

## 2022-23 Annual Report

## THE PATH FROM STRATEGIC VISION TO PURPOSEFUL ACTION

PREPARED BY: Ottawa Rape Crisis Centre SEPTEMBER 2023



## LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Ottawa Rape Crisis Centre (ORCC) acknowledges that we are located on the unceded, unsurrendered territory of the Anishinaabe Algonquin nation whose presence here reaches back to time immemorial.



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## About ORCC

The Ottawa Rape Crisis Centre (ORCC) was established on December 14, 1974, as one of Canada's first rape crisis centers to provide emotional and trained assistance to women who had experienced rape. Today, ORCC remains committed to enhancing the community's response to sexual and gender-based violence, and as such have evolved our services to better reach all those who need support.

ORCC operates on an anti-racist and anti-oppressive philosophy, providing advocacy, community outreach, service navigation, and trauma-informed, evidence-based counselling services to individuals who have lived experience of sexual and/or gender-based violence in the nation's capital. The center empowers all those who come to us seeking support.



## Message from the Chair of ORCC's Board of Directors

On behalf of ORCC's Board of Directors, I am delighted to share this opening message highlighting our fiscal 2022-23 achievements.

This year our message is centered on the everincreasing solidification of our growth and modernization. The phrase that I used in last year's message was "a joyful progression" and so it continues to be with many who contribute to its steady, forward movement.

It would not be possible without the strategic vision, unwavering commitment, and simply, just plain hard work of all Board members and staff members. A heartfelt thank you to all for your steadfast focus on excellence in the services that we provide. Your creative and innovative thinking rooted soundly in best practices and research sets the organizational foundation on a strong and bold path now and into the future.

Fiscal 2022-23 was equal to the whirlwind of the previous year. As an organization, we remain laser-focused on being strategic in our vision and in our decision-making. Yet we also strive to remain nimble and flexible when bumps in the road occur, as they undoubtedly do!

The approval of our strategic plan was a major milestone in our modernization. The plan outlines our clear road map anchored by four strategic pillars and correspondingly strong strategic foci that bring the strategic pillars to life operationally and evaluatively.

ORCC is grounded in,

- Being transparent, accountable, and trustworthy.
- Programs & service delivery that is caring, responsive and equitable.
- Partnerships and collaboration that strive to build healthier and stronger communities.
- And financial stewardship that is responsive and sustainable.

Additionally in fiscal 2022-23, we grew our counselling program, both in staffing and in the breadth of services provided, enhanced our community outreach and collaboration, increased our partnerships, and launched our new website.

To our stakeholders - Together we strive to make a difference both to individuals with lived experience of

sexual and gender-based violence and collectively, to our community. We look forward to our on-going collaborations and partnerships and to those yet formed. It does indeed take a village!

None of this would have been possible without the steadfast support of our funders. Thank you to our core funders - to the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, the City of Ottawa, and the United Way. And thank you to new funders whose financial support augmented our ability to enhance our programs and services even further.

The achievements of 2022-23 by themselves have been both exciting and motivating. However, there is one additional achievement that I would like to draw attention to – the Fall 2022 launch of our new logo, the Common Chickadee.



The Chickadee represents resilience. Belying its size, the Chickadee perseveres through the depths of our Canadian winters. Freedom is illustrated in the Chickadee's flight. The leafy branch within its wing represents renewal and growth. Resilience we see in those who seek our services. Freedom, renewal, and growth are intertwined as we walk with them on their healing journey.

Fundamentally at its core, this resilient Chickadee is a constant reminder to both the Board and staff of why we exist as an organization – not for ourselves but for those whose journey we share. This is our North Star, our touchpoint, our promise.

Respectfully,

Claudia Newman Chair of the Board of Directors

#### **Message from ORCC's Executive Director**

We started off the year at ORCC with continuing our collaborative strategic planning process that engaged the ORCC Board of Directors and Operations team, which fostered thoughtful reflection and further focused our eye to the future for purposeful action. This reflection and meaningful plan for action has been especially important in the face of an economic climate marked by extraordinarily high rates of inflation, a corresponding rising cost of living, and deepening food and housing insecurity for many in our community. Now, more than ever, it is essential for ORCC to think critically about how best to respond to the current and growing needs of our community. An important first step that we are taking to do this is prioritizing efforts to strengthen relationships with those who come to us for services, with community partners, funders, and the broader community.

