

# QUEEN'S PARK INSIDER

2025-2026

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE ONTARIO LEGISLATURE INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME



OLIP IS A PROGRAMME OF THE CANADIAN POLITICAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION

# FROM THE EDITORS

Dear Readers,

This year marks a momentous milestone: fifty years of the Ontario Legislature Internship Programme (OLIP), and with it, over 40 years of Queen's Park Insider Magazine. Together, they form not just a chronicle of Ontario politics and policy, but a living record of the people who have animated both: the interns, mentors, academic directors, Assembly staff, and parliamentarians whose curiosity, conviction, and care have shaped Ontario's democratic life—one generation at a time.

To celebrate fifty years is to honor an enduring continuity of purpose. Though faces and fashions have changed, OLIP's spirit remains the same: to learn with humility, to question with integrity, and to serve with vision. That ethos has guided each cohort of non-partisan interns as they navigate the complexities of governance with open minds and steadfast hearts.

This anniversary issue doubles as a tribute and a testament: to the Members and mentors who have opened their office doors and widened our view of public life; to the alumni whose careers reflect the transformative power of early opportunities; and to every intern who has wrestled with the ambiguities of politics and still chosen idealism.

With gratitude to all who have shaped this shared journey—and with great anticipation for the decades still to come—we invite you to join us in celebrating fifty years of inquiry, fellowship, and the extraordinary everyday operations of democracy.

With warm regards,

Eve Parry and Giuliana Iacobucci

Co-Chairs of 50th Anniversary Edition of Queen's Park Insider

Cover photo shot by Nokomis Twovoice



## The Admin Team

**Academic Director:** *Dr. Peter P. Constantinou*

**Legislative Coordinators:** *Tanzima Khan & Nick Ruderman*

**Programme Manager:** *Elisa Natarelli*

**Archivist:** *Rick Sage*



## OLIP Committees

**Alumni Relations:** *Noor Akrawi & Keana Cavero*

**Magazine:** *Giuliana Iacobucci & Eve Parry*

**Meetings:** *Keana Cavero & David Landry*

**Partnerships:** *Kewan Perera & Shakthi Suthakaran*

**Recruitment:** *Bianca Morelli & Kewan Perera*

**Social Media:** *Shakthi Suthakaran & Noor Akrawi*

**Study Tours:** *David Landry & Bianca Morelli*

**50th Anniversary:** *Geneva Fuina & Emily Yinchang Shi*



# FROM THE ACADEMIC DIRECTOR

Dear Readers,

As Academic Director of OLIP, it is my great pleasure to mark an extraordinary milestone: the programme's 50th anniversary. Since 1975, OLIP has offered emerging professionals and academics a rare opportunity to work at the heart of the legislative process, engage with public policy in real time, and cultivate competencies integral to careers in government, academia, and beyond.

OLIP would not be possible without close collaboration between the leadership of the Canadian Political Science Association (CPSA) and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario (LAO), nor could it thrive without the support of the Speaker, the Honourable Donna Skelly, and Clerk, Trevor Day, the Board of Internal Economy, and the Members of the Legislative Assembly. I am also deeply grateful to our corporate partners and individual donors for their generous contributions and active involvement. I extend sincere thanks to our alumni, whose engagement over five decades has been central to the programme's growth and reputation.

I wish to recognize the outstanding work of our administrative team, Tanzima Khan, Elisa Natarelli, and Nick Ruderman, whose dedication mean a great deal to both the interns and me. Former coordinator Richard Sage likewise deserves notable recognition for his archival work; a contribution made all the more meaningful in this anniversary year.

The 2025–2026 cohort welcomed diverse academic paths, professional experience, and lived perspectives, yet united by a serious commitment to provincial affairs. They will leave not only better informed but also carrying new skills, sharper perspectives, and lasting connections that will serve them far beyond this year.

For fifty years, OLIP has opened the doors of democratic institutions, deepened civic literacy, and prepared future leaders for public life. As the programme enters its next chapter, I am confident it will continue to adapt, innovate, and deliver exceptional learning experiences for generations to come. Its impact is undeniable: participants leave as better citizens, and Ontario and Canada are stronger for it.

Thank you for your continued support of OLIP and for taking the time to read this anniversary edition of the magazine. On behalf of the entire team, I congratulate this year's cohort and look forward to celebrating their achievements past, present, and future. Here's to the next fifty years!

Warm regards,

Dr. Peter P. Constantinou

OLIP Academic Director



*The Ontario Legislature Internship Programme (OLIP) was established in 1975 and is administered by the Canadian Political Science Association and supported by a financial grant from the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. OLIP is a non-partisan organization and is not associated with the Government of Ontario nor with any political party. Each year, ten interns are selected from across Canada through a highly competitive process. The internship provides backbench opposition and government members of the Legislative Assembly with highly qualified assistants while simultaneously giving interns academic and practical experience in the day-to-day work of the Legislature.*

*We acknowledge the land on which we operate is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis. We also acknowledge that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 with the Mississaugas of the Credit.*



# INTRODUCING THE INTERNS



**Noor Akrawi**

*Oakville, Ontario*

Noor Akrawi, a McMaster University graduate from Oakville, Ontario, holds an Honours Bachelor of Arts in Political Science. Deeply committed to supporting children and youth, she has worked as a childcare provider and co-led a local book drive for underprivileged students. Noor completed her Assembly placement with Information Services, where she explored her interest in Artificial Intelligence and its societal impacts. She serves as Chair of the Alumni Relations Committee and Vice-Chair of the Social Media Committee.

# INTRODUCING THE INTERNS



**Giuliana Iacobucci**

*Toronto, Ontario*

Giuliana Iacobucci was born and raised in Toronto. She recently graduated from Queen's University with a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Political Studies. She completed her Assembly placement in the Legislative Library. Her work in this branch involved the creation of a report on Select Committees, which allowed her to learn more about House documents and procedures. She serves as Co-Chair of the Magazine Committee.



**Keana Cavero**

*Brampton, Ontario*

Keana Cavero, raised in Brampton, earned her Bachelor of Law and Legal Studies from Carleton University, concentrating on Transnational Law and Human Rights with a minor in Religion. She also recently studied at the University of Malaga in Spain. She completed her Assembly placement with Parliamentary Counsel, assisting in updates on the Office's policies alongside administrative work. Keana is the Chair of the Meetings Committee and is Vice-Chair of the Alumni Relations Committee.



**David Landry**

*Halifax, Nova Scotia & Ottawa, Ontario*

David Landry was born in Halifax, grew up in both Halifax and Ottawa, and now resides in Toronto. David graduated with an Honours Arts and Science degree from McMaster University. He completed his Assembly placement in the Procedural Services Branch's Committees section, creating a guide on Private Bills alongside other work related to Committees. David is Chair of the Study Tours Committee and Vice-Chair of the Meetings Committee.



**Geneva Fuina**

*Markham, Ontario*

Geneva Fuina was raised in Markham, Ontario, before relocating to London to pursue a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Political Science at the University of Western Ontario. She graduated at the top of her class, earning the S.F. Glass Gold Medal. Geneva completed a placement with the Canadian Parliamentary Review, where she authored a short-form article on legislative portraiture and moderated a roundtable panel discussion. She currently serves as Co-Chair of the 50th Anniversary Committee.



