.

A series of professional development sessions will equip learners with knowledge and skill application in their current roles as well as future career aspirations. The Certificate Program includes two paths:

- ▶ **Path 1** is a foundational program, providing learners with an introduction to theories, competencies, principles, and practices in Human Services.
- ▶ **Path 2** of the program provides further practical application of theories, competencies, principles and practices in Human Services.



## OMSSA would like to congratulate the first cohort of learners for completing Path 1 of the OMSSA Human Services Certificate Program.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| ▶ Sharon Barnes, County of Simcoe       | ▶ Karen Kennedy, Municipality of Chatham-Kent            |
| ▶ Rachael Bebb, County of Simcoe        | ▶ Sarah Lodeserto, County of Wellington                  |
| ▶ Shivaughn Carmichael, City of Toronto | ▶ Christine Nadeau, Counties (U/C) of Prescott & Russell |
| ▶ Aimee Cowan, County of Dufferin       | ▶ Jason Nelson, City of Greater Sudbury                  |
| ▶ Jennifer Filletti, County of Dufferin | ▶ Chelsea Raven, County of Dufferin                      |
| ▶ Shannon Forward, County of Simcoe     | ▶ Kelly Stone, City of Stratford                         |
| ▶ Juli Griffin, County of Dufferin      | ▶ Keira Thompson, County of Simcoe                       |
| ▶ Lynn Hill, County of Renfrew          |  |
| ▶ Kim Hurley, County of Dufferin        |  |

# NON-MEMBER EDUCATION MEMBERSHIP



OMSSA launched its new annual [Education Membership](#) option for Non-Members. Through this membership, individuals and organizations receive

special pricing for OMSSA's professional development opportunities. The Education Membership is available in three tiers:

- ▶ **Level 1:** Special pricing for all OMSSA professional development courses, virtual and in-person Conferences and Forums.
- ▶ **Level 2:** Special pricing for all OMSSA professional development courses.
- ▶ **Level 3:** Special pricing for all OMSSA virtual and in-person Conferences and Forums.





# COMMUNICATIONS AND MEMBER ENGAGEMENT

In 2023, OMSSA continued to build its Communications and Member Engagement program providing Members with frequent opportunities for dialogue and knowledge exchange along with timely and relevant updates.

Some of this year's highlights include:

- ▶ Launch OMSSA's Advertising and Sponsorship Program to **diversify OMSSA's revenue streams**.
- ▶ **Hire Communications Intern** from Humber College to work with OMSSA in the winter semester to complete their diploma.
- ▶ Update OMSSA's Brand Standards document to include a new style guide and accessibility guide, and update our templates, **to make our communications more accessible**.
- ▶ Launch Communications Advisory Group **bringing together communications staff** from OMSSA Member organizations and hold three meetings with this group.
- ▶ Update OMSSA's Job Board pricing model to include new 2, 3, and 5-job bundles to offer Members **flexibility and savings** when posting multiple jobs.
- ▶ Create Knowledge Exchange Blog newsletter to **further promote and grow readership** of OMSSA's blog.

**316,000+** VISITS TO OMSSA'S WEBSITE

**294,000+** SOCIAL MEDIA IMPRESSIONS

**7,900+** NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIBERS

**7,500+** KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE BLOG PAGEVIEWS

**933** NEW SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS

**339** NEW NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIBERS

**318** JOBS POSTED ON JOB BOARD

**204** NEWSLETTERS PUBLISHED

**159** NEW NETWORK MEMBERS

**81** REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION SHARED

**31** KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE BLOG POSTS PUBLISHED

**4** RFPS POSTED



# thank you

OMSSA would like to thank the people and organizations who helped to make our work possible in 2023. In addition to our Committees, thank you to all those who participated in OMSSA's Networks, Leadership Table, Sector Leads and other meetings in 2023.



## AWARDS COMMITTEE

- ▶ (Chair) Andrew Scavarelli, Simcoe County
- ▶ Tanya Hall, Regional Municipality of Halton
- ▶ Tammy Kealey-Donaldson, Lanark County
- ▶ Rob Kirsic, OMSSA
- ▶ Stacey Mullen, County of Lambton
- ▶ Ken Renta, Thunder Bay DSSAB

## FINANCE COMMITTEE

- ▶ Mike Nadeau, Sault Ste. Marie DSSAB (Treasurer)
- ▶ Doug Ball, OMSSA
- ▶ Kari Buzzelli, Regional Municipality of Peel
- ▶ Bill Bradica, Thunder Bay DSSAB
- ▶ Cathy Cousins, Regional Municipality of Niagara

# THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS!

## EXCHANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE

- ▶ (Chair) Tod Duncan, OMSSA
- ▶ 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 Marks, Cochrane District Social Services Administration Board
- ▶ Andrea McLean, City of London
- ▶ Meena Mullur, City of Cornwall
- ▶ Geoffrey Rao, City of Ottawa
- ▶ Nalisha Sankreacha, OMSSA

