



Lead by Example  
Encourage the Heart  
Appreciate One Another  
Develop Potential  
Enable & Empower  
Respond with Dignity  
Seek Out Opportunity  
Hear Others  
Inspire a Shared Vision  
Promote Inclusiveness



**Ontario AIDS Network**

**REPORT to Membership  
2007-08**

## **A MESSAGE FROM THE Co-Chairs**

Over the past year, it has been our privilege to serve you as part of the leadership of Ontario's community-based response to HIV/AIDS.

It was a year marked by both accomplishment and loss.

A loss that has touched all of us deeply was the death of Steve Harris, a former OAN Board Member and leader, friend, and mentor to many people with HIV. An expression of our loss is included in the pages of this report.

Our accomplishments can be evaluated in light of our strategic plan. The OAN's strategic plan for 2004-2008 set ambitious goals, serving as both a guidepost and beacon; and while many goals were met, there are those that remain before us. As always, we were routinely challenged by the unexpected.

During the latter half of 2007, the OAN became acutely aware of the emerging threat of federal cuts to community funding; cuts to the funding that supports HIV prevention, education, and support services through the AIDS Community Action Program (ACAP). Indeed, during the OAN Board Chairs' and Executive Directors' retreat, participants identified the funding cuts as the primary issue affecting AIDS Service Organizations and their clients throughout Ontario. With the approval and active support of the OAN Board and the Executive Directors of our member agencies, we began a grass roots campaign further supported by our national partners and, most notably, our regional partners in both Alberta and Quebec.

The cuts in federal funding have attracted the attention of local as well as national media, and have been the subject of debate during Question Period in the House of Commons. The OAN's involvement in the issue, and thus its commitment to social justice, is demonstrated by its urging of all Ontarians – through an all-party approach – to express their concerns to Members of Parliament by using a pre-printed postcard voicing their opposition to cuts in funding. To further increase public awareness, the OAN created the website [www.increaseaidsfunding.ca](http://www.increaseaidsfunding.ca) as part of its ongoing efforts to keep the issues of HIV/AIDS research, treatment, education, and support services in the forefront of the minds of both the public and policy leaders throughout Canada. Although these efforts remain a work in

progress, we are confident that our collective actions thus far have helped deliver the message to policy makers that “cutting funding = cutting lives.”

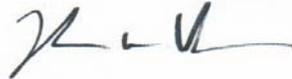
We could not have done any of this without your support and active participation in your communities. Thank you for all you have done as part of the collective leadership that is working to stop HIV/AIDS in Ontario.

**“To lead the people, walk behind them.” ~ Lao-Tzu**



Kim Dolan,

Co-Chairs, Board of Directors



Joseph van Veen

## **Executive Director's Report**

The progress of our work together should, as noted, be evaluated based on the objectives laid out in our Strategic Plan. As such, the OAN's strategic plan outlined five key areas for action: social justice & advocacy, communications, skills building, knowledge brokering, and in-reach. And there is clear evidence that we have made significant progress within each.

**Social Justice** – Beyond the actions taken in relation to funding cuts, the OAN's commitment to social justice and advocacy this past year was further evidenced by our membership's request that we continue to address the issues of poverty and housing in relation to HIV/AIDS. Working in partnership with the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH), the OAN served as a co-investigator in a published report entitled "Housing Solutions." This report identified both the opportunities and partners that need to be addressed in the creation of a more effective and responsive housing system. In addition, the OAN continued to lend its support to the efforts of the Ontario HIV Treatment Network (OHTN) in its ongoing research work "Positive Spaces, Health Places" – the first longitudinal study of people with HIV in Canada.

This past year, the OAN also partnered with the Social Justice Committee of the Diocese of Toronto. The Committee has made HIV and poverty its two priority issues, raising these issues in two meetings with local elected officials last year – meetings which attracted more than 300 people. In terms of even more direct advocacy, the OAN has raised close to \$87,000 in the last year through the Positive Support Fund to support member organizations in their assistance to clients in financial need.