**Bianca Morelli**

*Toronto, Ontario*

Bianca Morelli was born and raised in Toronto before moving to Halifax to complete a Bachelor of Arts in Law, Justice, Society, and Sociology at Dalhousie University. As Vice President of her Student Union, she led student advocacy efforts, working directly with government and university administration on policy issues. Bianca completed her Assembly placement with Parliamentary Counsel, where she supported case briefings and legislative procedural work. She is Chair of Recruitment and Vice-Chair of Study Tours.

# INTRODUCING THE INTERNS



## Eve Parry

Vancouver, British Columbia

Eve Parry was born in Montréal and raised in Vancouver. She is the youngest graduate of the London School of Economics-University of Toronto Double Master of Public Administration and Master of Global Affairs program. Previously, she worked at the International Maritime Organization, a specialized United Nations agency. During her placement with the Parliamentary Protocol and Public Relations Office, Eve gained invaluable experience supporting official ceremonies, advancing community outreach, and contributing to public-facing media development. She serves as Co-Chair of the Magazine Committee.

# INTRODUCING THE INTERNS



## Shakthi Suthakaran

Toronto, Ontario

Shakthi Suthakaran was born and raised in Toronto, Ontario. She completed her Honours Bachelor of Arts in Political Science at the University of Toronto before earning her Master's degree in Political Studies at Queen's University. Shakthi thoroughly enjoyed her placement with the Legislative Research Branch, where she contributed to several Provincial Affairs Briefings and participated in enriching research work to aid Members of Provincial Parliament. She is Chair of the Social Media Committee and Vice-Chair of the Partnerships Committee.



Learn more about the interns!



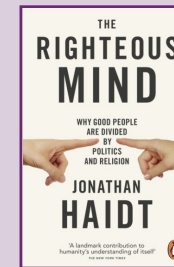
## Kewan Perera

Mississauga, Ontario

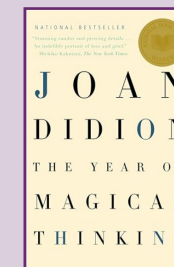
Kewan Perera is from Mississauga, Ontario. He holds an Honours Bachelor of Arts in Justice, Political Philosophy, and Law from McMaster University, and is pursuing a Master of Public Policy at Johns Hopkins University. He completed his Assembly placement in the Legislative Protective Service (LPS) Branch. Kewan focused on creating policy memos on redaction and AI usage in the LPS. He was Chair of the Partnerships Committee and Vice-Chair of the Recruitment Committee, and left the programme on March 13, 2026.

## The 50th's Favourites

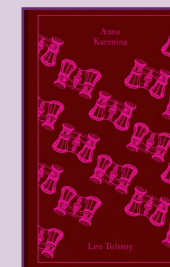
### WHAT ARE THE INTERNS READING? *Kewan, Giuliana, Emily, Eve, and Keana*



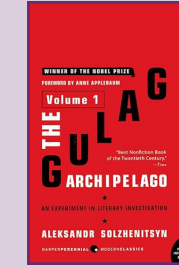
*The Righteous Mind* by Jonathan Haidt



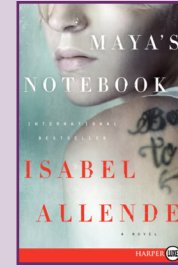
*The Year of Magical Thinking* by Joan Didion



*Anna Karenina* by Leo Tolstoy



*The Gulag Archipelago* by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn



*Maya's Notebook* by Isabel Allende



## Emily Yinchang Shi

Richmond, British Columbia

Emily Yinchang Shi is originally from Richmond, British Columbia. She is a recent graduate of the University of Toronto, where she completed a double major in Criminology and Political Science alongside serving as President of the Hart House Debate Club. She was delighted to complete her placement with the Table Research Office, where she contributed to the Assembly by supporting procedural research and analytical work. She is Co-Chair of the 50th Anniversary Committee.

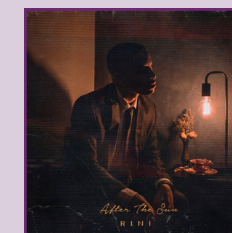
### WHAT ARE THE INTERNS LISTENING TO? *David, Noor, Shakthi, Bianca, and Geneva*



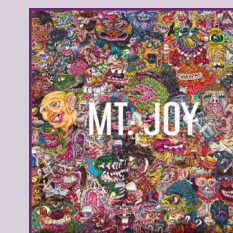
*Random Access Memories* by Daft Punk



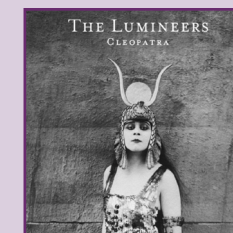
*Sincerely*, by Kali Uchis



*After the Sun* by RINI



*Mt. Joy* by Mt. Joy



*Cleopatra* by the Lumineers

# MPP PLACEMENTS

Noor and MPP Doly Begum



For my opposition placement, I had the privilege of working with former MPP Doly Begum of Scarborough Southwest, former Deputy Leader of the Official Opposition and Official Opposition Critic for Public Transit with responsibility for Equity and Anti-Racism. I contributed by drafting Members' statements, preparing speeches and remarks, researching Private Members' bills, and coordinating with stakeholder groups. I am grateful to MPP Begum for fostering a supportive environment and for offering my first immersive experience in service leadership.

Noor and MPP Monica Ciriello



I had the pleasure of working in the office of MPP Monica Ciriello, Parliamentary Assistant to the Attorney General, representing Hamilton Mountain. I supported the Ministry's work through speechwriting, development of Private Member's bills, research, stakeholder meetings, conferences, and community engagement. I am grateful to MPP Ciriello for welcoming an OLIP intern during her first year and for the opportunity to learn from the meaningful and impactful work carried out by her office.

# MPP PLACEMENTS

Geneva and MPP Laura Smith



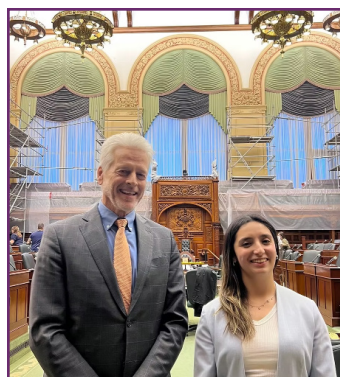
I had the pleasure of working with MPP Laura Smith of Thornhill. In my placement, I wrote Members' statements, speeches, and remarks spanning a range of policy and constituency matters. I welcomed constituents to Queen's Park, engaged in stakeholder meetings, and worked on two Private Members' bills. I had the unique opportunity to spend several weeks at the constituency office and to engage with community members by visiting conferences, events, and local businesses. Thank you MPP Smith!

Geneva and MPP John Fraser



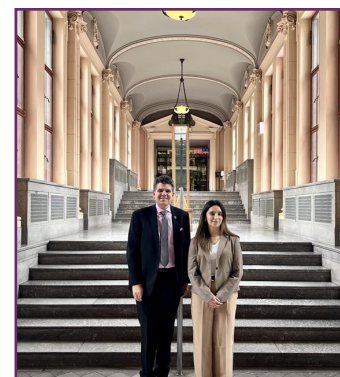
I had the privilege of working with the Interim Leader of the Ontario Liberal Party, MPP John Fraser, who represents the riding of Ottawa South. During my placement, I had the opportunity to conduct policy research and draft Private Members' bills. I also participated in Question Period preparation, engaged in stakeholder meetings, and had the unique opportunity to gain insight into the various roles of the Liberal Caucus Services Bureau. Thank you, MPP Fraser!

