



ANNUAL REPORT 2019

Ontario Justice Education Network

// I believe that young people who have positive interactions with the justice system benefit personally and academically from their increased understanding and from the direct contact with justice sector professionals. "

— The Honourable R. Roy McMurtry, Former Ontario Chief Justice, Founding Chair of OJEN

WHO WE ARE

OJEN's justice education programs and resources promote understanding of the justice system and build legal capability in youth. Whether enrolled in a high school law class or confronted with their own legal issues, young people engage with the law in many different ways. OJEN's school-based initiatives bring the law to life through experiential activities and interactions with justice professionals. Our community outreach programming provides marginalized and vulnerable youth with the skills and knowledge they need to manage their legal issues with confidence. OJEN believes that building legal capability in young people is one of the most effective preventative strategies for advancing access to justice.

PROVINCIAL OFFICE

OJEN's small and dedicated staff run our justice education activities from our Toronto office. Outreach, Educator Support, and Training teams direct every aspect of project management, from planning and development to implementation and evaluation. Working with a network of volunteers along with our community and education partners throughout the province, they manage our portfolio of ongoing core programs and pilot new ones.

LOCAL COMMITTEES

Sixteen local committees located in every region of the province help to deliver OJEN's justice education programs. Committee members are volunteers from the justice and education sectors who collaborate to organize programming that responds to the needs of their communities.

VOLUNTEERS

Hundreds of volunteers, including judges, lawyers, and court staff, give their time and expertise in all areas of OJEN's operations throughout the province. Whether coaching a high school mock trial team, providing teachers with up-to-date legal information at a PD session, or explaining to newcomer youth where to find help with common legal issues, volunteers allow us to reach far beyond what staff alone could achieve.

COMMUNITY & EDUCATION PARTNERS

Thousands of youth access OJEN's programs and resources each year through the partnerships we cultivate with schools and youth-serving organizations. OJEN's justice education programs are free of charge and tailored to Ontario curriculum expectations as well as the needs of specific youth audiences.

OJEN STAFF

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Marc Rainford
Project Leader

Bryn Rieger
Project Leader

Simone Samuels
Director of Outreach Programs

Michelle Thompson
Manager of Legal and Digital Development

How Justice Education Happened in 2019



Ontario communities

hosted justice education programs for youth in schools, courthouses, and community-based organizations.



35,411
Young people

participated in school or community-based justice education programs.



402

Organizational partners

collaborated with OJEN to deliver our justice education programs and resources province-wide.



1,600

Active project volunteers

contributed **7,966 volunteer hours** to help deliver justice education programs and develop teaching materials.



105

Youth-Police Dialogue sessions

delivered in **14 communities** to **331 youth**.



28,600

Students visited Ontario courthouses

to observe court in action and meet with judges, lawyers, and other justice sector professionals.



29

Students

gained valuable employment experience with OJEN projects.



188,680

Downloads of teaching resources

enhanced classroom learning.



200,569

Viewings

of OJEN educational videos.

OJEN IN THE SCHOOLS



Over 1600 Ontario students participated in the OOCMT.

Experiential programs and curriculum-linked resources bring the law to life for high school students in classrooms throughout the province. While learning about Ontario's justice system, students also develop the legal capability to recognize and manage legal issues that may affect them throughout their lives.

OBA/OJEN Competitive Mock Trials for High School Students

The OBA/OJEN Competitive Mock Trial (OOCMT) program is a network of tournaments that takes place province-wide annually in April and May.

Each tournament follows the same basic format, rules and official case. Hundreds of high school students gain a new understanding of the legal profession as they try their hand at arguing a mock trial in courtrooms throughout Ontario. Weeks of coaching sessions with lawyer volunteers, hours of legal research and after-school huddles with their team members, culminate in hard-fought courtroom showdowns with peers from neighbouring schools.

