



OPIRG *Carleton*

2020 ANNUAL REPORT

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ABOUT OPIRG CARLETON

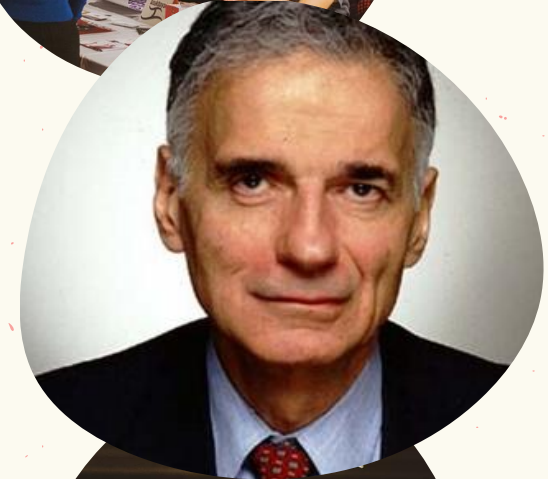
OPIRG Carleton is a campus-based not-for-profit organization, working to create and sustain student and community-based engagement through research, education, and action on social justice and environmental issues.

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.



ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

In 2019-20, Bradley Evoy (Volunteer, Outreach and Programming Coordinator -- VOPC) and Muna Mohamed (Administrative Coordinator -- AC) resigned from their respective positions after a year of incredible work. Leyda J. Estrada-Arellano was then brought on as the Administrative and Organizational Development Coordinator (AODC), whilst Andy Crosby reduced his hours due to his studies as a PhD student, and continued on as the Financial Coordinator (FC). During the fall, three new hires joined OPIRG Carleton to share the duties of the VOPC position: Benjamin Segobaetso, Gowlene Selvavijayan, and Harar Hall.

The new year brought on several more employees than is usually the case at OPIRG Carleton, and thanks to the different perspectives, we are learning new ways to engage with community and center marginalized folks.

During the Fall term, uncertainty grew due to the Student Choice Initiative (SCI), but with more hands on deck, the organization was able to carry on with programming, trainings, etc., especially after the court struck down the SCI at the end of the term. While there is a possibility of the Ford government appealing, there is a strong impression that this will not happen.

This year in programming, we started off by collaborating with various community organizations/unions, such as CUPE 4600, \$15 & Fairness, and more. In total, DisOrientation Week featured eleven events. Later in the year, OPIRG Carleton held several trainings pertaining to Anti-Oppression, Conflict Resolution, Disability Justice, Peer Support, etc. We also held a very successful Open House for our Working Groups, and several other new programming initiatives. Programming then dwindled as the organization (similarly to the rest of the world) found itself under unfamiliar circumstances with COVID-19.

ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

Currently, OPIRG Carleton is attempting to better serve our communities. We are in the stages of restructuring the organization by inviting people who engage or wish to engage with OPIRG to community consultations, to fill out feedback forms, or get in contact with us through feedback@opirgcarleton.org (forms and emails can be sent anonymously). We are consulting closely with Pascale Diverlus, community members, and our Union to guarantee that the restructuring is being addressed through various perspectives.

FINANCES

ONTARIO PUBLIC INTEREST RESEARCH GROUP (OPIRG) CARLETON

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

For the Year End August 31, 2019

	2019	2018
REVENUE		
Student Fees	\$ 219,501	\$ 209,468
Interest	0	786
Other	207	1,567
	219,708	211,821
OPERATING EXPENSES		
Salaries and Benefits	100,044	95,721
Programming	37,766	42,560
Rent	19,489	19,490
Donations and Bursaries	9,578	9,015
Dues	5,282	4,932
Advertising and Promotion	1,627	3,218
Photocopy Expenses	3,206	2,838
Office Expenses	1,992	2,018
Insurance	1,785	1,701
Telecommunications	1,200	1,200
Professional Fees	6,893	7,176
Interest and Service Charges	1,777	1,782
Amortization of Capital Assets	443	459
	191,082	199,304
EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	\$ 28,624	\$ 1,923