Keana and MPP Chris Glover



I had the privilege of working with MPP Chris Glover, the NDP representative for Spadina—Fort York. I contributed to constituency events, engaged with stakeholders, wrote speeches, helped plan FIFA World Cup activities, and managed logistics for MPP Glover's Commissioner of Democratic Rights Private Member's bill (Bill 78). I am deeply grateful to MPP Glover and his dedicated team for welcoming me so warmly and exemplifying what it means to be a positive force in politics.

Keana and MPP Andrew Dowie



I had the privilege to work in the office of MPP Andrew Dowie, representative for Windsor—Tecumseh and Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks. I learned from stakeholders about local issues, sharpened my writing skills, created digital content to connect Queen's Park to constituents, and learned about what keeps a Ministry running smoothly. I truly appreciate MPP Dowie's mentorship, kindness, and commitment to my growth in the world of governance.

Giuliana and MPP Jamie West



For my opposition placement, I worked with MPP Jamie West of Sudbury, the Official Opposition Critic for Labour and for Energy and Mines, and Deputy Whip for the Official Opposition. In addition to a memorable visit to Sudbury, I assisted with pitching questions, preparing remarks, drafting briefing notes, researching Private Members' bills, and engaging with stakeholders and constituents. This experience provided meaningful insight into the legislative process and the daily responsibilities of an opposition office.

Giuliana and MPP Matthew Rae



For my government placement, I had the pleasure of working in the office of MPP Matthew Rae, who represents the riding of Perth—Wellington. In addition to being the Parliamentary Assistant to Municipal Affairs and Housing, MPP Rae is also the Chief Government Whip. During my placement, I conducted research on local histories, assisted in constituency work, gained deeper knowledge of House procedures and affairs, and supported the administrative and party coordinating roles of the Whip's office.

# MPP PLACEMENTS

# MPP PLACEMENTS

*David and MPP Michelle Cooper*



I had the privilege of working in MPP Michelle Cooper's office representing Eglinton—Lawrence. I accompanied MPP Cooper to community events and stakeholder meetings as well as assisting with a wide range of constituency matters. I was honoured to contribute to MPP Cooper's Private Member's motion, scheduled to be tabled later this year in the House. From her, I learned lasting lessons about dedication, responsibility, and service.

*David and MPP John Vanthof*



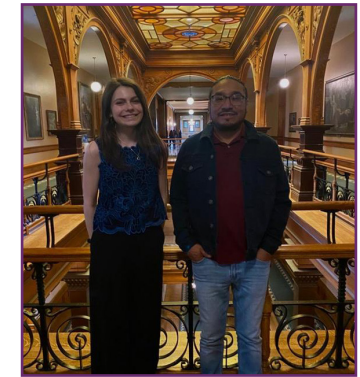
I am thrilled to have been placed in the office of Opposition House Leader, John Vanthof. MPP Vanthof represents the riding of Timiskaming—Cochrane, a vast riding in Northern Ontario. During my placement, I had the opportunity to work on drafting MPP Vanthof's Private Member's Public Business, accompany him to stakeholder events, and shadow the dynamic work of his Legislative Affairs team. Thank you, MPP Vanthof, for the brilliant opportunities I had in my Opposition placement.

*Eve and MPP Ernie Hardeman*



I had the privilege of working for MPP Ernie Hardeman, the Dean of the Legislature and Chair of the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs. The most meaningful moments came from time spent in his Oxford riding—travelling back roads and visiting local legions. I was also grateful to assist with his Private Member's bill, Bill 67, the Hospitality Workers Appreciation Day Act. Learning from Ontario's longest-serving MPP, whose humility, groundedness, and policy acumen were evident throughout, was deeply inspiring.

*Eve and MPP Sol Mamakwa*



I was deeply honoured to intern in the office of MPP Sol Mamakwa, Deputy Leader of the Ontario New Democratic Party. Representing Kiiwetinoong, Ontario's largest riding by landmass and smallest by population, he serves his community with a rare blend of courage, integrity, and resolve. As Critic for Indigenous and Treaty Relations and Northern Economic Development and Growth, his leadership is unyielding. I remain profoundly grateful for the guidance and generosity of MPP Mamakwa, Athena, and Bridget.

*Bianca and MPP Monica Ciriello*



I had the pleasure of being welcomed into the office of MPP Monica Ciriello and her Hamilton Mountain team. I was immersed in the work of the Ministry of the Attorney General through briefing note preparation, Private Members' bill research, Standing Committee on Justice Policy proceedings, conference participation, and stakeholder meetings at Queen's Park. I also gained firsthand insight into constituency work through community events and local engagement.

*Bianca and MPP Peggy Sattler*

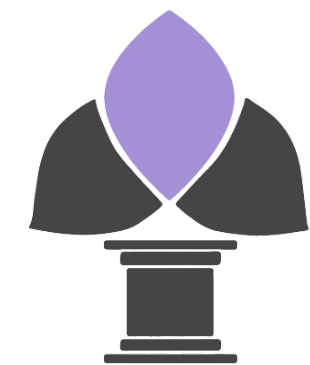


I had the privilege of spending my spring in the office of MPP Peggy Sattler of London West, the Official Opposition's Critic for Colleges, Universities, Research Excellence, and Security, as well as the party's Chief Whip. I contributed to Members' statements and advocacy letters, conducted policy research, and supported the development of Private Members' Bills. I also had the opportunity to pitch questions for Question Period, participate in stakeholder meetings, and engage with constituents through community events!

*Kewan and MPP Tyler Watt*



I was placed with MPP Tyler Watt of Nepean. Elected in 2025, he serves as Critic for Long-Term Care, Colleges and Universities, and as Second Vice-Chair of the Standing Committee on Heritage, Infrastructure, and Cultural Policy. Visiting the constituency office offered insight into community concerns, and I particularly enjoyed conducting financial analyses of ministerial reports. I'm grateful to MPP Watt for welcoming an OLIP intern in his first year and providing meaningful exposure to Canadian politics.



*Thank you to the MPPs who welcomed interns this year, without whom this programme would not be possible.*

# MPP PLACEMENTS

*Emily and MPP Deepak Anand*



I am grateful to have been placed with MPP Deepak Anand. I had the opportunity to research legislation, assist with Members' statements, and attend stakeholder events. I also spent significant time in the Mississauga—Malton riding, where I gained a deeper understanding of local priorities and challenges. This placement painted a clearer picture of what it truly means to be a Member: to be, all at once, a community leader, negotiator, researcher, and orator.

*Emily and MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam*



This spring, I had the privilege of working with Kristyn Wong-Tam, MPP for Toronto Centre. I supported them at diverse community events, from a tour of the Aga Khan Museum and Ismaili Centre to a Black Francophone Liberation Day celebration. I also organized a Town Hall on endometriosis, conducted research to address constituents' concerns, and helped convene stakeholders for Standing Committee on Justice Policy hearings. The experience reinforced my commitment to meaningful public service and impact.

*Shakthi and MPP Adil Shamji*



I had the pleasure of working with MPP Adil Shamji of Don Valley East, Chief Whip for the Liberal Party and Critic for Housing; Indigenous Affairs; and Primary Care, Urgent Care, and Public Health. I was drawn to this office primarily for the opportunity to work on timely, wide-ranging portfolios, including the impact of the housing crisis. I supported MPP Shamji in writing press releases and speeches, and in researching historical and contemporary legislation for House debates.