// The moment after I delivered my cross-examination was the moment my career aspirations took a sharp turn. [Mock trials] provided a realistic glimpse of the legal realm, and I haven't looked back since."

— Summer Harb, former St. Thomas More SS student, Hamilton

French Mock Trial Tournament

Students participating in OJEN's first stand-alone French mock trial tournament worked with French-speaking lawyer coaches, gaining a greater understanding of Ontario's bilingual justice system.

Six schools from the Ottawa area competed in the first French language version of the OBA-OJEN Competitive Mock Trial Tournament (OOCMT) at the Ottawa Courthouse in the spring of 2019, doubling the number of French language schools participating the previous year.

Providing French-speaking students with the same justice education opportunities as English-speakers is a priority for OJEN. Teaching resources and school-based programs are available in both languages. OJEN's academic French-language programs are especially important for newcomer students who may come from countries where the justice system is different than Ontario's justice system.



Six schools competed in a French mock trial tournament.

“ OJEN's French language mock trial program allows the young participants to interact with clerks, paralegals, lawyers, and judges, which helps them to be less intimidated by the complexity of the legal system on the one hand, and to discover new professions and even consider a career in the justice field, on the other hand. ”

— Justice Julie Thorburn, Court of Appeal for Ontario,
OJEN Director

London Courthouse Visits

OJEN's flagship Courthouse Visit program, is an opportunity for young people to see the justice system in action and to connect with legal professionals such as judges, justices of the peace, lawyers, and court staff.

Each year, tens of thousands of young people visit one of over 70 participating courthouses in Ontario. Thanks to the London OJEN Committee, students visiting the London/Middlesex Courthouse enjoy a unique program feature – a sentencing demonstration. A judge, Crown attorney and defence lawyer present the scenario, interspersed with commentary to explain what they are doing and why.

“ The judge explains what factors go into his decision, the flexibility and leeway he has in setting the sentence and what might have led him to a different outcome. The mock sentencing demonstration happens immediately before the class visits actual court in session, so they can apply what they've learned to what they see in the courtroom. Bridging the gap between theory and application was fascinating. ”

— Jason Hatch, teacher, Strathroy Collegiate Institute



1,650

high school students participated in OOCMT tournaments



96

classrooms received visits from lawyers and judges



873

courthouse visits provided students opportunities to see court in action

OJEN IN THE COMMUNITY



Police & newcomer youth in Kingston connect through the YPD program.

Tailoring programs to the needs of unique communities allows OJEN to provide meaningful and timely legal information to vulnerable youth. The learning goes two ways – justice professionals share information about legal processes with youth, and the youth share information about their lived experiences with justice professionals.

Youth-Police Dialogues

Challenging stereotypes and building rapport can help reset relationships between youth and police officers in communities with histories of conflict.

OJEN's Youth-Police Dialogue (YPD) program engages some of Ontario's most vulnerable and marginalized young people. In this multi-session program, youth learn about their legal rights, police procedures, and effective communication strategies, while getting to know police officers as individuals. Police officers gain insight into the lived experiences of youth, including the youths' views on the issues and challenges both they and their communities face. A second phase of the program allows youth, police officers, lawyers, and community workers to build on their learning and collaborate on a project chosen by the youth. By the time the program concludes in March 2021, OJEN will have delivered at least 24 YPD programs across the province.

// The YPD program was an eye-opening experience that I believe every police officer should have the opportunity to take part in! Getting to know our newcomer students and their families on a personal level was such a great experience, and I learned as much as they did. "

— Constable Bryan McMillan, Kingston Police

Newcomer Community Justice

Empowering newcomer youth with skills and knowledge impacts entire communities.

Newcomer youth, with their greater English language fluency, have a special, trusted role within their families. They often act as interpreters and problem solvers for adult family members. OJEN's Newcomer Community Justice program equips youth with information to help their families and community members find the resources needed to resolve legal issues—often in their own language. Youth in three Toronto newcomer communities received leadership training and learned about common legal issues affecting newcomer families. They took what they learned back to their communities, organizing, promoting and delivering local public legal education events. In the process, they acquired new skills, knowledge and self-confidence.