ONTARIO PUBLIC INTEREST RESEARCH GROUP (OPIRG) CARLETON

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

For the Year End August 31, 2019

	2019	2018
ASSETS		
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash	\$ 162,986	\$ 102,675
Accounts Receivable	11,126	29,710
Prepaid Expenses	464	8,097
Term Deposits, Matured During the Year	0	0
	174,576	140,482
CAPITAL ASSETS	1,370	1,813
	\$ 175,946	\$ 142,295
LIABILITY		
CURRENT LIABILITY		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 13,657	\$ 9,157
NET ASSETS		
Unrestricted	53,655	26,427
Internal Restriction - Special Operating Reserve	108,634	106,711
	162,289	133,138
	\$ 175,946	\$ 142,295

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



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 OPIRG Board of Directors is comprised of 5-9 individuals with 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 to maintain the vision of the organization, and to direct its growth.

OPIRG Carleton Board of Directors 2019-20

- Fa'Ttima Omran
- Raye Guo
- Adriana Mallya
- Mariam Furre (interim)
- Mars Ramlogan (interim)

STAFF

Current Staff

- Andy Crosby
Finance Coordinator
- Gowlene Selvavijayan
Volunteer, Outreach and Programming
Coordinator
- Harar Hall
Volunteer, Outreach and Programming
Coordinator
- Oula Hreiche
Administrative and Organizational Development
Coordinator
- Leyda J. Estrada-Arellano
Administrative and Organizational Development
Coordinator

Volunteers

Volunteers are involved at all levels of OPIRG Carleton, including Board members, Working Group members, practicum/intern/co-op students, researchers, general volunteers and supporters, and more!

OPIRG volunteers make the office, campus, and community a better place to be, with their commitment to justice and their work towards equity.



BURSARIES

The 2020 bursary recipients are as follows:

- Nadia Ahmed Firoz received both the Terry Cottam (Graduate) and Accessibility Bursary. Nadia's research is on "the impact of relocation on the social and familial position of Rohingya women in Bangladesh."
- Roshane Farquharson received the Undergraduate Student Bursary. Roshane plans on using the bursary amount to facilitate monthly/weekly speeches that will "spark a national debate that involves politicians, theorists, historians, and many other influencers to validate the legitimacy for the need of reparations for the descendants of slaves."
- Margaret Ross received the Indigenous Student Bursary. The money went towards funding a trip to northern "British Columbia" wherein they participated with matriarchs in resisting colonial violence. Ross wishes to document this event to broaden their research of modern Indigenous resistance on Turtle Island.
- Monika Imeri received the International Student Bursary, with their research topic concentrating on "tackling the impacts of commercial gentrification in Herongate."

This year we also provided the Name-Change Bursary.

OPIRG Carleton is excited to see what the research of these individuals leads to, and we hope to hear from them next year for an update on their work. We encourage people to apply for our bursaries, and we make the news of their open-submission status known by posting on our social media (Instagram and Facebook), website, and by poster around campus.

CO-SPONSORSHIPS & DONATIONS

- \$650 to Spice's 1 year anniversary show
 - \$200 to Ajamu Baraka's talk on campus
 - \$500 to Tiny House warriors via the purchase of shirts, hoodies, and cups
 - \$500 to the Herongate Tenant Coalition
 - \$400 for Islam Awareness Week 2020 on campus
 - \$250 for a talk by Tamara Lorincz
 - \$400 for The Vagina Monologues
 - \$400 Spice's February 1st show
 - To support the growth of Mohawk PIRG, we granted them \$1000
 - \$600 for an event called Black Laughs Matter
 - \$1000 to the Whine 'N Grind event
 - \$500 to the Ten Oaks Project: Bowl-A-Thon
 - \$500 was granted to the Claring Singson Speaking Tour
 - \$400 was granted for Spice's March 14th show
 - \$2000 was donated to the Herongate Tenant Coalition
 - \$500 was donated to Rent Strike Ottawa
-
- So far, \$3000 have been donated to members of the community who have been deeply affected by the passing of Abel Mengistab.