*Shakthi and MPP Steve Clark*



I had the privilege of working with Government House Leader, Steve Clark, MPP for Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes. Crowning parliamentary procedure, this office enabled me to truly understand the mechanisms of government. By routinely supporting debates, researching and drafting statements, and preparing various committees, I learned to thoroughly navigate the inner workings of Parliament. I am deeply grateful for MPP Clark's mentorship and truly valued my experience interning with the Government House Leader's Office.

# LEGISLATIVE LEADERSHIP

*Speaker, Hon. Donna Skelly, Clerk Trevor Day, Sergeant-at-Arms Tim McGough*

In our opening weeks at the Legislature, the interns had the privilege of meeting three of the Assembly's most integral figures: the Speaker, the Clerk, and the Sergeant-at-Arms. The atmosphere in each meeting was palpable: ten enthusiastic interns, one seemingly larger-than-life figure before us. Yet, any sense of formality quickly gave way to genuine ease, as each of these distinguished individuals greeted us with sincerity. The Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, the Honourable Donna Skelly, Clerk Trevor Day, and Sergeant-at-Arms Tim McGough were gracious, sharing their insights with candor as we began to acquaint ourselves with the Assembly.



Our first meeting took place in the Chamber of Queen's Park with Speaker Skelly. As the first female Speaker in the Assembly's history, she represents a decisive step toward more inclusive and representative leadership. Speaker Skelly spoke with clarity and reflection about her approach to the Speakership, characterized by non-partisanship, punctuality instilled through her years in broadcast journalism, and a strong command of parliamentary procedure. Speaker Skelly was an engaging listener, offering helpful advice and taking a genuine interest in each of us, and generously hosting us for lunch. It was an honour to meet the first female Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, whose poised and embracing presence made the conversation truly memorable.

The OLIP interns next met Clerk Trevor Day, the chief permanent officer of the Legislative Assembly, in his office overlooking the southern grounds of the legislative precinct. Clerk Day brought a jovial presence to the meeting, remarking on the principle of non-partisanship, the functions of the Office of the Assembly, alongside the ceremonial and administrative dimensions of his role. Clerk Day was incredibly receptive to our questions, leaving the cohort deeply appreciative of his exceptional advice.



It was a privilege to meet such a respected parliamentary official, and we extend our heartfelt thanks to Clerk Day for his steadfast support of both current and future cohorts.

The OLIP interns were delighted to meet Sergeant-at-Arms Tim McGough, who presides over the Assembly's security functions and precinct administration.



Spanning over forty years of law enforcement—from the British Military Police to Acting Chief of Police in Medicine Hat, Alberta—Mr. McGough's career exemplifies a rare combination of operational acumen and enduring commitment to public service. Our conversation highlighted recurring themes of diligence, agility, prudence, and institutional stewardship. As the security landscape evolves, Mr. McGough's transparency and collaborative spirit ensure the doors stay securely open rather than swing shut.

United by a shared devotion to democracy, the Speaker, Clerk, and Sergeant-at-Arms each uphold the integrity, order, and security of the Legislative Assembly. We thank them for their exemplary leadership and service to Ontario's parliamentary tradition.

# MINISTERS AND MEMBERS

*Premier Hon. Doug Ford, Marit Stiles, John Fraser, & Mike Schreiner*

We had the privilege of meeting Ontario's Premier, Party Leaders, and Ministers, each providing their perspectives on the province's leadership, spirit of service, and decisions dictating Ontario's direction.

The Honourable Doug Ford—Ontario's 26th Premier, MPP for Etobicoke North, and Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party—cordially welcomed our cohort. Premier Ford articulated his core values: family, consensus-building, tactful partnership, and humility.



He recounted his tenure as Chair of the Council of the Federation, revisiting their July 2025 meeting. Reflecting on the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, he offered candid insights into the pressures, uncertainties, and tough choices that defined that era; an experience that informs his approach during another period of instability, the Canada-U.S. trade war. Our conversation touched on the challenges and opportunities facing Ontario, from housing and resource development to job growth, energy, education, and commerce.

We similarly met with Ontario's Leader of the Official Opposition, NDP Leader and MPP for Davenport Marit Stiles, for a wide-ranging discussion on the balance between strong local representation and effective province-wide leadership.



She spoke of forging productive, cross-jurisdictional relationships, pointing to close working ties with Manitoba the Honourable Premier Wab Kinew and British Columbia the Honourable Premier David Eby. MPP Stiles further detailed her approach to effective political communication in a digital age.

The OLIP interns likewise had the opportunity to engage with MPP John Fraser, Interim Leader of the Ontario Liberal Party, and MPP for Ottawa South. MPP Fraser framed leadership not as a position of authority, but as a responsibility to elevate others. He remarked that the capacity to look down is inseparable from the obligation to lift up. He argued that the ability to grow is an essential attribute of effective public service and reflected on the job of opposition to ask the hard questions.



We also met with MPP Mike Schreiner, Leader of the Green Party of Ontario, and representative for Guelph. MPP Schreiner traced his early career as a small-business owner in the organic food sector. He outlined the Green Party's core priorities, including climate and environmental stewardship, universal basic income, and electoral reform. His insights underscored the enduring importance of informed, engaged citizenship in shaping a more just and sustainable future.

Together, these engagements with various party leaders offered a multi-partisan window into the competing visions, values, and governing philosophies at play in Ontario.

# MINISTERS AND MEMBERS

*Minister, Hon. Graham McGregor*

We had the privilege of meeting the Honourable Graham McGregor, Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism and the MPP for Brampton North.

Minister McGregor offered a nuanced exploration of identity, pluralism, and Canada's social fabric. Minister McGregor revealed what multiculturalism means to him, emphasizing the delicate balance between a collective, confident Canadian national identity and the freedom to celebrate individual heritage, culture, and religion.

The OLIP interns were left with a deeper appreciation for how a shared sense of belonging in Canada can coexist with, and even be enriched by, the diversity of different identities and experiences. Thank you Minister McGregor for your reflections and willingness to meet with us!



## SPOTLIGHT: LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

The OLIP interns were privileged to meet Her Honour the Honourable Edith Dumont, Ontario's 30th Lieutenant Governor and the first Francophone to hold this esteemed office. This memorable encounter offered a wonderful opportunity to engage with a dynamic individual whose career spans educational leadership and service in this crucial constitutional, ceremonial, and community role.

Her Honour's appointment as Lieutenant Governor followed a distinguished tenure within Ontario's Francophone education system. As the inaugural female Director of Education for the province's largest French-language public school board, she championed enhanced access to French-language learning and fostered inclusive environments for student populations. Notably, she was instrumental in the founding of the Université de l'Ontario français, the province's first independent French-language university. Her Honour offered thoughtful reflections on the vital importance of representation in public office, particularly in a province as linguistically and culturally diverse as Ontario.



Her Honour's remarkable contributions have earned her widespread recognition, including appointments as Officier de la Légion d'honneur and Chevalier de l'Ordre des Palmes académiques by the Government of France. She also serves as Chancellor of the Order of Ontario. The OLIP interns were deeply inspired by their enlightening discussion with Her Honour and gained greater appreciation for the responsibilities and enduring impact of the Lieutenant Governor's office.

# ONTARIO'S OVERSIGHT

## Independent Officers of the LAO

We had the incredible privilege of meeting with representatives from three of the Independent Offices of the Legislative Assembly, each of which plays a unique and vital role in advancing transparency and fostering public trust. Although their mandates are distinct, all offices are bound by a shared dedication to accountability in service to the people of Ontario.

