



**OPIRG** *Carleton*

**September 2021 – August 2022**

**Annual Report**

Presented for the

**2023 Annual General Meeting**

# About OPIRG-Carleton

OPIRG Carleton is a campus-based not-for-profit organization, working to create and sustain student and community-based engagement through research, education, and action on social justice and environmental issues.

OPIRG Carleton uses an anti-oppression framework, consensus-based decision making processes, operates in a non-hierarchical setting, and supports multiple Working Groups that struggle for social change.

OPIRG Carleton was founded in 1980, after a lecture by consumer advocate Ralph Nader. In a referendum in the following year, the majority of Carleton students voted in favour of placing a small levy on their student fees to support OPIRG.

In 1991, Carleton students again voted in support of OPIRG, agreeing to raise the amount of the levy to \$6.30 for full-time students, \$2.10/credit for part-time undergraduates, and \$1.26 for part-time graduates.

In 2009, students once again voted in favour of OPIRG, among other campus groups, to set the levy fee in accordance with the consumer price index. Graduate students voted to increase these fees in 2010. In the 2011-2012 term, levies reached \$3.32 per full full-time semester for undergraduates, and \$3.34 per full-time semester for graduates.

With this levy, all students at Carleton University are automatically members of OPIRG. While the fee is classified as non-refundable, OPIRG Carleton continues to offer refunds to students who object to the organization.

Over the years, OPIRG Carleton has provided students with a dynamic environment in which to apply their knowledge, passions, and energy to address issues of public concern. Many have also benefited from the training and support that OPIRG offers, the real opportunities that build leadership skills and empower students to become socially active.

OPIRG Carleton's office location and the work of our organization is done on unceded and unsurrendered Algonquin Anishinaabe territory.

# Organizational Developments: Staff, Board and Volunteers

After 17 months of closing the OPIRG-Carleton office due to the COVID-19 public health crisis, we have reopened to the public in August 2022. A cleaner had been contracted and staff furnished the office on a small budget. The office was staffed regularly Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 9am-5pm, with options for Working Groups and other community groups to book the space for meetings and activities. We've met many students in our space, some new and some who have been in virtual classes for two years. We're continuing to improve the space to make it more visible and welcoming to students, however it still remains inaccessible without elevator service.

We continued to implement 2020's Restructuring recommendations, including training staff, board and volunteers. Much of the training and policies recommended to us by *Pascale Diverlus* are outstanding, and she has been contracted again for 2021-2022.

## OPIRG Board Members 2021-2022

OPIRG Carleton is governed by a volunteer, non-hierarchical Board of Directors and comes to decisions through consensus. Directors are elected each year at the Annual General Meeting and generally sit for one two-year term.

The Board of Directors is composed of 5-9 individuals with  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the members being Carleton University students. The role of the Board is to offer administrative support to OPIRG's projects and programming, as well as maintaining the vision of the organization and directing its growth.

The OPIRG Carleton Board of Directors for 2021 were:

*Jeffrey Bradley*      *Jane Crosby*  
*Roksana Hajrizi*      *Minh Hoa Kolié*  
*Philippe Parisot*

An election was held in January 2022 and the following board members were elected:

*Katarina Bogosavljevic*      *Ashley Courchene*  
*Dania Jallad*      *Reza Sohrabi*

Following multiple board resignations throughout 2022, an election was held in August with the following board members elected:

*Sophie Jean*      *Jean Ishimwe*  
*Yasmin Omar*      *Hande Uz Ozcan*

## OPIRG Staff 2021-2022

*Oula Hreiche* resigned as Administrative and Organizational Development Coordinator in December 2021. *Ashton Starr* was hired in the position the same month

*Harar Hall* resigned as Programming Coordinator in January 2022. *Helyeh Doutaghi* was hired in the position the same month.

A vacant Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator position was filled by *Mariam Furre* in March 2022. *Gowlene Selvavijayan* remains as Communications Coordinator.

*Mohammad Akbar* remains as Chief Governance Officer.