ANNUAL PROGRAMMING

DisOrientation Week

DisOrientation Week took place in September and bolstered eleven events, with attendance from students, OPIRG members, and other community members. The events included: an online workshop for protecting ourselves from online fascists, Ottawa's Protest History Walking Tour, a panel on strikes and union's importance in academic and student movements, a lateral violence panel, a workshop introducing folks to anti-colonialism and Indigenous solidarity work, a full day of harm reduction (a fair, a movie screening, and a naloxone workshop!), an anti-war talk with guest speaker Dan Kovalik, and a dance party headed by Fruit, Star, Candy Bar!

OPIRG Working Group Open House

Students, community members, and working groups gathered for OPIRG Carleton's Open House for information about what we do on campus, our working groups, community outreach, and they could get involved. It featured poetry performances presented by YouthSpeak Ottawa, guided meditation presented by Yoga.Unity, and an interactive demonstration from Cap City Cyphers.

Queering Consent

OPIRG Carleton and the GSRC collaborated for a panel discussion that explored the relationship between sexual violence, pleasure and consent in queer communities. This event was open to all members of the community.



Still Rising

In collaboration with the Graduate Student Association and Carleton Equity, we created a space to celebrate Black folks resilience while recognizing that needing to be resilient is exhausting. Still Rising was a two part event. The event began with two workshops and ended with a reception celebrating the work of outstanding Black community members. The reception was open to all members of the community, while workshops were a closed space for Black, African, and Caribbean folks to share, learn, and heal.

Community Consultation

We held a community consultation regarding the OPIRG Carleton safe(r) safe policy and organizational direction. It was facilitated by Pascale Diverlus (she/her), a communications specialist, digital strategist, educator and community organizer. The support person was Kais Padamshi (he/him), an East African settler based in Tkaronto/Toronto (Dish With One Spoon Territory) Canada, who is a Creative and Wellness Worker.



MEMBERSHIP IN OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

OPIRG Provincial Network

OPIRG Carleton is a member of the OPIRG Provincial Network. OPIRG Provincial is comprised of thirteen autonomous, non-profit, student-funded and directed organizations that conduct research, education, and action on social and environmental justice issues. <http://www.opirg.org/>

OPIRG ROOTS RADIO

OPIRG Roots Radio on CKCU 93.1 FM covers social justice issues on campus and in the larger community, themed broadly along the activism that OPIRG's Working Groups are engaged in.

The show airs every 2nd Tuesday during the noon hour slot. The overall goal is to engage with Carleton students and the broader community to not only inform of social justice initiatives, but to create dialogue and get people actively engaged in movements for social justice.



WORKING GROUPS

ATI Carleton

ATI 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.



Millhaven Lifers' Liaison Group

The Millhaven Lifers Liaison Group (MLLG) is made up of volunteers from the Ottawa community who have established a connection with people serving life sentences at Millhaven maximum security institution in Bath Ontario. Our objective is to serve as a bridge between the community and the prisoners, with a view to supporting their eventual release and re-integration. The MLLG's mission is to maintain a positive, ongoing relationship with the Millhaven Lifers Group (MLG) in order to support successful releases through joint projects.



WORKING GROUPS



Herongate Tenant Coalition

We are a group of tenants in the Herongate neighbourhood of south Ottawa who are fighting back against mass evictions, demolition, rent increases. The landlord, multi-billion dollar Timbercreek Asset Management, owns housing for 4,000 people in Herongate and we are trying to stop them from tearing our neighbourhood apart. We are working towards a vision of resident-control and community ownership of land, to prevent speculators and other financial actors from pushing out low income tenants. In the last year, we have embarked on a legal case against Timbercreek at the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario, representing dozens of affected tenants who have lost their homes and faced discrimination at the hands of the asset management company. The HTC is also currently in the midst of three defamation cases against the company in small claims court.

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 are 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.



Institute of African Studies Student Association

IASSA is an academic group at Carleton. We offer academic events and spaces for students to provide support to each other, mentor each other, debate, and discuss topics they are passionate about. The largest event we host is the Undergraduate Research Conference, in which students submit and present their own research. The top three winners receive prizes, and the first place winner gets to be peer-reviewed then published in our open-access journal, Nokoko.