It was a huge honour to meet Shelley Spence, the 14th Auditor General of Ontario. She was appointed for a ten-year term by the Legislative Assembly after being unanimously recommended by a bipartisan panel of MPPs.



Before her appointment, Ms. Spence served as a Partner at Deloitte LLP, where she spent over six years helping lead its Canadian Government and Public Service Assurance practice. With over thirty years of distinguished experience in audit, Ms. Spence reflected on the critical task of scrutinizing how public funds are managed and spent.

We also wish to express our sincere gratitude to Patricia Kosseim, the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario, for sharing her perspectives with us. Over the course of more than a decade, Ms. Kosseim served as Senior General Counsel and Director General at the Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada in Ottawa. In today's digitized world, with pervasive data collection, Ms. Kosseim underscored the growing imperative of protecting privacy while also facilitating access to government-held information.



The OLIP interns were also grateful to engage with Paul Dubé, Ombudsman of Ontario, during the final week of his second term. The Ombudsman's Office plays a vital role in upholding transparency across Ontario's public sector by investigating complaints and addressing systemic issues within its jurisdiction. Hearing Mr. Dubé reflect on his journey from private legal practice in New Brunswick to his role within the federal government as Canada's first Taxpayers' Ombudsman from 2008 to 2014 was profoundly inspiring. At every stage of his career, he has demonstrated a steadfast commitment to fairness, and we are grateful for the life lessons he so generously imparted.

All independent officers stressed that professional rigor and non-partisanship are not merely guiding principles of their offices, but conditions necessary for their credibility. We are tremendously grateful for their willingness to meet with us!



# PREMIERS OF THE PAST

## Previous Premiers

Each year, the OLIP interns reach out to former Premiers of all party stripes to learn from their experiences leading Canada's largest province. We extend our sincere gratitude to the Honourable David Peterson, the Honourable Bob Rae, the Honourable Dalton McGuinty, and the Honourable Kathleen Wynne for their past and present contributions.



The interns were thrilled to meet with David Peterson, Ontario's 20th Premier (1985-1990). Mr. Peterson offered thoughtful perspectives on Canada's distinct political culture and sense of national unity, grounded in compromise and pluralism. He reflected on idealism as a deeper and more sustaining force than material gain, the enduring need for good samaritanism and decency in public life, and the perils of ideological absolutism in an increasingly polarized world.

It was beyond an honour to meet with Bob Rae, Ontario's 21st Premier (1990-1995) and Canada's former Ambassador to the United Nations (2020-2025). He spoke vividly about the night of his first election victory, offered reflections on the differences between federal and provincial politics, and discussed his commitment to the public interest and the democratic process above all else.



Mr. Rae also urged us, as young interns, not to fear failure. He touched on his upbringing, framing his life not as a linear career path, but as a series of chapters, each pursued with purpose and openness.

Our dialogue with Dalton McGuinty, Ontario's 24th Premier (2003-2013), was particularly thought-provoking. He offered his perspective on the need for evidence-based policymaking, the moral imperatives of civic duty, and the corrosive effects of hyper-partisanship. Now serving as Chair of the Ottawa Heart Institute and author of the recent book *Be a Good One: Words to Live By*, Mr. McGuinty emphasized the enduring importance of personal integrity, intellectual humility, and a growth mindset in public life.



Kathleen Wynne, Ontario's 25th Premier (2013-2018), traced her political trajectory from municipal activism to Queen's Park, highlighting experience across four ministries. Wynne noted that policy is ultimately shaped by three forces: evidence, rhetoric, and ideology, each exerting different levels of influence across history. She outlined the traits the next Liberal leader must possess and argued that Ontario needs a forward-looking Liberal capable of advancing a visionary, rather than reactive, agenda.

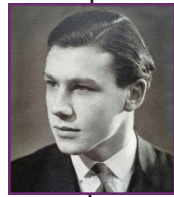
We are thankful for the former Premiers' willingness to meet with interns year after year, and for the strength and mastery they continue to model.

# OLIP's 50th ANNIVERSARY

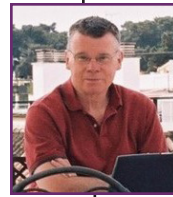


## 1975: OLIP Begins

1976-80: Academic Director (AD) Ronald Blair



1980-81: AD Colin Campbell



1981-88: AD Frederick Fletcher

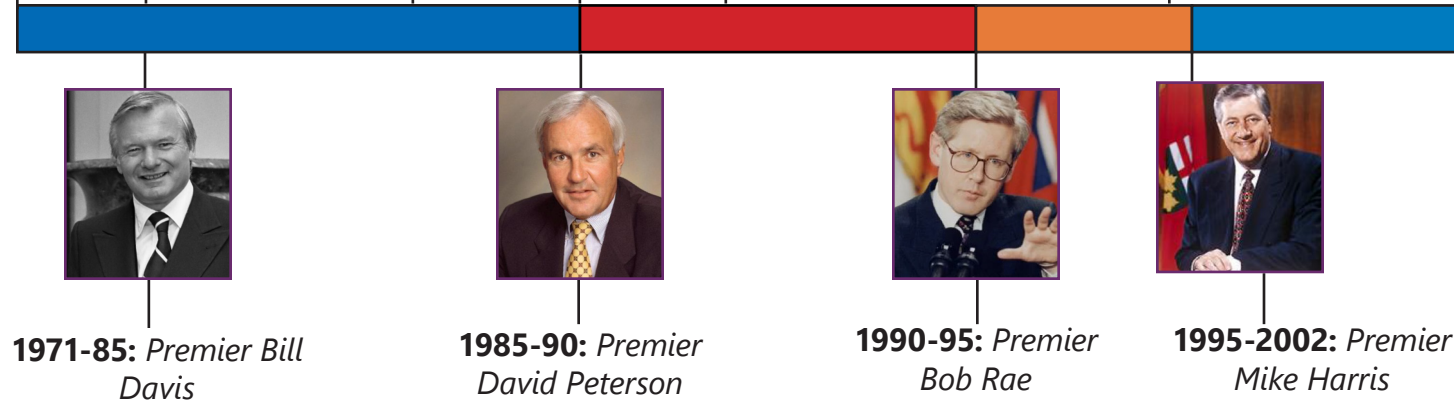


1982: First Edition of QPI

1986-94: AD Graham White



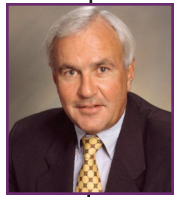
1994-2003: AD Bob Williams



1971-85: Premier Bill Davis



1985-90: Premier David Peterson



1990-95: Premier Bob Rae



1995-2002: Premier Mike Harris



# OLIP's 50th ANNIVERSARY



2003-2004: AD Greg Inwood



2004-2015: AD Henry Jacek



2015-Present: AD Peter Constantinou



2025-2026: OLIP Turns 50!



2002-03: Premier Ernie Eves



2003-13: Premier Dalton McGuinty



2013-18: Premier Kathleen Wynne



2018: Premier Doug Ford



## The Origins of OLIP with Professor Graham White



OLIP has shaped generations of politically engaged professionals, yet it began in 1975 as a simple idea to give young people a meaningful, hands-on introduction to the work of the Ontario Legislature. Few know that origin story better than Dr. Graham White, Professor Emeritus at the University of Toronto.

Dr. White is a leading authority on Canadian governance structures and legislative procedures; his research spans Queen's Park, Nunavut, Yukon, and the Northwest Territories.

