



# **ANNUAL REPORT 2018**

## **Ontario Justice Education Network**



# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Everyone will encounter the legal system at some point in their lives. From signing the rental agreement on your first apartment to disputing a parking ticket or navigating a divorce – it helps if you know how to spot a legal issue, have a basic understanding of how the system operates, know where to find reliable information or help, and feel comfortable engaging with legal institutions and professionals.

OJEN’s public legal education (PLE) initiatives build legal capability in youth by:

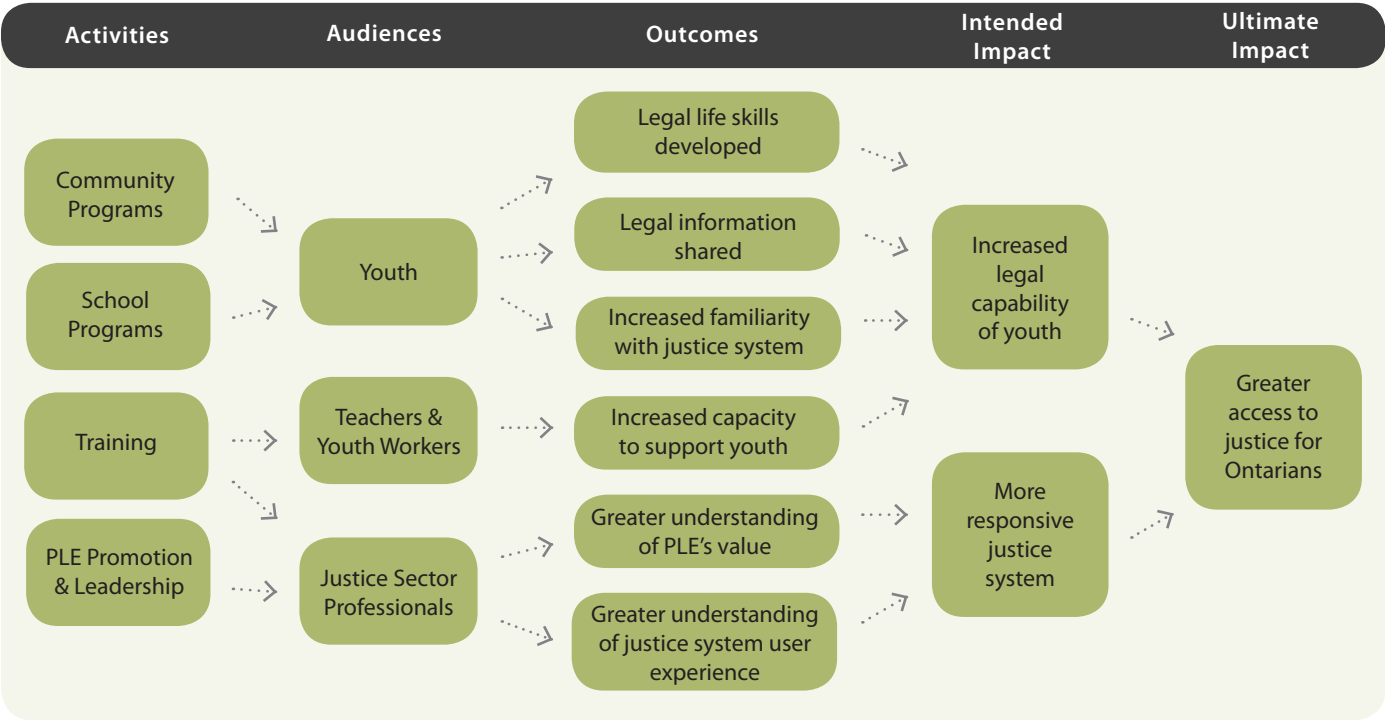
- Focusing on the development of legal life skills (e.g. issue-spotting, communication and advocacy skills, etc.);
- Sharing information that makes legal processes and concepts easier to understand; and
- Introducing youth to the people who work within the justice system to encourage greater comfort when engaging with it.

To achieve these outcomes, we engage youth, the adults who work with them and the justice sector professionals who volunteer to help deliver our programs. We partner with schools and community organizations to bring our PLE initiatives to young people. We offer professional development to teachers and youth workers, to support them in building the legal capability of their youth. We train our justice sector volunteers to better prepare them for effective community engagement and PLE delivery. And finally, we promote the value of PLE in working to achieve greater access to justice for all Ontarians.

This year’s annual report profiles three of our core areas of activity and highlights how our PLE programs are tailored to build specific legal life skills, share legal information and encourage interaction with the justice system. We have also dedicated a special focus to our Youth-Police Dialogues, which recently received a three-year funding award from the Ontario Trillium Foundation that will allow us to bring this high impact program to 20+ communities throughout Ontario. Thank you, to all of our stakeholders and supporters for making 2018 a productive and successful year!