**Communications** – The OAN website has been redesigned and now includes a shared web calendar announcing special events and job postings. Importantly, on-line learning opportunities through the OAN continue to be expanded; and our website remains an important information hub attracting more than 70,000 unique visitors annually. Further, in keeping with our broader cooperative inter-agency focus, the OAN is actively involved in the creation of a web portal with the Canadian AIDS Treatment Information Exchange (CATIE) as well as the OHTN.

The OAN also introduced a new communications workshop that dealt primarily with issues of inter-agency and interpersonal communication, circulated newsletters and advocacy updates, and created a new membership brochure.

**Skills Building** – 2007-2008 marked a year of accomplishment as the organization continued its important work in supporting skills development through knowledge transfer and exchange; and expanding its scope through the creation of a series of workshops for fundraisers, volunteer coordinators, executive directors, AIDS support workers, and educators – workshops offered in addition to retreats for member agency executive directors and board chairs.

In fact, the OAN provided more opportunities than ever before for enhanced and diverse skills building that addressed a broad range of issues, that were appropriate to its target audiences, and that addressed region-specific circumstances and concerns throughout Ontario.

Among these important innovations was the introduction of the Ontario Provincial Resources for ASOs in Human Resources (OPRAH) to assist in the development of ASO personnel management skills. In 2008, OPRAH provided both Level I and Level II workshop to both executive directors and human resource managers of member agencies. These region-specific workshops were not only geared to local employment conditions, but were also supported by a new HR “toolkit” developed specifically for ASOs in Ontario. Preliminary indicators suggest that these unique skills building efforts by the OAN have been not only well received, but are likely to remain highly in-demand educational components of our organization.

**Knowledge Brokering** – To further complement the aforementioned efforts and areas of development, the OAN is working to develop the skills and technological capacity to both manage and support a “virtual” network that provides diverse populations and organizations throughout Ontario the opportunity to share and exchange knowledge on-line. As such, the OAN has a newly designed and user-friendly website, is actively involved in the promotion of on-line discussion groups, and has recently hired a Director of Communications and Social Marketing responsible for supporting ASOs in their participation in the MSM-HIV Prevention Campaign.

**In-Reach** – The OAN’s commitment to diversity and its support of the Greater Involvement of People with HIV/AIDS remains integral to our growth and development – people with HIV are part of the DNA of our organization. And while the OAN’s mandate is the support of Ontario ASOs and HIV Program

providers rather than the general public, the OAN continues to serve as a crucial link between service providers and individuals who are HIV positive and living with AIDS. The OAN has worked tirelessly to reduce the hurdles to participation in the network of available programs and services, and to create inclusive and accessible organizational structures throughout the province for those living with HIV/AIDS.

To complement these efforts, the OAN continues to support the PHA Leadership Development Program – with a central focus on broad-based recruitment and the publication of the Living and Serving Document. Finally, it is worth noting that the OAN has relocated its offices to a more visible and accessible street-level location in the City of Toronto.

All of this activity could not have been accomplished without the encouragement and support of our highly dedicated Board and the energy, creativity, and enthusiasm of the OAN team.

It was a wise person who once said “Great ideas need landing gear as well as wings.”

Thank you for your support.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rick Kennedy". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rick Kennedy

Executive Director

## **PROGRAM REPORTS**

### **PHA LEADERSHIP PROGRAM** *Thomas Egdorf*

#### **STRONG COMMUNITIES THROUGH STRONG LEADERS**

The PHA Leadership Development Program at the OAN continues to evolve as it actively recruits and engages PHAs throughout Ontario, offering a profoundly unique opportunity to identify, develop, and nurture their leadership skills. And in the past year, the OAN has developed two new training components within the leadership program – one addressing communications and a second that focuses on organizational governance. These newly created modules help those with HIV/AIDS learn how to more effectively participate and communicate through their board and committee work, as well as better understand the governance and accountability of community organizations.

As such, the program has grown significantly – so much so that the Level I workshops, for example, are now filling six months in advance. In fact, the OAN is currently accepting applications for February, 2009. Importantly, the popularity of the program continues to encourage the development of new workshops, innovative and demographically-specific workshops, presentation partnerships with other ASOs, as well as the integration of program graduates into the leadership framework as workshop facilitators themselves.