Shield Your Rights

Indigenous youth take the lead in improving youth-police relations in their communities, by creating a game-based public legal education tool.

A team of six Indigenous youth from across Ontario, assisted by game design and legal professionals and Indigenous cultural educators, are developing a game-based learning tool about legal rights. Shield Your Rights blends traditional teachings with legal information, to educate youth about their legal rights when interacting with the police. OJEN delivers the Shield Your Rights project in partnership with Justice for Children and Youth and the Winkler Institute for Dispute Resolution.

“What I like most about this project is the cultural significance that’s woven into the story of this app. Youth will simultaneously learn how to shield their rights and establish a connection to their culture and identities.”

— Jeremy Naveau, Youth Leadership Team member

“The youth benefitted from the program because of the information they learned. They can teach their family and community about refugee resources, which is a big step. Youth also got to be leaders and they learned about event planning.”

— Jozsef, Youth Project Officer,
Parkdale Collegiate Institute



4,413

youth participated in
community programs



158

community partnerships
helped deliver programs
throughout Ontario



902

justice education sessions
facilitated by OJEN staff



Newcomer Community Justice participant speaks on a Spanish language radio show.



Indigenous youth collaborate to create a digital public legal education game.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING



Street Checks training session with Toronto youth workers.

OJEN offers professional development for teachers, youth workers, and other adults working with youth. Sharing our model of justice education, and providing access to legal expertise, improves OJEN's capacity to deliver programs province-wide.

Street Checks

Knowing their rights and understanding the parameters in which police work, allow youth to feel more confident about engaging with police.

OJEN's Street Checks workshops address misconceptions around the new provincial regulations about police procedures when interacting with civilians. Youth leaders and youth workers from across the City of Toronto attended Street Checks workshops during the spring of 2019.

In the workshops, they learned practical strategies for improving interactions with the police, which they took back and shared with their youth.

“ Frontline workers require access to accurate and up-to-date information and training that builds their knowledge, capacity, skills and network of service providers to better support the youth they are working with. If frontline workers know how to navigate, advocate and provide support through the Justice System, then this increases positive outcomes for youth, and we all benefit when youth have positive outcomes. ”

— Veronica Salvatierra, Supervisor, Toronto Youth Partnerships & Employment (TYPE), City of Toronto

Justice Education Fellowships

The training and experience Justice Education Fellows receive at the beginning of their law careers, prepare them to make public legal education (PLE) a part of their lives.

A select group of law students learn about OJEN program models, facilitation techniques and tips for working with teachers, volunteers and community partners. Throughout the academic year, with OJEN support, they initiate a minimum of three justice education projects in their communities through local schools or community groups. In the 2019-2020 academic year, six Fellows from six universities are delivering justice education projects that include workshops on alternative dispute resolution, employment law, and cyberbullying, safety and sexting.



Law students from 6 universities learn about delivering PLE.

// *The OJEN training was helpful. Learning how to establish rules and guidelines to maintain a respectful environment in the classroom was important for the sexting workshops I co-facilitated with Amanda Cutinha from University of Toronto Faculty of Law. "*

— Miscia Sullivan, OJEN Fellow,
Osgoode Hall Law School

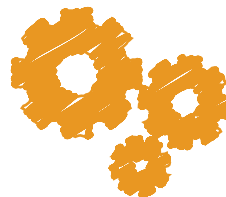
Steps to Justice Training Video

The Steps to Justice online training video gives teachers and volunteers access to facilitation instructions that allow them to run workshops for youth anywhere in the province.

OJEN's series of Steps to Justice teaching modules for young people compliment the Community Legal Education Ontario (CLEO) Steps to Justice website. This plain language website walks users through the legal steps they need to follow when facing a variety of common legal problems. Each OJEN module focuses on a specific area of law, such as employment, housing, or consumer rights. Using hypothetical scenarios, youth look for answers to legal questions, and in the process, learn how to use the website to access practical legal information.

