

#OFOVCCOMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

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The Ombudsman and team have had a packed schedule these past few months, responding to victims' questions and concerns, speaking at meetings and conferences, and getting the ball rolling on some of our new projects!

Introducing Our Indigenous Outreach Team Member, Francyne Joe

Wey-tk! Hello! Bonjour!

I'm Francyne Joe, a Shackan First Nation member from British Columbia. I am the daughter of two residential school survivors, a custom adoptee, the niece of a great traveller and storyteller, and the grand-niece of a well-respected Interior Chief.

I recently joined the OFOVC to bring an Indigenous perspective to its services and programs. My former work with the Native Women's Association of Canada provided me with a broad overview of the diverse concerns of Indigenous individuals and communities, from northern areas to urban centres. Before that, I worked in Indigenous economic development, human resource management, and with Canada Border Services Agency.

It's my pleasure to share my First Nations experiences and history, and I continue to learn more about Métis and Inuit. I believe education and the ability to ask questions without reproach are one of the many ways leading to reconciliation. I look forward to upcoming collaborations, community visits and exchanges with Indigenous people where I can learn about their concerns and the issues that affect victims of crime at the federal level.



Kukstemc! Thank-you! Merci!



Events and Engagements with Stakeholders

The Ombudsman's fall calendar kicked off with a presentation about the OFOVC's work and a discussion of compassion, healing and victims' rights at the 13th Annual Victim Advisory Council Community Forum in Surrey, BC. The Ombudsman then joined the Société de Criminologie du Québec and the Canadian Criminal Justice Association as they commemorated 100 years pursuing criminal justice. There, the Ombudsman spoke at a roundtable on Indigenous issues, mental health and victimology. On November 21 and 22, the OFOVC attended the Canadian Violence Link Conference hosted by Humane Canada, where we learned about the link between violence against animals and violence against people, and spoke with experts about barriers for people fleeing violence.



The Ombudsman and Ottawa Police Chief Sloly.

In December, the Ombudsman was invited to speak at a meeting of the Ottawa Police Service's Joint Senior Officers, Staff Sergeants & Managers, and shared best practices in victim-centred, trauma-informed approaches to serving victims of crime. Finally, at the end of January, we held our first stakeholder engagement session as part of a social media campaign we are developing on preventing victimization (see p. 3 for more on this!)

In November, our Executive Director was invited to present on the OFOVC at the Federal-Provincial-Territorial Working Group on Restorative Justice. This was a first for the Office!

Co-Hosting Our First Webinar

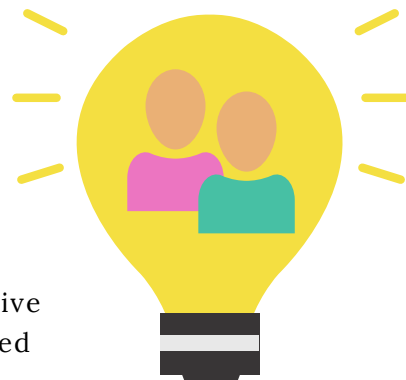


The Ombudsman and Executive Director (right) with Peter Sampaio and Priscilla De Villiers (left) from the Victim Justice Network.

On January 28th, we co-hosted our first webinar in a three-part series with the Victim Justice Network, called "Removing Barriers and Building Partnerships to Serve Victims Across Jurisdictions". The webinar brought together five experts to share different perspectives, knowledge, information, and to discuss ways to better collaborate across jurisdictions to serve and support Canadian victims of crime. We received excellent feedback from participants and we are thrilled that the event was a success! You can still watch a recording of the webinar, or access any of the presentation materials, by visiting <https://www.meetview.com/vjn20200128/>.

Academic Advisory Circle Meeting

We held our first Academic Advisory Circle (AAC) meeting in November! The goal of the AAC is to ensure that the OFOVC's recommendations target victim's most significant needs. During this first meeting, we asked participants to identify their research interests and the issues they are focusing on in their work. After a productive discussion, the AAC identified several important issues to discuss going forward, including coercive control, strengthening the Canadian Victims Bill of Rights, access to restorative justice, improving access to victim services, and reaching underserved communities. We look forward to our next session!



Looking Ahead ➤

Community Forum: Yellowknife March 11-12

We are happy to announce that our first Community Forum will take place in Yellowknife on March 11 and 12. We will be holding a session with service providers, criminal justice workers and community-based advocates on March 11 (1 to 4 p.m.) and a public session for all Yellowknife residents on March 12 (6 to 8 p.m.). We hope to share information about our Office's work and hear from residents about their lived experiences with the criminal justice system. Drop-ins are welcome. Please help us spread the word!

Preventing victimization campaign

Did you know that in 2015, Canada made a commitment to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030? SDG 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls) includes targets for reducing violence against women and girls. To that end, the OFOVC has partnered with the Canadian Municipal Network on Crime Prevention to develop a social media campaign aimed at preventing victimization in Canada. Our intention with this campaign is to highlight the high rates of victimization among certain demographics and promote actions to prevent it. We held our first stakeholder engagement session in Ottawa in January. We will be meeting with representatives from national, provincial and local organizations over the next few months to ensure key messages reflect the needs of those most at risk. Stay tuned as the campaign takes shape!

Canadian Victims Bill of Rights: A Report Card

Coming soon! To mark the 5-year anniversary of the Canadian Victims Bill of Rights this year, we are working on a report card which will assess the impact of this legislation. Some questions we are asking: How are victims' rights implemented across Canada? Are victims consistently informed of their rights by officials? Are victims able to exercise their rights to information, participation, protection and to seek restitution across the justice system? Can we measure how and when victims' rights are met? How can this legislation be strengthened? The report card will allow us to make evidence-based recommendations on how to improve victims' experiences in our criminal justice system.

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