*Andy Crosby* remains as the Financial Coordinator.

# ONTARIO PUBLIC INTEREST RESEARCH GROUP (OPIRG) CARLETON

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

For the Year End August 31, 2022

	2022	2021
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Cash	\$ 138,098	\$ 173,761
Accounts Receivable	37,911	35,174
Prepaid Expenses	7,580	6,321
	183,589	215,256
<b>CAPITAL ASSETS</b>	592	782
	\$ 184,181	\$ 216,038
<b>LIABILITY</b>		
<b>CURRENT LIABILITY</b>		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 9,292	\$ 10,853
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		
Net Income/Loss	<u>-30,297</u>	32,642
Unrestricted	58,684	54,529
Internal Restriction - Special Operating Reserve	146,501	118,013
	174,888	205,184
	\$ 184,180	\$ 216,037

# ONTARIO PUBLIC INTEREST RESEARCH GROUP (OPIRG) CARLETON

## STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

For the Year End August 31, 2022

	2022	2021
<b>REVENUE</b>		
Student Fees	\$ 219,827	\$ 225,340
Interest	0	0
Other	0	0
	<b>219,827</b>	<b>225,340</b>
<b>OPERATING EXPENSES</b>		
Salaries and Benefits	178,497	128,296
Programming	20,919	20,903
Rent	20,355	20,074
Donations and Bursaries	10,500	8,975
Dues	5,757	6,070
Professional Fees	5,481	3,000
Insurance	2,213	1,867
Interest and Service Charges	1,730	1,851
Telecommunications	1,200	1,200
Amortization of Capital Assets	190	253
Office Expenses	3,282	209
Advertising and Promotion	0	0
Photocopy Expenses	0	0
	<b>250,124</b>	<b>192,698</b>
<b>EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ -30,297</b>	<b>\$ 32,642</b>

# Bursaries, co-sponsorships and donations

## Bursaries and Grants:

\$100 Legal Name Change Grant

Six recipients

\$150 Emergency Grants

Six recipients

\$500 Caregiver Student Bursary

*Brayana Barham*

*Veronica Vincencio Diaz*

\$500 Undergraduate Student Bursary

*Linda Cho*

*Chanel Best*

\$500 Accessibility Research Grant

*River Rossi*

\$500 First Generation Student Bursary

*Rana Saadi*

\$500 Terry Cottam Graduate Student Bursary

*Sophie Birks*

\$500 International Student Bursary

*Monika Imeri*

## Co-Sponsorships

\$500 initial co-sponsorship + \$50 monthly from March 2022—August 2022 to Rainbow Ottawa

Student Experience's Queer Support program

\$500 to Samidoun for the 2022 Israeli Apartheid

Week of events

\$300 to the Criminalization and Punishment

Education Project for Prisoners' Justice Day Camp in

August 2022

## Donations

\$500 to the Healthy Transportation Coalition

\$500 to *Souheil Benslimane* organizing for

International Day Against Police Brutality

\$500 to the Ottawa Street Medics

\$100 to Rural Refugee Rights Network

\$500 to Ottawa Black Diaspora Coalition

## Programming

Co-hosted the 2022 Israeli Apartheid Week of events including:

Signed on to declare our space an Apartheid-Free Zone in our commitment to the principles of the Palestinian-led Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement

Carleton's Complicity in Apartheid hybrid in-person and livestream discussion led by *Bill Skidmore*, *Mohammed Nijm*, and *Nahla Abdo*

Online film screening of Fedayin! Documentary on George Abdullah and letter-writing with Books2Prisoners

#FreePalestinianStudents campaign launch with Samidoun

## Annual Programming

*Rad Frosh* 2021 "Radical Futures" from September 24-30 was hosting all online and included:

We Keep Each Other Sustained community discussion and panel facilitated by Anti-Oppression and Anti-Racism Educator, Organizer, and Moderator *Timaaj Hassen*.