## FORUM PLANNING COMMITTEE


- ▶ (Co-Chair) Tod Duncan, OMSSA
- ▶ (Co-Chair) Nalisha Sankreacha, OMSSA
- ▶ Stuart Beumer, County of Wellington
- ▶ Craig Cooper, City of London
- ▶ Kim Crew, Municipality of Chatham-Kent
- ▶ Christie Herrington, OMSSA
- ▶ Rob Kirsic, OMSSA
- ▶ Christine MacDonald, County of Bruce
- ▶ Miranda Mackie, City of Greater Sudbury
- ▶ Nakiema Palmer, Regional Municipality of Peel
- ▶ Andrew Scavarelli, County of Simcoe

## POLICY PLANNING COMMITTEE

- ▶ (Chair) Tod Duncan, OMSSA
- ▶ Tanya Antoniw, City of Windsor
- ▶ Sutha Balasingham, City of Toronto
- ▶ Doug Ball, OMSSA
- ▶ JJ Blower, Parry Sound DSSAB
- ▶ Chelsea Combot, Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres
- ▶ Mina Fayez-Bahgat, County of Simcoe
- ▶ Christie Herrington, OMSSA
- ▶ Michael Jacek, AMO
- ▶ Rob Kirsic, OMSSA
- ▶ Laura LePine, County of Renfrew
- ▶ Jennifer McPhee, Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres
- ▶ Janel Morrison, Regional Municipality of Peel
- ▶ Naama Ofrath, City of Toronto
- ▶ Jessica Rapcewicz, Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB
- ▶ Nalisha Sankreacha, OMSSA
- ▶ Darryl Wolk, OMSSA







OMSSA's financial position remains strong and sustainable. The operational deficit in 2023 of **\$64,435** was offset with planned revenues from the strategic reserve to implement the advertising and sponsorship program along with a number of strategic plan projects. Taking this into consideration the operations for 2023 would have seen a surplus of **\$20,565**.

The Association continued to deliver effective services to be responsive to Members' needs while maintaining sustainable finances and operations throughout 2023.

This past year, we started putting in place initiatives that leverage the flexibility and strong financial position built previously to further support and service Members into the future and ensure a strong and sustainable organization.

This included implementing advertising and sponsorship opportunities, introducing our Education Membership option and Human Services Certificate Program, and initiating a number of projects addressing goals within the strategic plan.

This upcoming year represents a year of steady implementation and a focus on delivering on the main pillars of the association including advocacy, professional development, and engagement for our Members.

## 2023 FINANCIAL OVERVIEW AND REPORT

# 2023 FINANCIAL REPORT

The financial report is based on the audit conducted by the firm Pennylegion | Chung LLP.

The audited financial statements are available by contacting OMSSA.

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT DECEMBER 31, 2023

	2023	2022
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Current Assets		
Cash	\$ 603,397	\$ 896,472
Guaranteed Investment Certificates	606,443	\$ 600,000
Accounts Receivable	46,224	\$ 37,814
HST Receivable	8,432	\$ 4,303
Prepaid Expenses	58,642	\$ 21,944
	<u>\$ 1,323,138</u>	<u>\$ 1,560,533</u>
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>		
Current Liabilities		
Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities	\$ 46,797	\$ 134,302
Deferred Revenue	301,007	386,462
	<u>347,804</u>	<u>520,764</u>
Net Assets		
Unrestricted	796,334	810,769
Designated - Strategic Reserve	179,000	229,000
	<u>975,334</u>	<u>1,039,769</u>
	<b>\$ 1,323,138</b>	<b>\$ 1,560,533</b>

## STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS AS AT DECEMBER 31, 2023

	2023	2022
<b>REVENUE</b>		
Membership Dues	\$ 653,012	\$ 663,963
Training	502,173	644,313
Conference Fees	311,565	229,603
Forums	64,612	63,373
Job Board	57,513	72,050
Sponsorship	35,125	-
Interest	23,656	6,502
Total Revenue	<u>1,647,656</u>	<u>1,679,804</u>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Personnel	945,948	820,797
Education	642,729	648,992
Office and Administrative	89,370	136,411
Governance	16,364	46,960
Advertising and Sponsorship	12,850	-
Policy and Member Services	4,830	872
Total Expenses	<u>1,712,091</u>	<u>1,654,032</u>
Excess of revenue over expenses for the year	(64,435)	25,722
Net Assets, beginning of year	<u>860,769</u>	<u>784,997</u>
Net Assets, end of year	<b>\$ 796,334</b>	<b>\$ 810,769</b>



# MEET OUR TEAM



**Doug Ball**

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



**Pavel Chernerov**

SOCIAL SERVICES PROJECT  
COORDINATOR (STARTED JULY 2023)



**Tod Duncan**

MANAGER, CONTENT DEVELOPMENT



**Rebecca Ellis**

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT



**Christie Herrington**

DIRECTOR, EDUCATION



**Manny Kalra**

COMMUNICATIONS INTERN (TO APRIL)



**Rob Kirsic**

COMMUNICATIONS AND MEMBER  
ENGAGEMENT MANAGER



**Paul Mallon**

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT SPECIALIST  
(STARTED MARCH 2023)



**Abel Nunes**

FINANCE AND HUMAN RESOURCES



**Nalisha Sankrecha**

EDUCATION AND EVENTS COORDINATOR



**Darryl Wolk**

MANAGER, POLICY DEVELOPMENT  
AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS



ONTARIO MUNICIPAL SOCIAL  
SERVICES ASSOCIATION

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