// *CLEO is thrilled that OJEN has taken the lead in developing and delivering Steps to Justice workshops to youth. An understanding of essential legal rights and responsibilities equips youth – and the young adults that they become – to take action early on, which can prevent or at least minimize legal problems. Kudos to OJEN! "*

— Julie Mathews, Executive Director, CLEO



650

justice sector professionals
engaged in 38 PD sessions



427

frontline youth workers received
accurate legal information on
issues relevant to youth



264

teachers learned about topical
legal issues at Law Institutes or
PD sessions

OJEN AWARDS



Chief Justices' Award

Sergeant Milton Ferguson, from Toronto Police Services' 52 Division, received the Chief Justices' Award in recognition of his outstanding efforts to improve relations between police and youth in Toronto's marginalized and racialized communities. For over 10 years as an OJEN volunteer, he represented the police perspective to youth and offered practical strategies for handling encounters with police to avoid escalation of conflict. In many cases he provided youth with their first positive encounter with a police officer.



Hux-Kiteley Exemplary Justice Educator Award

Laura Kirby-McIntosh from Cawthra Park Secondary School in the Peel District School Board, was recognised for over 20 years of inspiring students with her passion for law and civic action. She was a mentor to new law teachers and generous in sharing teaching resources. In addition to her classroom teaching, she led numerous extra-curricular student clubs, including the mock trial team, social justice and advocacy groups. She is best known for her role in establishing the Charter Challenge program at Cawthra Park.



The Tate Herbert Memorial Post-Secondary Award

Rebecca Strain received this award in recognition of her exceptional volunteer work with OJEN while she was a post-secondary student. During her placement with OJEN as a Bachelor of Social Work student, she went over and above her placement requirements by coordinating two mock trial programs. She continued her volunteer efforts later as a student at Queen's Law. In Kingston, she assisted with the delivery of a law symposium for high school students.