This year has brought notable growth on ORCC's Operations team, both in terms of size and with respect to the learning initiatives our team has undertaken. In the spirit of thoughtful reflection and purposeful action, this year the ORCC has been leveraging the incredible knowledge base of its growing team to critically look to multidisciplinary theories and emerging best practice to better understand how violence operates in our community and how ORCC can be most effective in its response to and prevention of violence. These critical discussions have laid the foundation of our renewed mission, vision and values; all of which inform our programming, advocacy initiatives and community engagement.

Another critical component of our strategic visioning, community engagement, and meaningful action has been to respond to the need for accessible, low barrier services for all members of the community who have experienced sexual and/or gender-based violence. In response to this, ORCC ensures its services are widely accessible to Trans and cis women, Trans and cis men, Two-Spirit, gender-fluid, and non-binary individuals. This year, we have also sought to broaden our reach to better serve historically underserved and marginalized communities by having our in-person services available at service delivery points around the city and by ensuring all layers of our work are inclusive, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive spaces for folks to receive supports.





Strategic responsiveness brought by our strategic planning process has helped us as a historic, survivor-centered not-for-profit to ensure reliability, positioning, and longevity of our services to the community for generations to come. This year has been about building a renewed strategic vision and engaging in purposeful action. It has also been about understanding how we can strategically set in place a plan that supports the people of the organization, the partnerships that we are fostering with other organizations, with funders, with various interest groups, and importantly with the community at large.



CANDICE SHAW, M.A., PHD (ABD) EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

### Message from ORCC's Executive Director (continued)

While we recognize the many challenges that our communities face. we also see countless opportunities for change, growth, and healing; both in terms of service delivery and advocating for the needs of people who have experienced sexual and gender-based violence. At ORCC, we believe that community building is critical to take coordinated steps towards change. Supporting community initiatives such as co-facilitating sharing circles with Project Agape, a Black, survivor led organization; attending major in-person events across the city; participating on panel discussions as both community members and experts in the space; and collaborating with service providers on how we can streamline services and support one another have all been valuable opportunities to strengthen networks across our sector.

To ensure that ORCC's strategic vision and purposeful action are connected to critical discussions at community, provincial, national, and international levels, ORCC participates on the following action groups: Truckers against Trafficking Advisory Committee (international); the Urban Indigenous Action Group for the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls National Action Plan (national); the Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres (provincial); Champlain Mental Health Table (regional); Ottawa Coalition to End Violence Against Women (community). By participating in these spaces, ORCC applies the information shared at these tables to our own policies and practices, while offering critical insights that centre the needs of those with live experiences of violence at these tables.

Finally, this year, we proudly launched a new logo and website, both of which reflect ORCC's stage of growth and renewal. Our new chickadee logo was carefully selected to reflect and embody resilience and hope as it takes flight. It is a symbol that resonates with us as an organization, and one that we hope brings strength and comfort to those seeking our services. Additionally, we have bolstered the information available on our website, so visitors can learn more about our organization and the work that we do, as well as access resources that may help in moments of crisis, direct them to other community services and/or provide learning opportunities.

Strategic responsiveness brought by our strategic planning process has helped us as a historic, survivor-centered not-for-profit to ensure reliability, positioning, and longevity of our services to the community for generations to come. This year has been about building a renewed strategic vision and engaging in purposeful action. It has also been about understanding how we can set in place a plan that supports the people of the organization, the partnerships that we are fostering with other organizations, with funders, with various interest groups, and importantly with the community at large. It is a plan that we hope enables all of us to see ourselves as part of the critical change we at ORCC wish to effect now and into the future. And it is a plan that encourages community-wide engagement and serves as a reminder that we must collectively work towards ORCC's renewed vision: a community that is free of sexual and gender-based violence.

Miigwetch, Merci, Thank You.

Candice Shaw, M.A., PhD (ABD) Executive Director



## ORGANIZATIONAL OPERATIONS

## **Meet the Operations Team**



Madeline McMahon Director, Finance & Operations



Elizabeth Williams Finance & Operations Coordinator



Meg Sinclair Knowledge Translation & Content Development Lead



Roselin Dixon Community Outreach & Communications Lead





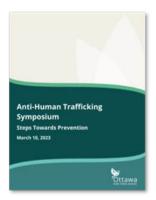
## The Redesigned ORCC Website

We introduced our new logo featuring the robust and resilient chickadee in late 2022. On March 27, 2023, we proudly launched the revamped ORCC website, providing site visitors with up-to-date information on our counselling services and organization. Our website has a modern and fresh look, accessed via www.orcc.net.