Jessica Reekie  
Executive Director

## WHAT WE DO AT OJEN



# How Justice Education Happened in 2018



95

## Ontario Communities

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

1,394

## Active Project Volunteers

contributed

6,000

## Volunteer Hours

to help deliver justice education programs and develop teaching materials.



361

## Organizational Partners

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



16

## Local OJEN Committees

engaged

205

## Volunteer Committee Members

who worked together on justice education initiatives that responded to local community needs.



7,347

## Youth

participated in school or community-based justice education programs.



28,330

## Students

visited

## Ontario Courthouses

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



830

## Adults

participated in OJEN training and received information & resources to help youth.



# OJEN IN THE SCHOOLS



*Braiding Diversity into Justice was a full day career modeling program connecting high school girls with women working in the legal profession organized by the Waterloo OJEN Committee.*

OJEN's programs for secondary school students compliment the Ontario curriculum for law and civics courses. They offer excellent opportunities for students to get a closer look at the justice system in action and learn about careers in law. Programs such as the Charter Challenge and mock trials, also allow students to develop research, critical thinking, perspective-taking and advocacy skills while building their self-confidence.

At the same time, OJEN programs prepare students to engage with common legal issues. Focusing on areas that will affect young people as they transition to adulthood, OJEN programs offer practical information and focus on building the legal life skills they will need when faced with legal issues later in life.

*// I believe that this opportunity could be beneficial for many students as it teaches you not only how to properly present yourself and your ideas in court, but allows you to build upon your confidence and your ability to work with others. It was an opportunity to become comfortable in an intimidating setting."*

**- Student mock trial participant**



**1600**

students practiced advocacy skills in the OBA-OJEN Competitive Mock Trial program



**900**

students considered complex legal issues participating in the Charter Challenge



**1360**

students connected with a justice sector volunteer visiting their classroom



# OJEN IN THE COMMUNITY



Youth from the Vanier community in Ottawa took part in a multi-session, interactive program designed to improve relationships between youth and the police.

OJEN partners with community organizations to offer programs for vulnerable and marginalized youth where we provide practical legal information, skill-building exercises, and opportunities to share their lived experiences with members of the justice system. These programs are generally youth-driven and focus on areas of the law that are directly relevant to young peoples' needs and interests.

Giving youth tools to manage their own legal situations and to know where and how to find legal help when required, form the basis of our programs for vulnerable and marginalized youth.

// *This is a great opportunity for us to learn about legal rights, which we don't know and can be of help if we are in a situation that requires legal action.*

- Youth participant in OJEN's Legal Leaders program for newcomer youth



**894**

vulnerable youth developed legal life skills in OJEN programs



**36**

community partners welcomed OJEN justice sector volunteers to share perspectives & information



**111**

justice education sessions provided practical legal information tailored to youth



# YOUTH - POLICE DIALOGUES



**Top left:** Young mothers from Humewood House in Toronto at their YPD culminating activity.

**Top right:** Youth from Ottawa form connections with local police officers.

**Bottom left:** Youth from Toronto's Regent Park community learn about police perspectives.

**Bottom right:** Indigenous youth in Sudbury develop communication and advocacy skills with police.



OJEN's Youth-Police Dialogue (YPD) programs offer young people a safe, inclusive space to share their perspectives about their neighbourhood and the issues that cause conflict between youth and police. Over 6-8 weekly sessions, lawyers and police officers help youth explore criminal law and policing concepts, while building their communication and advocacy skills. Youth participants practice framing their ideas and concerns in a respectful, assertive way that enhances youth-police relations. The program ends with a roundtable discussion between youth and police officers, where both sides work to come up with solutions, while addressing community safety as a shared goal.

Since the program launched in 2014, OJEN has offered Youth-Police Dialogues throughout the GTA, Ottawa, Thunder Bay and Sudbury. In April 2018, OJEN received a three year grant from The Ontario Trillium Foundation to replicate the program province-wide. Additional funding from Crime Prevention Ottawa, the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services and the Law Foundation of Ontario, has allowed us to expand the program, creating a second phase in which youth and police officers work together on a shared project.

*// Many times, youth talk amongst themselves about the issues regarding youth-police interactions, but are not offered a safe and conducive platform to frame their experiences as a dialogue and potential way forward in bettering police services. The young mothers [from the Humewood House program] offered a very unique perspective, talking on behalf of themselves as youth with lived experience, and on behalf of their young children. "*

- YPD Youth Leadership Team member

Since we began piloting YPDs in 2014...