Black Cannabis Futures panel discussion featuring *Vivienne Wilson*, *Jeremiah Mondesir*, and *Andrea "Peachtree" Boucaud*

The Personal Dimensions of the Political talk with *Daysha Loppie*

Surrealism: Changing the Order talk with *Andrew Kellie*

An Anti-colonial Poetics of Love and Resistance talk with *Manahil Bandukwala*

Hosted the Radical Self-Care and Mental Wellness workshop with *Koeshia Love* in April 2022

Integrity Not Spite Against Falastin (INSAF) UOttawa's The Art of Resistance exhibit in March 2022 with a \$300 donation

An emergency rally, Ottawa Stands with Gaza with Students for Justice in Palestine

Black Event Producer Fund

\$150 for *Velvet Duke's* Ottawa production of (Re)Tired Magical Black Man (Ottawa) premier in-person as part of the 2022 Ottawa Fringe Festival

\$250 for *Maya Basudde's* production of Spoken in the City poetry slam

Re-Imagining Pedagogy for International Students in the Post-pandemic Era talk with *Fairuz Sharif* and *Sohini Ganguly*

Where the Mundane Girl Takes Us talk with *Sophia Obaidu*

Published three blogs on our website:

New institutions by Black journalists are Crucial to the Industry's Ethical Reckoning by *Daysha Loppie*

Edible Cities? Food Forests Foster Community Connection & Healing By *Samphe Brulé*

Reimagining Planetary Governance & Responses to Climate Change in a Borderless World by *Natali Euale Montilla* and *Catherine Euale Montilla*

Roots Radio was put on hiatus and we'll be working with staff and boards to relaunch.

# Working Groups

Working groups are collectives—groups of people working together towards a common goal while sharing responsibilities and decisions equally. They function autonomously with funding and programming support as needed from OPIRG - Carleton. Together with our volunteers, working groups are the heart of OPIRG-Carleton. The 2021-2022 Working Groups are:

## **Access To Information–Carleton Working Group**

The Access to Information Carleton (ATI) Carleton Working Group uses Access to Information and Freedom of Information legislation to research various issues of public interest. Issues can be related to other WG areas, or determined by OPIRG members. We put the R in OPIRG.

## **Anakbayan Ottawa**

Our mission is to unite youth from different sectors and communities in the Filipino diaspora in Ottawa in order to advance the struggle for national liberation, democracy and a just and lasting peace in the Philippines. We seek to educate, organize, mobilize Filipino youth on issues that affect the Philippines, as well as here on Turtle Island. Made up of second generation, as well as first and 1.5 generation youth, Anakbayan Ottawa seeks to address systemic issues that oppress the Filipino youth and community through campaigns, community events, and educational workshops and discussions. There is a growing number of Filipino youth migrating into the Ottawa area and Canada over all. Many Filipino organizations have a strong focus on ethnicity, culture and fun. While Anakbayan is also excited to focus on these aspects of our lived experiences, we seek to address the nuances and complexities of being migrants on stolen territory, how migration has been affected by capitalism and imperialism, and what the root causes of our struggles are.

## **Anti-Imperialist Alliance**

AIA aims to build a united response against the tides of war, militarism and neo-fascism brought on by the crisis and decay of US and global monopoly capitalism. In our view the imperative task of our times is to rebuild the peace movement at its base in a range of sectors and build toward powerful mass mobilizations for a decisive shift in Canadian and global politics, away from conflict and militarism, towards peace and disarmament.



## **Books 2 Prisoners**

Books to Prisoners Ottawa shares donated reading materials to incarcerated individuals and promotes social justice campaigns in Canada. We are a volunteer run, donation based group that works with community partnerships locally with provincial institutions at OCDC, William E Hay, Collins Bay, Bath, Port-Cartier, CSC institutions from BC to the Maritimes as well as respond to individuals books requests.