We have exciting plans to update and add to the website over time, so please stay tuned!

The work of Design DePlume and AvO WebWorks was crucial to the success of this project, and we thank them for their professional expertise on this collaborative project.

## **ORCC Research Publications**



#### **Anti-Human Trafficking Report**

In March 2023, ORCC hosted an Anti-Human Trafficking Systemic Action Symposium. The forum was attended by local anti-human trafficking service providers aiming to collaborate on developing an action plan. During the event, the discussions centered on the root causes of human trafficking, such as power structures and systems of exploitation. We are happy to share some key points from our interactions and a preliminary version of the Action Plan. This plan serves as a guide for taking specific and effective measures toward achieving actual change. For further details, please refer to the <u>Anti-Human Trafficking 2023 Report</u>.



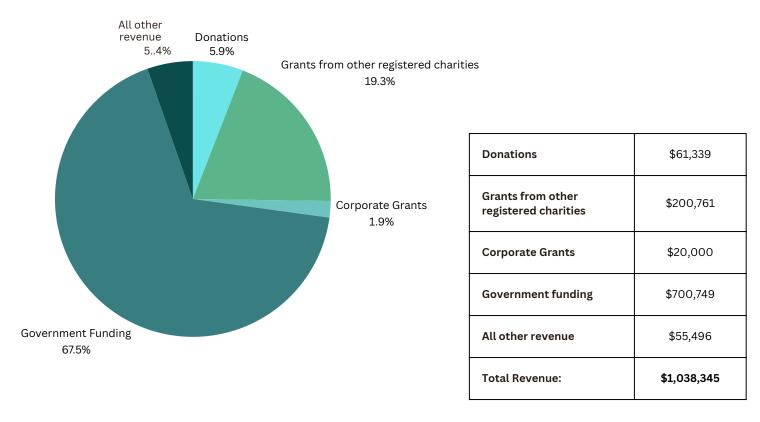
#### Trauma-Informed and Anti-Oppressive Approaches to Family Court Support Report: An Analysis of Power, Oppression, and Sexual Violence

It is crucial to improve support for survivors of intimate partner and sexual violence in the family justice system. However, current practices fail to meet the diverse needs of survivors and often lack trauma-informed and anti-oppressive approaches. To help service providers and professionals create meaningful and transformative change, the ORCC has undertaken this critical work. Earlier this year, the Trauma-Informed and Anti-Oppressive Approaches to Family Court Support Report was written to provide valuable insights into power relations, inequality, and sexual violence, as well as the role of language in oppression and resistance within the justice system. Our goal is to play a meaningful role in the work to dismantle systems of domination and oppression. This document is available in both English and French for viewing.

## FUNDING OUR ORGANIZATION: IT TAKES A VILLAGE

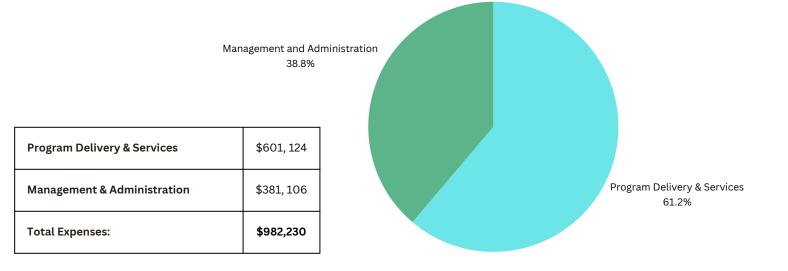
ORCC relies on a wide variety of supports, both internally and externally, to fulfill our mission of supporting survivors of sexual and gender-based violence in Ottawa. Funding is a crucial component, and the support of both new and longstanding donors and funders is invaluable. To acknowledge their contributions, we would like to share an overview of ORCC's financial summary for the 2022-23 fiscal year.

### Revenue



### **Expenses**

A majority of accrued expenses were allocated to ORCC's survivor-centred programming that directly provides support and resources to program participants and the broader community of people with lived experience of sexual and/or gender-based violence/.



## Supporting ORCC for the Fun(d) of It!



#### The #SayItWithACard Campaign

From November 29 to December 22, 2022, ORCC conducted a fundraising campaign called #SayItWithACard for Giving Tuesday. We posted social media messages throughout the campaign, urging community members to support our clients by sending a virtual gift card, mailing a gift card, or donating directly to ORCC via our website.

Donors' generous contributions provided our clients with basic daily necessities, improved their access to support, and helped build a stronger community of care.