Cap City Cyphers

Our main goals at Cap City Cyphers are:

- 1) to hold safer spaces for creatives to share, foster, and develop skills related to Hip-Hop culture, mainly freestyle emceeing, beatmaking, and live drawing, as well as
- 2) to keep Hip-Hop culture alive by hosting freestyle rap sessions and (moving forward) presenting educational programming related to Hip-Hop.





CU Global Promise

CU Global Promise is a new club at Carleton University which aims to advocate and raise awareness for human rights and social justice issues through community engagement.

Yoga.Unity

Yoga.Unity is Ottawa's first weekly series of yoga classes for racialized, black, trans, cis-gendered, LGBTQ2IA+, Indigenous, First Nations, Metis, Inuit, refugee, newcomer or immigrant womxn or person of colour. Started in 2015, our classes allow womxn of colour to benefit from the healing and nurturing properties of yoga & movement while building a community of wellness, trust, and care in a safe and supportive space. Womxn of colour can reap the health benefits of a calming and restorative practice while being surrounded by others who share similar experiences. Our classes are introductory in nature – all levels are welcome and class is offered by pay-what-you-can donation.

The Leveller

The Leveller is a left newspaper covering the city of Ottawa and the wider world from a student's perspective. Our aim is to provide news and analysis in support of people everywhere who are fighting against all forms of oppression – among them, racism, sexism, homophobia, and capitalism. We are a democratic organization, and we side with people over profit.

Maawanji'idiwag Group

Maawanji'idiwag is the Ojibwe word meaning they come together/to meet together. This group is specifically for Black Indigenous, Indigenous Peoples of Turtle Island and elsewhere, and other people of colour to come together, eat and build community (1-2 times a month). Born out of a panel on lateral violence and occupying/returning land held on Carleton campus on Sept 25, 2019. Born out of a need to come together and celebrate our survival and existence. Born out of a need to take up space and to hold space for each other.

The logo for 'The Leveller' features the title in a large, black, serif font. The word 'The' is in an italicized script, while 'Leveller' is in a bold, upright serif. A thin horizontal line is positioned directly beneath the word 'Leveller'.

CAMPUS • COMMUNITY • CULTURE

YouthSpeak Ottawa

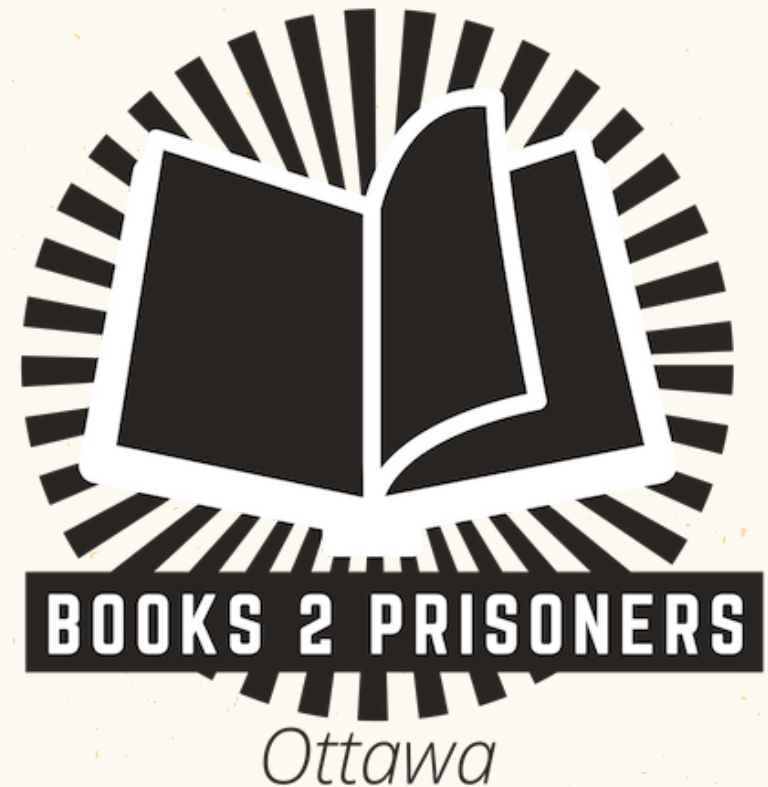
Free drop-in writing and performance workshops for youth age 22 and under. Sessions take place every Monday at the Ottawa Public Library Main branch and are facilitated by literary and performing artists voluntarily. There is a poetry slam at the end of each month so the youth can gauge their poetic growth.