#### **PROGRAM OUTCOMES AND FEEDBACK**

Program feedback since 2006 continues to be both constructive and enthusiastic – and reveals that leadership development remains an in-demand and important service provided by the OAN. As part of the OAN's ongoing data collection and review process, information from client satisfaction surveys as well as external evaluations consistently demonstrates the very diverse range of PHAs who participate in the Leadership Development Program and who see it as integral to greater self-understanding as well as the growth of personal and professional leadership skills.

In fact, the OAN has recently made efforts to document the impact of the program on the lives of five leadership graduates through a video that was produced during the recent Leadership Alumni Event held in Toronto – one that will be presented at the OAN Annual General Meeting in 2008 and will be used as a promotional tool

for the purposes of both recruitment and funding. The video, as well as the following testimonials, describes the profound effect that the program has had on the lives of those who have taken part, as well as the passion of the program facilitators:

“This program introduced me to all the communities living with AIDS, which gives me a great sense of purpose and understanding of how AIDS/HIV impacts each community... We need solid leaders to stand up to this [v]irus and to come together – [to] pool our strengths and skills and increase awareness in our communities...”

“The facilitators of this program are truly great people teaching important skills to all the communities involved. What they teach comes from the heart... They... support us in every way...”

### **COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH PROGRAMS** *Shelley Cleverly*

The OAN has recently completed the first of a two-year program supporting capacity building for community-based research funded by the Canadian Institutes for Health Research. During the 2007-2008 fiscal year, the Director of Community-Based Research at the OAN collaborated with a number of ASOs in support of either seeking funding for, or implementing, community-based research projects. A central highlight of these efforts was the completion and release of ‘Living and Serving II: Ten Years Later’ – the recommendations from which continue to support planning discussions among leaders throughout the sector.

Other foci have included HIV prevention for high-risk youth, program development for marginalized women, community-based research network development, spiritual care, and efforts to increase the capacity to offer community-based mental health services. Of particular note is the fact that while community agencies have indicated their interest in participating in community-based research, they continue to face the problem of limited financial resources in basic service delivery as well as problems in maintaining their funding.

A final means of supporting knowledge exchange is that of HIV Research Cafes –a more recent collaborative development of the OAN, CAHRO, and CATIE. To date, pilot activities to advance the café concept have been offered in a number of small venues, at the 2007 OHTN Conference, and at the OAN’s Leadership Program Alumni event. Cumulatively, these efforts have been able to reach an estimated 600 individuals.

## **SKILLS WORKSHOPS AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM** *Michele Cherry*

The Skills Development Program is, by definition, a skills-based educational series provided through the OAN to its member agencies. The goal of the program is two-fold: first, to ensure that those affected, infected, and/or at risk of HIV infection receive the optimum support and educational resources necessary to better enhance not only their quality of life but also to maintain a healthy lifestyle through both service and care providers; and, second, to enhance the skills of ASO staff to create more professional and cohesive organizations and member groups throughout the Province of Ontario.

### **WORKSHOPS FOR ASOs**

Every year, the program holds seven two-day skills workshops for ASOs – one for each of the key positions within OAN member agencies. As such, in 2007-2008, workshops were held to address the needs of fundraisers, volunteer coordinators, support workers, administrators, executive directors, board chairs, and prevention educators. In addition, the OAN was pleased to offer a workshop retreat for agency executive directors as well as a unique and innovative workshop dealing specifically with issues of inter-agency and interpersonal communication.