#### Funds Raised for ORCC via the Ottawa Gatineau Compilation Series – Volume 2

In March 2023, the Ottawa-Gatineau Compilations Series team contacted ORCC for permission to raise funds on our behalf. They planned to donate the profits from their second volume release, which showcases local artists in the area. We thank Andrew Grosvenor, Sandy Vance, and all the talented artists who generously contributed their time and skills to the album. Their efforts in promoting ORCC through Instagram and at their shows are highly appreciated. The funds raised went toward the Counselling programming and services that ORCC offers.



#### Strides4ORCC 2023!

Ian Fraser, the Race Director of the Tamarack Ottawa Race Weekend, chose ORCC as his charity for the Desjardins Charity Challenge for the second consecutive year. He pledged to run 10 kilometers daily from January 10th to May 23rd to raise funds for the counselling programming and services at ORCC. The running comprised virtual distances on a treadmill and in-person group running events. Ian successfully ran a total of 1054 kilometers!



In January, Ian met with Candice Shaw, ORCC's Executive Director, at the Women's Monument in Ottawa to kick off the #Strides4ORCC campaign. The first part of the Strides4ORCC campaign began in Ottawa, and shortly after that, Ian ran with Meg Sinclair, the Knowledge Translation & Content Development Lead at ORCC and a local running group in Pembroke. He also connected with Roselin Dixon. ORCC's Community Outreach and Communications Lead, and Chix Run the Six in Toronto. The campaign also made stops with running groups in Peterborough and Cornwall. Consistency was essential for the Strides4ORCC campaign, and while it was a challenge, every stride was worth it to support those seeking help from ORCC after experiencing sexual and/or gender-based violence.

## COUNSELLING SERVICES

## **Meet the Counselling Team**



Erefaa Ogbuaku Jnr. Registered Psychotherapist (Qualifying)



Katie Montague Registered Social Worker



Meghan Sangster Registered Social Worker



Odera Odenigbo Registered Psychotherapist (Qualifying)



Caron Cuff Service Navigator



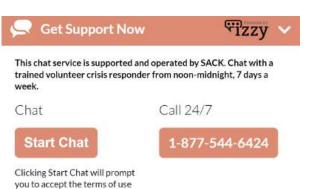
Jan Vesna Director of Programs



Abrar Ali Abrar served as the Director of Programs for ORCC until the end of 2022. With her international MD accreditation, she has transitioned into patient research. We are grateful for her expertise, which has helped to guide the growth of ORCC's counseling team.

## **Crisis Support**

Our affiliation with Sexual Assault Centre Kingston and its crisis services remains robust. ORCC clients can access immediate assistance 24 hours daily throughout the year. Chat + Text support is also available from 12 p.m. to 12 a.m., seven days a week. This access to both services is crucial for those who have experienced sexual and gender-based violence in Ottawa.





For inquiries regarding counselling, please contact us by phone (613-562-2334 ext.105) or email at counselling@orcc.net

## **Counselling Services:**

## Statistical Highlights

2580

Number of individual counselling/advocacy sessions



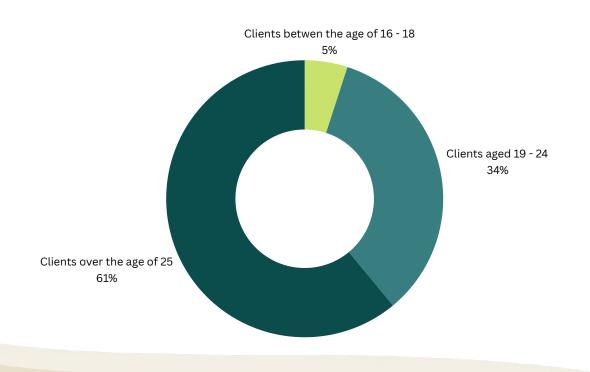
calls to ORCC's 24/7 Crisis Line from April 1, 2022 – March 31, 2023, for a total of **68.5** hours of crisis support.



New clients who received individual counselling from March 31, 2022 -March 31, 2023



Number of group counselling sessions



## **Counselling Services:** Group Counselling and Workshops

#### **ORCC Group Counselling Programs**

#### Conscious Cultivation Virtual Group

The Conscious Cultivation online group is specifically designed to support individuals who have experienced gender-based and/or sexual violence. The program covers a range of topics based on the needs of the participants, including consent, coping strategies, grounding skills, relationships experiencing after violence. self-awareness, and resource navigation. The program aims to enhance coping mechanisms and help individuals acquire new tools to address trauma symptoms. The group meets weekly over Zoom for ten weeks.