135

YPD sessions delivered in 18 different communities



9

police services engaged with youth to problem-share and problem-solve



21

community organizations partnered with OJEN to deliver YPDs



455

youth engaged in positive interactions with local police officers



# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING



Law teachers at an OJEN professional development session learn how the Steps to Justice website ( [stepstojustice.ca](http://stepstojustice.ca) ) can be used in the classroom to teach about the law and show students the steps to take to address many common legal problems.

Although young people are the primary focus of OJEN's public legal education programs, we reach a wider youth audience by empowering the trusted adults in their lives with current, accurate and relevant legal information. OJEN offers training and professional development (PD) to teachers, youth workers, and our justice sector volunteers.

Through demonstrations, presentations and hands-on activities, participants not only gain a deeper understanding of legal issues themselves, they receive tips and techniques for enhancing the learning experience for youth. As with most OJEN programs, training and PD sessions are tailored to meet the needs of each audience and the youth with whom they work.

// *The Summer [Law] Institute was excellent. The topics covered were of real interest to high-school students. I would definitely recommend the Summer [Law] Institute to my teacher friends. "*

- Teacher participant



**105**

post-secondary students received training in delivering public legal education sessions



**344**

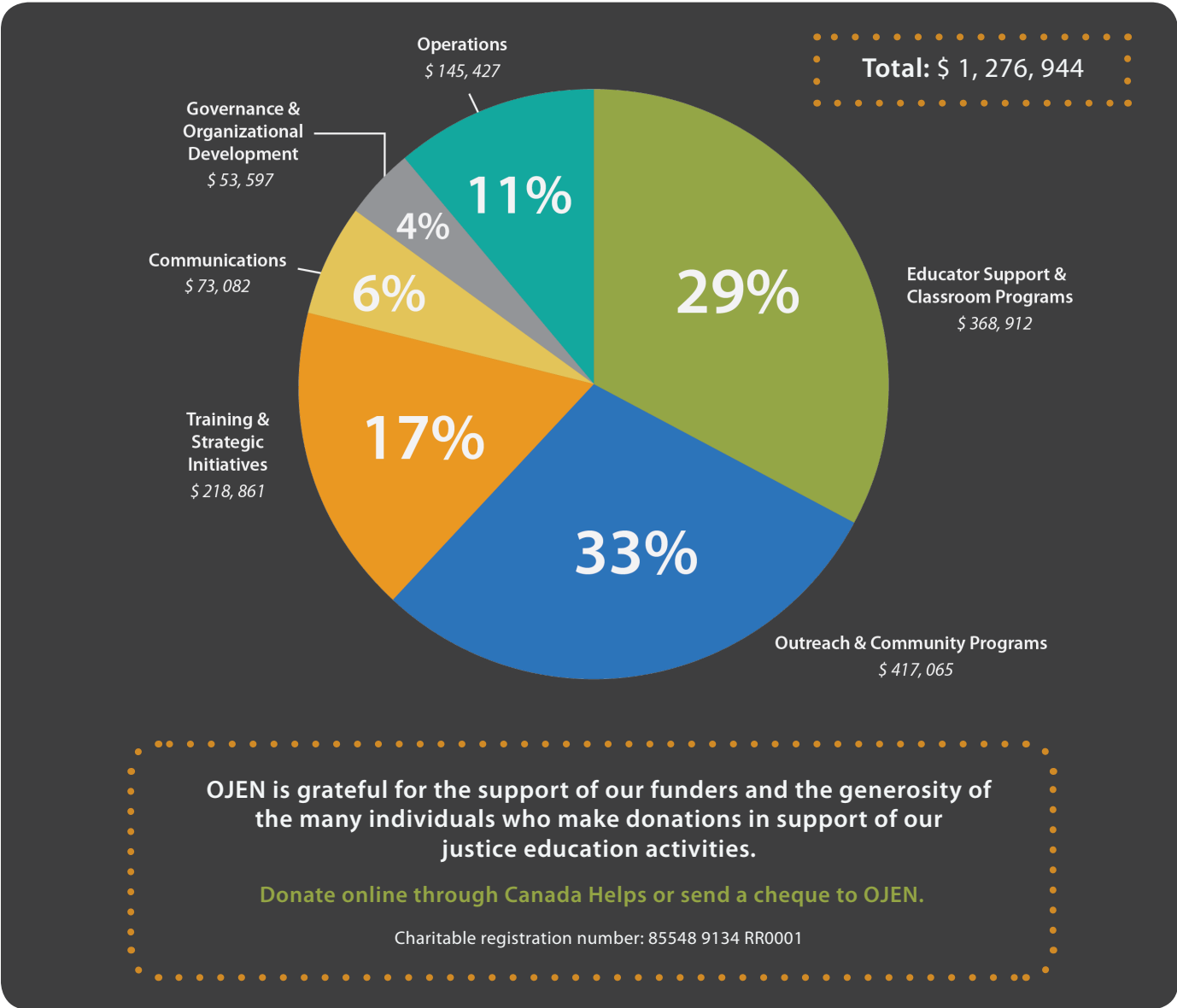
youth workers received accurate legal information on issues relevant to youth