### **PROGRAM OUTCOMES**

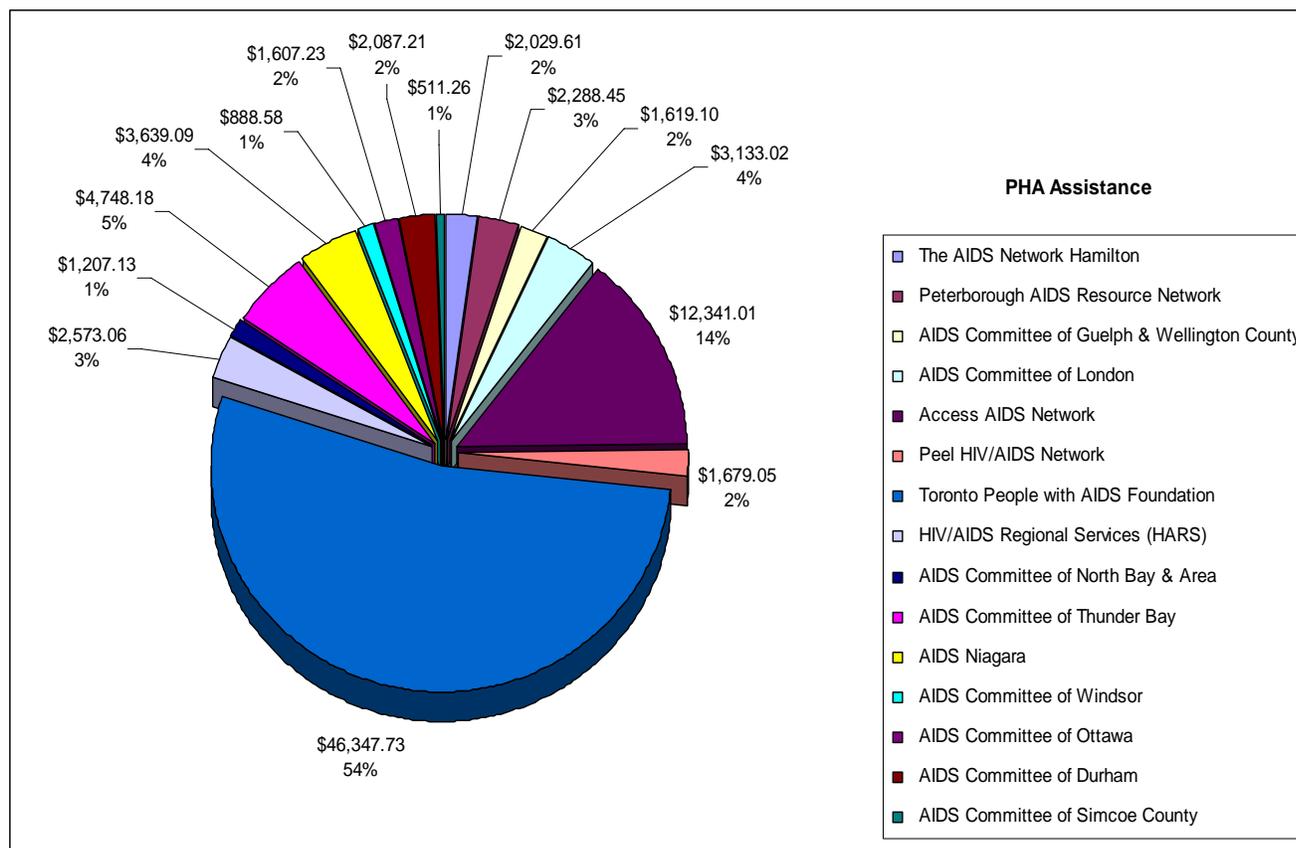
As noted in the message from the OAN’s executive director, last year the organization launched the Ontario Provincial Resource for ASOs in Human Resources (OPRAH). The four two-day workshops took place in the latter part of 2007 -- primarily in response to a key priority identified at the 2006 Executive Directors’ and Board Chairs’ summit during which members identified the need to create a consistent and coordinated approach to human resources management among member agencies. Once again, the workshops also made use of the new Human Resources “toolkit” developed specifically for ASOs throughout Ontario.

## COMMUNICATIONS AND SOCIAL MARKETING *Jason Oliver*

In an important development in 2008, the OAN recruited a Communications and Marketing Coordinator to work on the AIDS Bureau's Gay Men's HIV Prevention Strategy. This position allows the OAN the opportunity to work more actively on strategic internal communications throughout the infrastructure of the Ontario Gay Men's HIV Prevention Strategy.

The new coordinator, housed at the OAN, will also serve as a liaison for the AIDS Bureau, participating AIDS Service Organizations (ASOs), and the marketing firm Top Drawer Creative for the launch of the 2008 Social Marketing Campaign. Importantly, this innovative campaign will focus directly on the issue of stigma of HIV among diverse populations of gay, bisexual, and other Men Who Have Sex with Men (MSM). The anti-stigma campaign is scheduled to begin in the fall of 2008.