Throughout the 2022-23 fiscal year, ORCC's Counselling Team has continued to provide muchneeded in-person drop-in support by meeting our clients across various community locations including Cornerstone Housing for Women, Larga Baffin, Centretown Community Health Centre, and Neighbourhood Wellness Hubs.

#### **Art Therapy Workshops**

ORCC's online Art Therapy Group offers participants a safe and welcoming environment to explore their inner experiences through creative expression. During these sessions, attendees learn about art therapy and discover new ways to regulate emotions through creative expression.

#### **In-Person Processing Group**

The 10-week in-person Processing Group focuses on topics that are collaboratively decided on between participants, and guided by a member of the ORCC Counselling team.. Examples of common topics include communication in relationships, coping strategies for anxiety and panic attacks, navigating triggers, and finding support services in Ottawa.

#### **ORCC** Counselling and the Ottawa Carleton Detention Centre

The ORCC has partnered with the Ottawa Carleton Detention Centre (OCDC) for quite some time, offering group programming for inmates residing in OCDC's designated female dormitories. Each group is limited to 12 participants and is led by a registered social worker from our Counselling Team.

The objective of these group sessions is to encourage discussions on general topics related to the participants' lives. Topics also include consent, intimate-partner violence, self-esteem, and attachment. ORCC intertwines psycho-education, conversation, and art-based activities for this programming. The group facilitator helps establish a connection between the participants and ORCC so they can access crisis appointments or long-term counselling shortly after release. The program has been well-received and continues to be in demand by the participants in the unit.

ORCC thanks our Counselling Team and all of the post-secondary placement students for their dedication to their clients and commitment to their ongoing professional development. We look forward to next year's report, where we share insight regarding how ORCC's counselling programming further develops and expands its reach into 2024.

# COMMUNITY-SERVING COMMUNITY-BUILDING

#### U of O's Pre-Take Back the Night Event

On September 5, 2022, the Women's Resource Centre at the University of Ottawa organized the Take Back the Night event to provide new and returning students information and resources. Several communityserving organizations were present, and we, the ORCC team, had the opportunity to connect with visitors to our table. We shared information about our services and learned about the valuable work other organizations in the National Capital Region are doing to help keep things safe and supported on campus.



#### Take Back the Night Ottawa Rally and March

ORCC was honored to be a part of the **Take Back the Night 2022** organizing team. This event brought together community members and social justice leaders to march for important causes such as the right to safety, access to support, autonomy over our bodies, and political action to end sexual and gender-based violence.







#### Working on Wellness Festival

ORCC was one of the 80 organizations at the **Working on Wellness (WOW) Festival** on September 16, 2022. The event, previously known as Recovery Day Ottawa (RDO), was free and open to the public. It showcased various Ottawa-based service providers and organizations focused on mental health, spiritual health, physical health, and substance use health. The festival included a community wellness information fair, speakers, live performances, and an award ceremony.

#### Algonquin Project Lighthouse Fair

The annual Project Lighthouse Fair, hosted by **Algonquin College and the Project Lighthouse team**, recently welcomed ORCC and other community-serving agencies to participate. At our table, we had the opportunity to connect with attendees who wanted to learn more about the resources available in Ottawa regarding sexual violence. We also shared how ORCC supports individuals who have experienced sexual and/or gender-based violence. It was a great event!



#### 'Growing Under the Weather' -GCWCC Mental Health and Wellness Fair Panel Discussion

The United Way of Eastern Ontario reached out to ORCC to participate in a panel discussion titled 'Growing Under the Weather' as part of the Government of Canada's 2022 Workplace Charitable Campaign Mental Health and Wellness Fair on October 6. Various federal government employees attended the event. Roselin Dixon, ORCC's Community Outreach & Communications Lead spoke on the panel, and she also serves as a speaker on behalf of ORCC for the United Way of Eastern Ontario events if available upon request from the organization.

#### Shine a Light on Gender-Based Violence for 16 Days of Activism

ORCC was grateful to be in attendance with representatives from organizations like Interval House and OCTEVAW for a lighting ceremony hosted by **Grandmothers Advocacy Network** (**GRAN**). The event marked the start of the 2022 16 Days of Activism to end gender-based violence.

As part of the 'Shine a Light' campaign, Hydro Ottawa lit up City Hall's Heritage Building in purple to draw attention to the issue from November 25 to December 10. The event aimed to raise awareness about gender-based violence. People throughout Ottawa were encouraged to attend local events and donate to community organizations that support survivors.