## **Climate Justice Ottawa**

Based in the Ottawa-Gatineau region, on unceded and unsurrendered Algonquin Anishnabeg territory, Climate Justice Ottawa is part of the climate and environmental justice movement following the lead of the most impacted communities to ensure a liveable climate for future generations. Through empowering communities, we challenge political systems that do not align with an equitable and healthy planet. We participate in the process of reconciliation and decolonization, and support First Nations, Métis and Inuit self-determination. We work in a proactive way towards collectively-defined goals, while understanding the necessity for reactionary mobilization in climate organizing, particularly in the national capital. We have launched a campaign to organize around 350.org's principles for a Just Recovery that creates a better future that prioritizes resilient communities, and are looking to connect with community organizers working on various climate justice/ action initiatives to create a document outlining our shared vision for a Just Recovery in Ottawa.

## **Herongate Tenant Coalition**

HTC is an independent collective which lobbies and campaigns on the behalf of racialized working class across Ottawa and Ontario. We began organizing as a response to the dehumanizing evictions working class people of colour suffered in 2016 & 2018 in Herongate, a racialized, underfunded, and overpoliced neighbourhood in Ottawa South. We work to create neighbourhood power and collective strength in people made vulnerable in Herongate, as well as call out the rampant financialization of housing across Canada. This is an urgent need, especially now in this unprecedented time, wherein so many are unprotected. With millions facing unemployment, landlords unwilling to cancel rent, and local and provincial governments unwilling to help, thousands are facing eviction in Ontario alone, and the need for tenant organizations and resistance is dire.

## **Indigenous Solidarity Ottawa**

ISO, based in unceded and unsurrendered Algonquin Territory, is a grassroots organization of settlers who aim to directly support Indigenous Peoples in diverse struggles for justice, sovereignty and decolonization. Ottawa-Cuba Connections

OCC CU is a solidarity organization which works to promote both an understanding of Cuba today and to build person to person connections (via the Che Brigade) with Cubans.

## **The Leveller**

An online publication covering news, current events, and culture at Carleton University, the University of Ottawa, the Ottawa/Gatineau region and the wider world. It is intended to provide readers with a lively portrait of their campus and community and of the events that give it meaning. It is also intended to be a forum for provocative editorializing and lively debate on issues of concern to post-secondary students, staff, and faculty as well as Ottawa residents.

## **The Millhaven Lifers' Liaison Group**

MLLG is an initiative created to provide support, community, and educational collaboration with life-sentenced prisoners at Millhaven maximum security institution in Bath, Ontario. The group visits lifers once per month and is active in the community doing outreach, research, writing, presentations and lobbying. MLLG aims to foster a positive relationship with the Millhaven Lifers' Group (MLG) in order to support their eventual release. We exchange information with the men who are serving life-sentences; share that knowledge with the public through meetings, events and social media; provide the Lifers with hope and encouragement; and, create connections with community-based resources to support our personal development both inside and out.

## **Yoga.Unity**

Yoga.Unity is a series of pay what you can (PWYC) yoga classes for self-identified cis & trans women and non-binary people of color. It is a LGTBQ2IA+ inclusive space. Classes are held online weekly. Besides yoga, we hold workshops & special events which promote healing and serve to strengthen a community of trust and care. Our classes are introductory which permits people of all levels and ages to participate. The term "women of colour" refers to all and any cis or trans woman with a racialized experienced, regardless of "skin colour". Yoga.Unity is a unique space where cis & trans women of colour and non-binary people of colour can come together in collective processes of healing, building solidarity and community

## Membership in Other Organizations

### OPIRG Provincial Network

OPIRG Carleton is a member of the OPIRG Provincial Network, a decentralized body that provides support for, and facilitates collaboration between individual PIRGs in Ontario. The network comprises thirteen autonomous, non-profit, student-funded and directed organizations that conduct research, education and action on social and environmental justice issues. <https://opirg.org>

*Thank You*

Thank you for reading our annual report. OPIRG Carleton cannot exist without a community of supporters, volunteers, and workers in which we are incredibly grateful for. We are working hard to continue to meet our mandate while our organization develops and we face the challenges presented by a global public health crisis. We look forward to meeting and working directly with you today to make a better future.

Be safe and stay healthy,

The OPIRG Carleton Board and Staff.



**OPIRG** *Carleton*