As an alumnus of OLIP's inaugural cohort (1976-1977), former Clerk at the Ontario Legislature (1978-1984), and OLIP Academic Director (1987-1994), Dr. White's connection to the program is both extensive and personal. The interns had the delight of speaking with him about what it was like to pioneer OLIP, how the program has evolved, and what the future might hold.

## OLIP's Inaugural Cohort!



For Dr. White, joining OLIP was far more than another line on a CV; it fundamentally altered his career and expanded his sense of what public life could offer. "It was a life-changing experience," he says. "I met my first politician, a Tory backbencher named Jack Johnson from Wellington-Dufferin-Peel, and he was just the nicest guy. He believed so deeply in serving his constituents that you couldn't help but admire him."

Back then, the Legislature's atmosphere felt, in his words, "fabulous and lively." OLIP widened Professor White's sense of what was "interesting and important" in the political universe, revealing a multitude of stimulating non-academic roles for political scientists. The program equipped him for his first position in the Clerk's Office, where he supported several committees and amassed a reservoir of insights, information, and relationships that later underpinned multiple books on parliamentary affairs and a lifelong fascination with the machinery of governance.

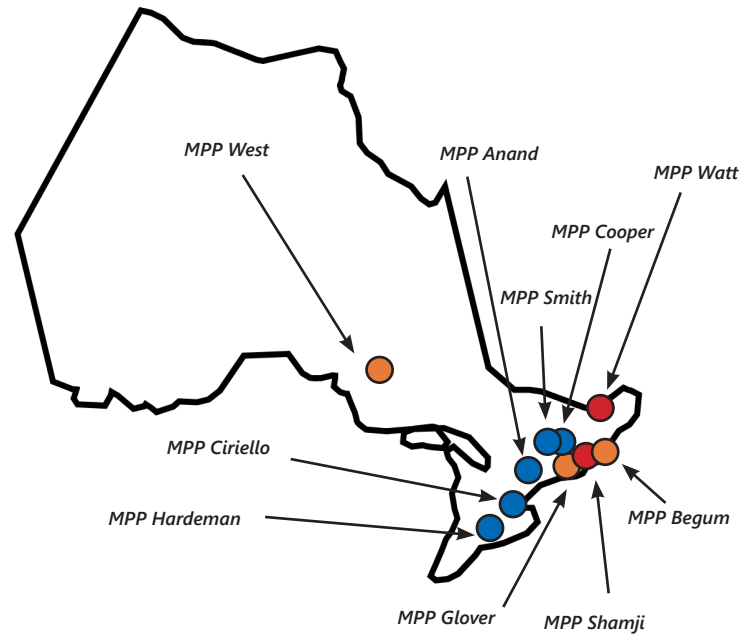
While OLIP has always carried a serious purpose, Dr. White remembers those early years as "fun, first and foremost—life as an intern was like that; I expect it still is." Fifty years after that first fall, Professor White's memories of OLIP remain vivid, matched only by his enduring belief in its value.

# HERE, THERE, AND EVERYWHERE

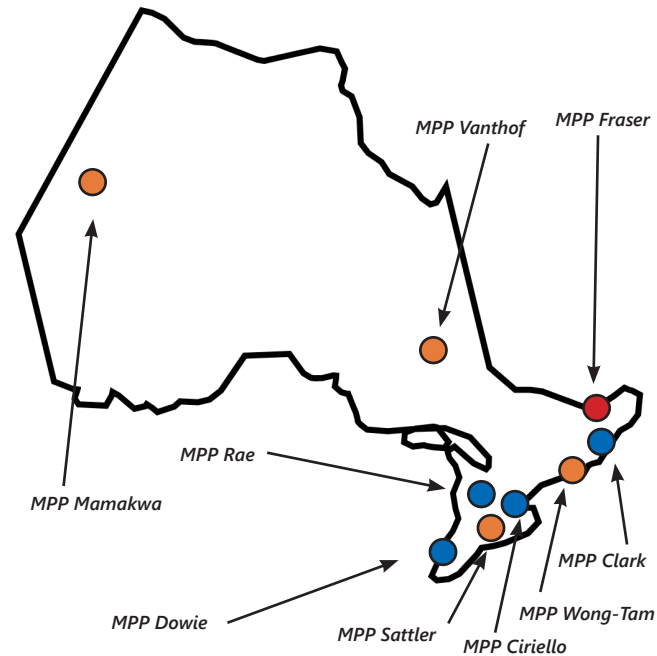
# OLIP HALL OF FAME

## Across the Province with Our MPPs

### ~ First Placement ~

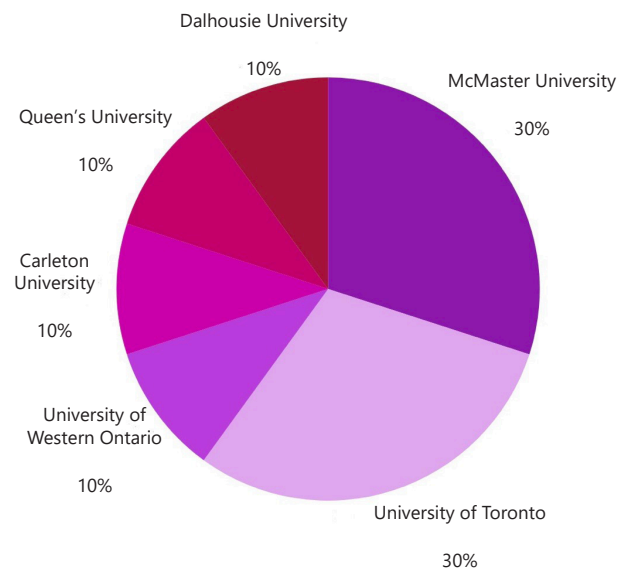


### ~ Second Placement ~

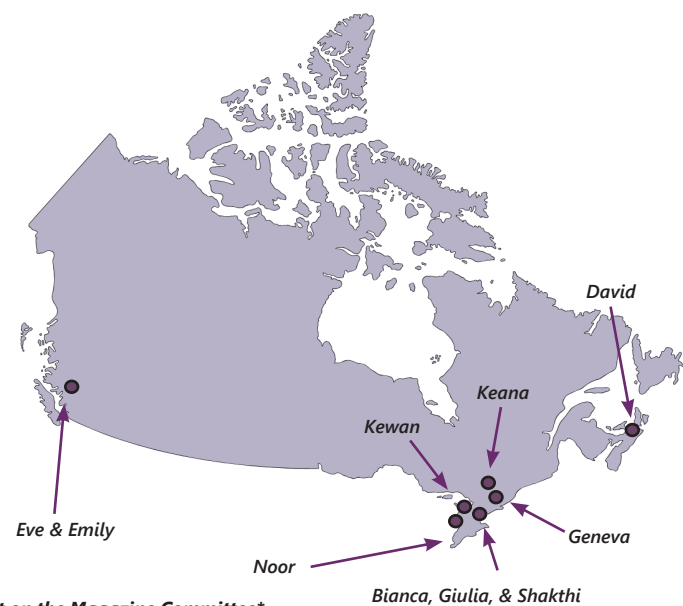


## Across the Country with the 50th Cohort

### Education:



### Hometown:



\*Maps are not to scale. The cohort's Royal Canadian Geographical Society Fellow is not on the Magazine Committee\*

## Alumni Spotlight: Douglas Wong

The interns had the pleasure of meeting with Douglas Wong, an OLIP alumnus from 2013–2014, and would like to spotlight him in appreciation of his continued support, mentorship, and willingness to connect with interns across multiple cohorts. Douglas currently manages government relations at Intact Financial Corporation, overseeing federal, provincial, and municipal files.