Ottawa Cuba Connections Carleton University

OCCCU is a solidarity organization which works to build understanding between Carleton students and revolutionary Cuba.

Books 2 Prisoners

We send free books to prisoners across Canada and the US, and respond to letters from prisoners. We are an abolitionist group and believe that education and human contact are important to maintain mental health while incarcerated. We have been active for more than four years and are entirely volunteer-run. We work with Booth Street Salvation Army providing volunteer hours for court purposes.



Pass The Vibes Collective

Pass the Vibes is collective of QTBIPOC creatives and artists based in Ottawa. We aim to hold intentional space for BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Colour) & QTBIPOC (Queer, Trans, Black, Indigenous, People of Colour) folks to create, express, and share knowledge in safe(r) environments with accessibility at our core.



Students Against Israeli Apartheid Carleton

We believe that justice will not be achieved without equal rights for everyone in the area of historic Palestine, regardless of religion, ethnicity or nationality

We understand Israeli apartheid as one element of a system of global apartheid. To this end, we stand in solidarity with all oppressed groups around the world, in particular, the indigenous people of North America.

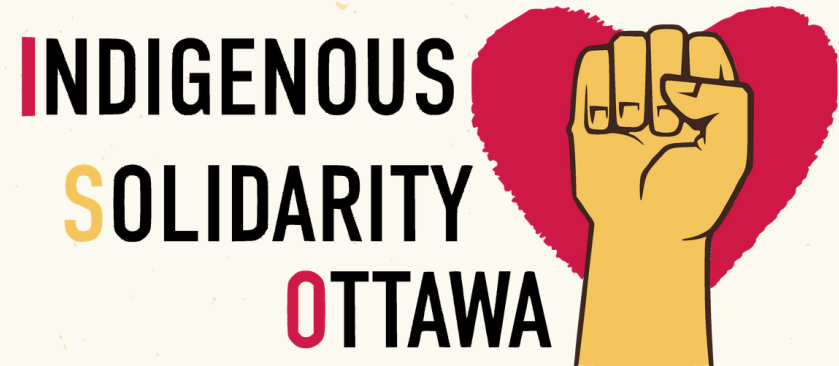
We oppose all forms of racism, including Islamophobia and anti-Semitism.

Our demands are based upon a July 2005 call from over 170 Palestinian organizations in support of a global campaign of boycotts, divestment and sanctions.

Boycott, divestment and sanctions should be maintained until Israel meets its obligation to recognize the Palestinian people's inalienable right to self-determination and fully complies with the precepts of international law.

Indigenous Solidarity Ottawa

ISO is an Ottawa-based, grassroots collective that supports Indigenous struggles for justice and decolonization. We acknowledge that Ottawa, and the entire Kitchissippi (Ottawa River) watershed, is Algonquin territory. We are committed to helping decolonize this territory, and to supporting national and transnational indigenous struggles. Our collective is for anyone who wants to be in solidarity with Indigenous people, but we want to be clear that most of us are settlers. Our group strives to listen to and take direction from Indigenous voices. Learning from indigenous knowledge and indigenous knowledge holders is crucial to decolonizing ourselves, and to challenging the colonial ideas and practices that dominate Canadian society and undermine indigeneity.



THANK YOU

Thank you for giving our annual report a read/view. OPIRG Carleton is grateful for the continued support from folks like you. We are working hard despite the tremendously unusual situation that we find ourselves in, and we hope that you will continue to keep us company and making us better.

Stay safe and healthy!

Sincerely,

OPIRG Carleton Board and Staff