

#OFOVCCOMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

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Welcome, OFOVC Community! The Ombudsman and team spent the past few months responding to victims' questions and concerns, attending meetings and conferences, and working on exciting new plans and events for the busy months ahead.

CELEBRATING ONE YEAR AS OMBUDSMAN

October 1st marked the Ombudsman's one-year anniversary in this role serving Canadian victims of crime. And what a year it's been! Taking a victim-centred and trauma-informed approach, the Ombudsman has taken every opportunity to engage with victims, survivors, stakeholders, researchers and practitioners to gain as much knowledge and insight as possible on their perspectives and experiences. The Ombudsman has made seven recommendations to government addressing gaps in policies that could better respond to victims' needs. Finally, the Ombudsman has taken steps to rejuvenate the Office by developing the team and creating a Strategic Plan outlining a clear direction for the next 3 years (more on this below!). Happy anniversary, Heidi!





INTRODUCING OUR NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In July we welcomed our new Executive Director, Dr. Nadia Ferrara, to the team. She brings with her a wealth of knowledge from her 16 years of public service, and her background as a medical anthropologist and practicing clinician. Before beginning her career in government, Nadia was an art therapist specializing with Indigenous peoples in Quebec and Ontario. In addition to being our Executive Director, Nadia leads a workshop called "Our Reconciliation Journey" as part of the Canada School of Public Service's Indigenous Learning Series. She is also a published author! Her most recent publication, *In Pursuit of Impact: Trauma- and Resilience-Informed Policy Development*, is extremely relevant to the work of the OFOVC. Welcome aboard, Nadia!



The OFOVC team attended "Our Reconciliation Journey" as part of our commitment to reconciliation and to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Call to Action #57



EVENTS & ENGAGEMENT WITH STAKEHOLDERS

The Ombudsman's calendar kicked off with a visit to Kahnawake, Mohawk Territory, where she was welcomed to a beautiful site on the St. Lawrence River. There the Ombudsman heard about the challenging realities faced by Indigenous victims, and was inspired by the solidarity, courage, and hopefulness that they displayed. In September, the Ombudsman traveled to New York for the Voices of September 11th Resiliency Symposium, and learned about the needs of victims, survivors, and first responders who have been directly affected by acts of terrorism and mass violence. Next, the Ombudsman was in Las Vegas for the National Missing and Unidentified Persons Conference, to learn about recovering missing persons from mass casualties and multiple victim incidents. Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls was discussed, which is a priority for the Ombudsman.



LOOKING AHEAD



We're happy to share an overview of the many initiatives planned for the coming months!

➤ *Strategic Plan 2019-2021: Empowering Victims and Survivors of Crime*

The OFOVC will soon release our Strategic Plan for 2019-2021, which sets out the direction of the OFOVC for the next 3 years, and will enable us to reach more Canadians impacted by crime than ever before.



➤ *Town Halls*

The Ombudsman is planning to embark on a cross-Canada Town Hall tour to connect with victims of crime and gain a better understanding of their current needs. So far, we have heard from Edmonton, Yellowknife, Regina, Winnipeg, Montreal, Thunder Bay, Moncton, to name just a few! If you would like to add your city to the list, please send us your location suggestion. We want to hear from you!

➤ *Advisory Circles*

In support of our reconciliation agenda, the OFOVC will establish its first Indigenous Advisory Circle to engage with Indigenous victims and survivors of violence, and experts working with Indigenous victims in the public and private sector. We have also established an Academic Advisory Circle, to engage with victimology experts and other academics to support our work moving forward.



➤ *Webinars*

Coming soon! The OFOVC has teamed up with the Victim Justice Network to host a series of Webinars, where speakers will discuss various issues currently facing victims in the Canadian criminal justice system. Our first session, titled *"Removing Barriers and Building Partnerships to Serve Victims Across Jurisdictions,"* will be held in January 2020. Keep an eye out for the official date!