Prior to this, he served in the federal government, where he advised the Minister of Finance on a wide range of policy areas, including housing, pensions, labour markets, and income security. He played a central role in policy development for several federal budgets and economic statements, contributing to major initiatives such as the Housing Accelerator Fund and enhancements to the Canada Workers Benefit. Earlier in his career, he worked with the Co-operative Housing Federation (CHF) of Canada, advocating for causes important to the co-operative housing sector. The OLIP interns and programme are deeply inspired by Douglas's exceptional career trajectory and his enduring commitment to public service and meaningful policy impact. His guidance, generosity, and willingness to engage with us young professionals have left a profound and lasting impression.



## MPP Spotlight: Hon. Ernie Hardeman



After fifty years, one of the greatest debts OLIP owes is to the Members of Provincial Parliament who opened their offices to interns and treated mentorship as public duty. Among them, MPP the Honourable Ernie Hardeman stands out.

Holding the record for hosting the most OLIP interns, sixteen in total, most recently Eve Parry, MPP Hardeman has welcomed several interns throughout the course of his fantastic career.

Reflecting on the experience, he often remarks that the greatest reward of public life is "getting the chance to learn from bright young people and send them back out to serve their communities." Eve still recalls her first morning in his office, when MPP Hardeman paused beside a painting left of his desk and traced each pictured Oxford landmark, with evident honour and pride. Over three decades in the Legislature, MPP Hardeman has served as Associate Minister of Municipal Affairs (Rural), Chair of the Public Accounts Committee, and twice as Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (1999–2001; 2018–2021). Currently serving as Chair of the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs, he became Dean of the Legislature in 2025 and is now the longest-serving MPP at Queen's Park. For interns fortunate enough to learn from him, his legacy is not only legislative, but legendary.

# OUTSIDE QUEEN'S PARK

## Members of the Media

Think OLIP interns move fast? Try matching the Press Gallery's stride. Queen's Park has its own rhythm, and reporters keep pace, moving from scrums to press conferences with questions ready. The OLIP interns had the rare pleasure of turning the tables and interviewing media members whose work illuminates Ontario's political happenings.

Several interns had followed Steve Paikin before OLIP, whether through TVO's *The Agenda* or his #onpoli podcast with John Michael McGrath, so meeting him in person felt surreal.



Steve Paikin

With nearly four decades of public-interest journalism behind him, Paikin spoke with a mastery that only experience earns. He contemplated the moments in Canadian public life that deserve more attention, the corrosive erosion of local-lens news, the political figures who surprised him most, and what it takes to maintain credibility in a time when trust is hard to win.

Known as "Fife the Knife," Robert Fife has built a reputation for incisive, agenda-setting political journalism through his work at *The Globe and Mail*, including landmark reporting on the SNC-Lavalin and Senate expenses scandals. In conversation with OLIP interns, Fife spoke bluntly about what happens when fact-based, issue-based reporting disappears: power goes unchecked, civic knowledge thins, and entire communities lose the journalists who once held decision-makers to account.



Robert Fife

Charlie Pinkerton of *The Trillium*, who has covered federal politics since 2018 and Queen's Park since 2021, offered a window into the craft of journalism itself. He spoke about developing a sharp editorial instinct, how he decides which stories are worth pursuing, and the careful process of gathering information that cuts through noise to reveal what the public most needs to know.

Veteran journalist and alumnus Gord Westmacott reflected on his OLIP experience during the 1999 Ontario general election and former Premier Mike Harris's second term. With a 25-year career spanning *The London Free Press*, TVO's *Studio 2*, and the CBC, Westmacott described journalism as "what people don't want you to know; the rest is public relations." He urged aspiring journalists to be inquisitive and versatile, cultivating a broad yet agile knowledge base.



Charlie Pinkerton

Gord Westmacott



Sabrina Nanji

The interns also met Sabrina Nanji, founder of *Queen's Park Observer*. A decade-long member of the *Queen's Park Press Gallery*, Nanji has reported extensively on Ontario's political landscape and is a familiar voice across Canadian media, including CBC, CTV, CP24, TVO, and *Newstalk 1010*. Her impressive portfolio includes bylines at the *Toronto Star* and *Reuters*. As the first woman of colour to serve on the *Press Gallery's* executive, Nanji has helped shape a more dynamic era in Ontario political journalism.

Whether on television, online, or in the halls of Queen's Park, media members and journalists share the same commitment: to make Ontario politics accessible and accountable for the public.

# OLIP TAKES OTTAWA

## OTTAWA, ON

Our study tour to Ottawa was not merely sightseeing. It was immersion into how the machinery of Canadian democracy works day by day. Instead of engaging with politics as theory, we met the people and experienced the institutions that shape decisions through practice. Over several days, we moved through different corridors of power, engaging with Members of Parliament, diplomats, journalists, and policy experts from every political stripe and echelon.

November 17th marked our first day in Ottawa and offered an immediate introduction to federal decision making. We began with Mr. Eric Janse, the Clerk of the House of Commons and a Table Officer since 1998, who spoke warmly about his decades of experience advising parliamentarians.



Our visit to the Senate followed, housed in Ottawa's former Union train station with *Beaux-Arts* architecture. Later, Anne McGrath, the NDP's National Director, discussed the party's future following results of the 2025 federal general election. A meeting with the EU delegation focused on transatlantic cooperation, Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), and Canada's participation in the European Defence Fund. Our discussion with Chief of the Defence Staff, General Jennie Carignan, examined recruitment and retention in the Canadian Armed Forces, NATO spending targets, and strengthening Arctic security. We ended the day with MP the Honourable Karina Gould, who reflected on serving as the youngest woman to hold a Cabinet post.



On November 18th and 19th, our focus shifted to the institutions shaping Canada's law and diplomacy. At the Supreme Court of Canada, overlooking the Ottawa River, we explored the Court's history and gained a clear sense of how selective the path to final appeal is, with only a small number of cases ever reaching the bench of nine justices. Our attention then turned to the UK High Commission, where discussions on nuclear energy, the UK-Canada free trade agreement, and the Commonwealth took place. We also met with Conservative MP Chief Billy Morin of Edmonton Northwest, who discussed leading the Enoch Cree Nation toward budgetary surplus. Meeting with Speaker of the House of Commons the Honourable Francis Scarpaleggia and watching Question Period, we witnessed the intersection of procedure and politics in real time. We closed the tour with Bloc Québécois leader Yves-François Blanchet, whose reflections on Québec's political identity and environmental priorities provided a thoughtful conclusion to our time in Canada's capital.



# OLIP's NORTHERN ODYSSEY

## YELLOWKNIFE, NWT

Perched on the shores of Great Slave Lake, Yellowknife sits well above the 60th parallel, where Canada's provinces give way to the vast territories. For the OLIP interns, a study tour to this subarctic capital was nothing short of the opportunity of a lifetime.

Home to just under 50,000 people, nearly half of whom live in Yellowknife, the Northwest Territories (NWT) offers a striking contrast to the rest of the country. While roughly two-thirds of Canadians live within 160 kilometres of the US border, the North offers a very different perspective on geography, governance, and grit.



Travelling first to Calgary and then to Yellowknife, the interns embarked on a journey that proved both eye-opening and unforgettable.