#### The National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence against Women at Minto Park

Local organizations, including ORCC, WEN, Interval House, OCTEVAW, and SASC Ottawa, organized a vigil at the Women's Monument in Ottawa. The purpose of the vigil was to honour and mourn the 14 women whose lives were taken by femicide 33 years ago at École Polytechnique. Those who attended the vigil also expressed solidarity and support for the ongoing fight against the genocide of Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirited people throughout Canada. Speakers called for action to support organizations that are working to end femicide and provide assistance to individuals who have experienced sexual and genderbased violence.



#### Presentation to the Critical Victimology class at Carleton University

ORCC and the Sexual Assault Support Centre at Carleton University collaborated to present valuable information to Ellen Faulkner's Critical Victimology class on campus. The presentation focused on the services provided by our respective organizations and how we support our clients. The information provided was relevant to the class studies on the sexual and gender-based violence sector in Ottawa and shed light on the efforts being made to eradicate these issues.



#### Meeting at City Hall with Ottawa's Mayor

The ORCC met with newly elected **Mayor Mark Sutcliffe**. The purpose of the meeting was to introduce the ORCC and discuss aligned priorities.

#### International Women's Day: Together We Go Farther

On International Women's Day, the ORCC joined forces with seven local organizations - Harmony House, St. Joe's Women's Centre, The Well, Immigrant Women Services Ottawa, Interval House, OCTEVAW, Dress for Success, and Cornerstone Housing for Women - to organize a celebration for female-identifying clients, including women, children, and gender-diverse individuals. The event theme was 'Together We Go Farther' and featured fun activities, delicious food, and entertainment. Samantha Moonsammy Gordon, Section Head and Lead Advisory for Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging at Material Group, National Defence, acted as the emcee. The registration invitation was shared internally with all participating organizations to ensure client safety. The event was a tremendous success, with over 80 attendees enjoying the festivities.





### Black Women: For Liberation & In Celebration Webinar

In collaboration with Project Agape and Women's Health & Women's Hands (and in recognition of Black Mental Health Week 2023). ORCC's Community Outreach and Communications Lead. Roselin Dixon. moderated a panel discussion with Esther Fagbola (from Project Agape) and Chantal Carey and Tomilola John (from Women's Health in Women's Hands) titled, 'Black Women: For Liberation and In Celebration.' The event centered its discussion on the historical and cultural context for violence against Black women, why Black women are highly targeted for violence today, its impact on mental health, what the future of healing and prevention can look like, and what it will take to get there.

#### Anti-Human Trafficking Symposium

ORCC hosted a Symposium on Anti-Human Trafficking Systemic Action. Various local service providers that combat human trafficking attended the forum with the shared goal of developing an action plan. The discussions that took place at the event centered around the root causes of human trafficking, which included power structures and exploitative systems.

## **Thank You for Your Support!**

#### **Our Team**

#### **Our Board of Directors**

- Claudia Newman, Chair
- Jeanette Doucet, Co-Chair
- Kayla Cavanagh, Treasurer
- Mary Marsella, Secretary

#### Our Staff

- Candice Shaw, Executive Director
- Janath Vesna, Director of Programs
- Madeline McMahon, Director of Finance
  & Operations
- Elizabeth Williams, Finance & Operation Coordinator
- Meg Sinclair, Knowledge Translation & Content Development Lead

- Emma Pratt, Member-at-large
- Vanessa Stewart, Member-at-large
- Megan Simon, Member-at-large
- Sharon Rouleau, Member-at-large
- Mary Witherspoon, Member-at-large
  - Roselin Dixon, Community Outreach & Communications Lead
  - Meghan Sangster, Registered Social Worker
  - Katie Montague, Registered Social Worker
  - Odera Odenigbo, Registered Psychotherapist (Q)
  - Erefaa Ogbuaku, Registered Psychotherapist (Q)
  - Caron Cuff, Service Navigator

#### **Our Support Team**

• Design DePlume

• Annelies van Oers, Web Developer

We'd like to extend a heartfelt thank you to the Board of Directors, staff, support team, contributors, donors and funders; without whom, this work could not be accomplished. Thanks to these coordinated efforts, we can continue to meaningfully support and empower survivors of sexual and gender-based violence in the Ottawa region.

Ottawa Rape Crisis Centre gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the following funders. I Ottawa Rape Crisis Centre tient à remercier sincèrement les bailleurs de fonds suivants de leur soutien financier.