DIRECTORS & OFFICERS

Justice Lois Roberts

appointee of the Ontario Court of Appeal

Justice Julie Thorburn

appointee of the Superior Court of Justice

Justice Katrina Mulligan

appointee of the Ontario Court of Justice

Denise Dwyer

appointee of the Ontario Ministry of Education

Paul Evraire

appointee of Community Legal Education Ontario

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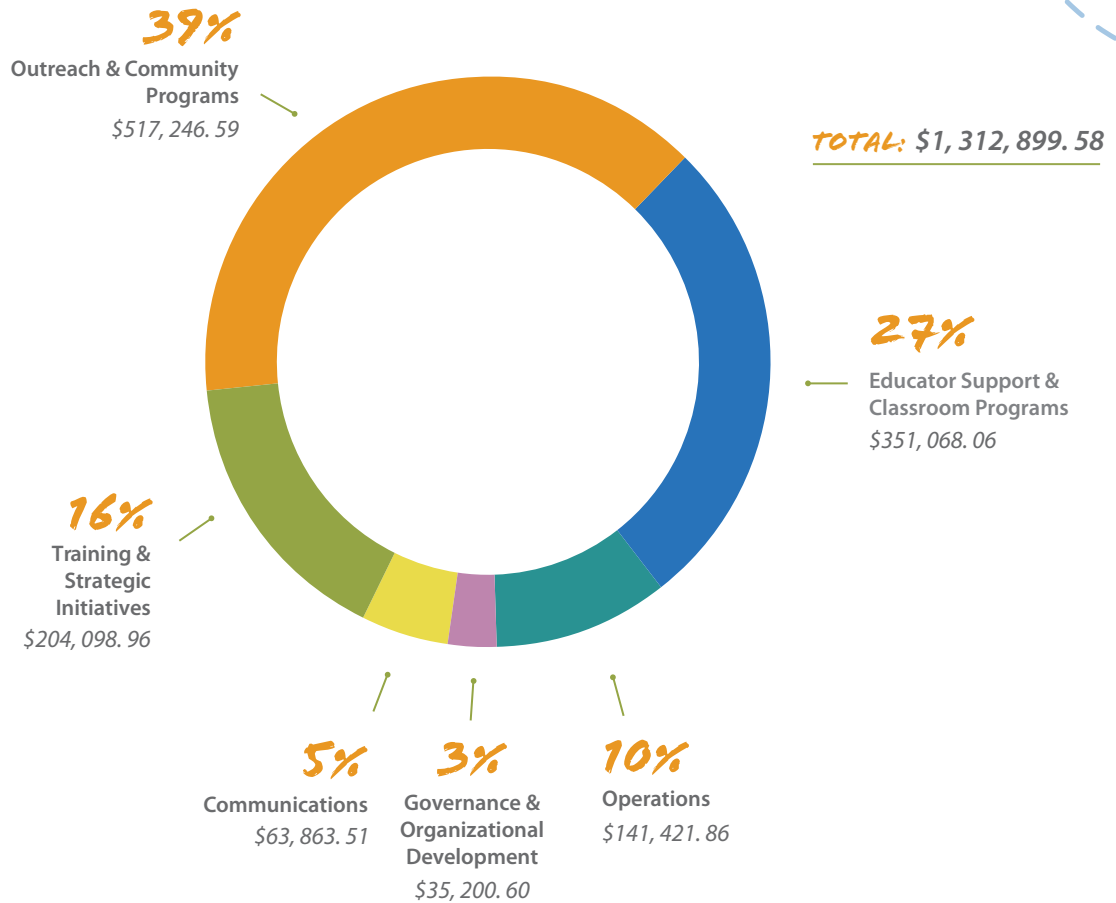
Byron Stevenson

appointee of OJEN



Jan Haskings-Winner and Justice Katrina Mulligan, OJEN Board Co-Chairs

2019 BUDGET



We are grateful for the generous support of the many individuals who have donated to OJEN throughout the past year.

Special thanks to the Herbert family and friends who continue to support our activities with Tate's Tableaux.

[Donate online through Canada Helps](#) or [send a cheque to OJEN](#).

Charitable registration number: 85548 9134 RR0001

AMBASSADOR PROGRAM



OJEN's Ambassador program gives young lawyers and other professionals an opportunity to get an inside look at OJEN's unique approach to public legal education.

Each Ambassador chooses their own area of involvement from a wide range of OJEN initiatives. They receive invitations to events that connect them with senior justice sector professionals. Pictured here, Ambassadors attend a lunch and learn session with Justice Thomas McEwen of the Superior Court of Justice.

NETWORK MEMBERS

The Chief Justice of Ontario

The Chief Justice of the Superior Court of Justice

The Chief Justice of the Ontario Court of Justice

The Deputy Attorney General of Ontario

The Deputy Minister of Education

The Chair of the Law Foundation of Ontario

The Treasurer of the Law Society of Ontario

Department of Justice Canada

The President of the Advocates' Society

The President of the Federation of Ontario Law Associations

The President of the Ontario Bar Association

The Chair of Legal Aid Ontario

The President of the Ontario History and Social Science Teachers' Association

The Executive Director of Community Legal Education Ontario

The Executive Director of the Association of Community Legal Clinics of Ontario

The Ombudsman of Ontario

The Education Director of the Canadian Civil Liberties Education Trust

Representative of the Institute for Catholic Education

The President of the Ontario Principals' Council

Representative of the ESL/ELD Resource Group of Ontario

The Executive Director of the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres

The Executive Director of the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants

Representative of the Ontario Council of Law Deans

The President of the Association of French Speaking Jurists of Ontario (AJEFO)

Representative of the Ontario Business Educators' Association

FUNDERS

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