This study tour also offered rare insight into the Northwest Territories' distinctive political system. At the Legislative Assembly, interns met Acting Clerk Mr. Harjot Sidhu and Deputy Clerk Mr. Michael Ball and learned about the Territory's consensus-style governance. The Legislature consists of 19 Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs), none affiliated with political parties, who work collaboratively to make territorial decisions.



One particularly symbolic feature of the Assembly is its mace, which contains a pebble from each of the Northwest Territories' 33 communities. When moved, the pebbles softly rattle, a reminder that all must be heard.

Beyond government, the interns engaged with a wide range of Northern leaders and organizations: From the Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce to environmental advocates at Ecology North, aerial firefighters at Buffalo Airways, and entrepreneurs at Rio Tinto's Diavik Diamond Mine. We also had the honour of meeting Premier the Honourable R.J. Simpson, Speaker the Honourable Shane Thompson, MLA Jane Weyallon Armstrong, Elections NWT's Stephen Dunbar, and Yellowknife Mayor Ben Hendriksen. Each conversation echoed the same theme: resilience, adaptability, camaraderie, and great pride carry the North. By the end of the visit, one truth stood out: Yellowknife's beauty is not just in its landscape, but in the remarkable people



# THANKING OUR PARTNERS

## AMAPCEO ONTARIO'S PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES

The OLIP interns were honoured to spend an afternoon at the Association of Management, Administrative and Professional Crown Employees of Ontario (AMAPCEO)'s downtown Toronto office, where we were warmly received by President David Bulmer, Vice-President Cynthia Watt, Strategic Advisor Grant Burns, and District Director Jennifer Harewood. Over lunch, we had a rich conversation regarding their respective careers with the Ontario Public Service and dove into meaningful conversations about their work with the union.

AMAPCEO has been championing Ontario's professional public service employees since 1992 and now represents over 17,000 members across the province. The organization is committed to advancing fair workplaces and representing its diverse membership, which spans policy experts, analysts, educators, and more, while remaining non-partisan.

During our visit, we also had detailed discussions about AMAPCEO's organizational structure. The Annual Delegates' Conference (ADC), with 15 members, is the trade union's highest governing body. It includes the Board of Directors, elected District Delegates, and any elected Bargaining Unit Delegates. After gaining a deeper understanding of AMAPCEO's negotiation mechanisms, we turned to the constitution and by-laws that underpin the Association's system of governance. Thank you, AMAPCEO, for a wonderful meeting and your valued partnership with OLIP!



## Bruce Power™ Innovation at work

Bruce Power is a cornerstone of Ontario's energy system, supplying roughly one-third of the province's electricity. Every time Ontarians turn on a light, charge a phone, or heat a meal, part of that power originates from Bruce A or Bruce B, two nuclear stations operated by a team of over 4,000 full-time employees.

Bruce Power welcomed this year's interns to its headquarters in Tiverton, Ontario, offering a rare glimpse into the sophistication of nuclear energy production. During our visit to Bruce Power, the interns were struck by the professionalism and depth of knowledge demonstrated by Bruce Power's staff, along with the unforgettable experience of seeing Bruce B in operation, a testament to the precision and safety behind their operations.

Nuclear energy is a focal point in Ontario and Canada's clean energy strategy, positioning Bruce Power as a leader in carbon-free electricity and nuclear innovation. With major projects like the Bruce C refurbishment underway, the company is committed to delivering sustainable energy for generations to come.

On behalf of the OLIP cohort, we extend our deep gratitude to Senior Manager of Government Relations Clint Thomas, Vice President Corporate Affairs & Market Development Patrick Dalzell, and Communications Specialist Jim Troyak for providing an exceptional learning experience, and for your generous support of OLIP!



# THANKING OUR PARTNERS



The valued partnership of the Insurance Brokers Association of Ontario (IBAO) offers each OLIP cohort the opportunity to engage with leaders in Ontario's insurance sector and gain insight into the industry's evolving landscape. This fall, the interns were welcomed to IBAO's head office for a conversation with Colin Simpson, Chief Executive Officer.

The IBAO is a not-for-profit association representing over 17,000 brokers across Ontario, advocating for consumer-first policies and broker independence. Its longstanding involvement in shaping insurance policy through government and industry engagement highlights its commitment to fostering collaboration across the insurance community.

In our conversation, Mr. Simpson shared key insights facing brokers in Ontario today, including regulatory pressure, the rise of direct-to-consumer insurance models, and the importance of maintaining consumer trust. Our conversation helped us to understand the IBAO's pivotal role in equipping brokers with the expertise and resources necessary to ensure Ontarians have access to fair, transparent, and personalized insurance solutions.

Thank you, Mr. Simpson, and the IBAO for your continued support of OLIP and for such an engaging and informative discussion!



# THANKING OUR PARTNERS



We had the privilege of meeting with the Ontario Real Estate Association (OREA), which represents real estate professionals across the province and is committed to fostering stronger, more resilient communities. Our discussions have offered valuable insights into how OREA equips realtors with essential tools, resources, and guidance to help Ontarians achieve homeownership.

As emerging young professionals, we were particularly struck by OREA's proactive engagement with the government to address housing affordability concerns. Their efforts span policy advocacy as well as the delivery of professional development and wellness initiatives, all designed to strengthen both the profession and the communities OREA serves.

We extend our sincere thanks to former OLIP Interns Jason Lagerquist, now OREA's Head of Government Relations, and Dia Mukherjee, Government Relations and Communications Specialist, for their generosity in sponsoring and meeting us. Their support, including the fabulous opportunity to attend the OREA conference, reflects a meaningful commitment to mentorship, and we are incredibly grateful for their countless contributions to OLIP.



The OLIP interns had the distinct pleasure of meeting with senior Government Relations representatives from Ontario Power Generation (OPG), including former OLIP interns David Donovan (2008-2009) and Jake Sikora (2014-2015), as well as Timothy Gopaul. As Ontario's largest producer of low-carbon electricity, OPG plays a vital role in powering the province, supporting local economies, and employing over 11,000 people across a diverse energy mix that includes nuclear, hydro, solar, biomass, and natural gas. In fact, OPG generates over half of the electricity supplied to Ontario's grid.

Our discussion and visit to their office offered valuable insight into the scale, complexity, and responsibilities involved in delivering stable, constant energy across this vast province. At a time when energy security is an increasingly pressing concern, and when balancing affordability, reliability, and sustainability is more important than ever, it was encouraging to learn how OPG is actively addressing these challenges.

We are sincerely grateful to OPG for its support and for the opportunity to engage with such an important and timely subject through OLIP.



OLIP is pleased to welcome Graham Construction as our newest lead partner. Established in 1926, Graham has spent a century transforming skylines and strengthening communities across North America. Through the delivery of complex infrastructure, industrial, and commercial projects, they have played a significant role in shaping the built environment across the Greater Toronto Area. We value Graham's commitment to high-quality, community-focused development. Thank you for your support of OLIP, and for all you make possible for the interns!

## Partnership Opportunities

Each year, ten recent graduates immerse themselves in the world of provincial politics and experience incredible opportunities that define their early careers. Please consider supporting OLIP's endeavors and championing the leaders of tomorrow by donating to the programme. Contact [admin@olipinterns.ca](mailto:admin@olipinterns.ca) or visit [www.olipinterns.ca](http://www.olipinterns.ca) for more details.



# 50TH ANNIVERSARY PLATINUM PARTNER



## PURPLE TRILLIUM PARTNERS



## LEAD PARTNERS



## MAJOR PARTNERS



## PARTNERS



## INDIVIDUAL DONORS

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