**192**

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

# 2018 BUDGET



## Tate's Tableaux Raises Funds for OJEN Youth Programs



Ted and Ann Herbert (*centre*) attended OJEN's Annual General Meeting and presented the Board Co-Chairs, Justice Katrina Mulligan (*right*) and Jan Haskings-Winner (*left*), with a cheque for the proceeds from Tate's Tableaux. Their annual fundraising event in Barrie commemorates their son, Tate, bringing together friends and family for an evening of music and improvisational comedy. Combined with donations from friends and OJEN stakeholders, the total raised came to \$9,750!

We are very grateful to the Herbert family for their incredible efforts on our behalf. Thank you as well to our amazing OJEN friends for giving so generously to the **Tate Herbert Memorial Fund**.



## OJEN IN THE PROVINCE

Local OJEN committees expand our capacity to deliver public legal education programs province-wide. OJEN supports 16 local committees which offer a wide range of innovative justice education projects that respond to the needs of their communities.

Toronto  
Peel  
Hastings County  
Halton  
Ottawa  
Durham

Hamilton  
Waterloo  
Thunder Bay  
Windsor-Essex  
Sudbury  
London-Middlesex

Peterborough  
Wellington County  
Simcoe-Muskoka  
Kingston



## OJEN STAFF

**Jessica Reekie**  
Executive Director

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Project Leader, Outreach

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Digital Communications Associate

**Renae Bruce**  
Office Manager

**Mara Clarke**  
Director of Outreach Programs

**Nadine Demoe**  
Communications Manager

**Christopher Ferguson**  
Program Manager, Educator Support

**Thomas Gallezot**  
Project Leader, Educator Support

**Ashley Harripersad**  
Project Leader, Educator Support & Outreach

**Enisone Kadiri**  
Program Manager, Outreach

**Kristy Pagnutti**  
Program Manager, Educator Support & Outreach

**Nat Paul**  
Director of Educator Support

**Marc Rainford**  
Project Leader, Outreach

**Michelle Thompson**  
Manager of Legal and Digital Development



*OJEN staff and directors at the 2018 Annual General Meeting.*

# CO-CHAIRS MESSAGE



*Jan Haskings-Winner and Justice Katrina Mulligan*

In 2018 alone, OJEN programs directly impacted nearly 35,700 young people province-wide. For a small organization with a very modest budget, this is truly a remarkable achievement. As Co-Chairs of the OJEN Board of Directors, we have an opportunity to view the organization from the inside, and the reasons for its success are clear:

First, amazing staff. Although small in numbers, OJEN’s staff are enormously capable and committed. Their passion is the energy that drives the organization.

Second, dedicated volunteers. We’re immensely grateful to the hundreds of judges, lawyers, justices of the peace, court staff, police officers, law students, educators and others – who volunteer to deliver OJEN programs province-wide.

Third, valued partnerships. OJEN establishes collaborative relationships with schools, community organizations, law schools, government agencies, law firms and individuals. By finding areas of mutual interest, OJEN leverages resources that extend its capacity far beyond its modest means.

Finally, inspiring youth. Anyone who attends an OJEN program is moved by how much youth care about justice issues and how eager they are to seek positive solutions to challenges their communities’ face. Engagement between young people and members of the justice system does more than benefit the youth. Understanding their perspectives and lived experiences can inform the work we do as justice sector professionals and educators who care about increasing access to justice in this province.

It takes a great many caring and committed individuals to take up the challenge of developing empowered, legally capable youth. On behalf of OJEN’s Board of Directors, thank you to all of you who have contributed to the many successes of 2018. We look forward to continuing these successes with you in the year ahead.

*Justice Katrina Mulligan      Jan Haskings-Winner*

# 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

**Jan Haskings-Winner**  
appointee of the Ontario History and Social  
Science Teachers’ Association

**Paul Saguil**  
appointee of the Law Foundation of Ontario

**Gina Papageorgiou**  
appointee of the Law Society of Ontario

**Simone Bern**  
appointee of Legal Aid Ontario

**Beverly Leonard**  
appointee of the Ontario Ministry  
of the Attorney General

**John Adair**  
appointee of OJEN

**Halime Celik**  
appointee of OJEN

**Leigh MacDonald**  
appointee of OJEN

**Byron Stevenson**  
appointee of OJEN



## 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

OJEN is funded by grants from: the Law Foundation of Ontario, the Law Society of Ontario, the Ontario Trillium Foundation, the Ontario Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services, Service Canada, the City of Toronto, Crime Prevention Ottawa and the Ontario Bar Association.



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