## POSITIVE SUPPORT FUND



<b>REVENUE</b>	
OPSEU	\$12,400.00
MAC AIDS Foundation	\$50,000.00
GILEAD Sciences Canada Inc.	\$5,000.00
Individual Donation	\$5,453.50
Miscellaneous (Brought forward from last year)	\$14,000.00
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b><u>\$86,853.50</u></b>

## **SOCIAL JUSTICE IN HIV/AIDS AWARD INDUCTEES**

2007 marked the Twelfth Anniversary of the OAN Honour Roll of Excellence. Each year, the Honour Roll recognizes the outstanding achievements of particular individuals and their dedication to creating a just and effective response to HIV/AIDS in Ontario. 2007 recognized the inclusion of five new recipients.

### **2007 Honour Roll Inductees:**

Jean Bacon

Glen Brown

Peter Hayes

Neil McGregor

Lena Soje

## **KUDOS TO OUR VOLUNTEERS**

The OAN is grateful to all our volunteers contribute their time, energy, and passion to supporting the work of the organization. Our volunteers are not only members of the Board of Directors, but also participants working on various committees, as well as frequent “extra pairs of hands” to ensure that the work of the OAN gets done. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the many volunteers who continue to support the OAN.

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS (2007-2008)**

**Omer Abdulghani (resigned)**

**Joseph Babcock**

**Les Bowman**

**Kim Dolan Co-Chair**

**Chuck Haskins**

**Henry Hudson Luyombya (resigned)**

**Irene Masinde**

**Shannon Ryan (Secretary)**

**Greg Simmons**

**Joseph van Veen (Co-Chair)**

**Karen Vance-Wallace (Treasurer)**

## **THANKS TO OUR DONORS AND FUNDERS**

The Ontario AIDS Network acknowledges the generous support of our donors and funders, including:

**AIDS Bureau, Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, AIDS Community Action Program, Public Health Agency of Canada, Alfred W. J. Dick; Donald Bruce Morrison Estate, Ramada Plaza (Toronto), Federated Health Charities, GlaxoSmithKline in partnership with Shire BioChem, HIV/AIDS Community-Based Research Program of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Jennifer Furtney, The Trillium Foundation.**

## **2007-2008 ONTARIO AIDS NETWORK STAFF**

Patti Bregman, Director of Public Issues

Michele Cherry, Coordinator of Skills Development

Shelley Cleverly, Director of Community-Based Research

Thomas Egdorf, Program Director – PHA Programs

Romilson Garcia, Coordinator of Finance & Administration (beginning October, 2007)

Haimy Mekonnen, Coordinator of Finance & Administration (until end of September, 2007)

Jason Oliver, Social Marketing Coordinator (in collaboration with the Gay Men's HIV Prevention Strategy)

OAN Website Design, Original Individuals ([www.original-individuals.com](http://www.original-individuals.com))

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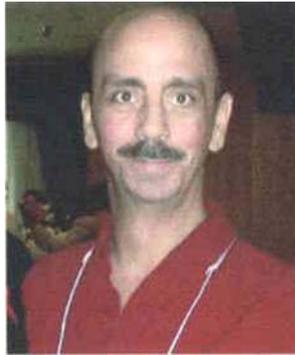
Website: [www.ontarioaidsnetwork.on.ca](http://www.ontarioaidsnetwork.on.ca)

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# IN MEMORIAM



**Steve Harris**

October 13, 1956- November 22, 2007

*Steve Harris was an advocate for improving the lives of people with HIV. We loved him and he inspired us. During the 10 years that Steve served on the Board of Directors of the Ontario AIDS Network he welcomed many people from all over Ontario who are HIV positive. They quickly became his friends. When you knew Steve, you knew a man that cared deeply. He always encouraged people to get involved.*

*Our work was not always easy, but Steve never gave up. He continued to be someone who could be relied on to be there in good times and in bad times. He could be depended on to share a laugh or a tear, or, best of all, a joke.*

*Steve was thoughtful and he was determined. Steve had courage. He was not afraid to ask questions or to stick up for the opposite point of view.*

*He was also a peacemaker that could help us find our way to higher ground.*

To commemorate Steve's life the OAN has arranged for his name to be engraved on the AIDS Memorial at Cawthra Park in Toronto.

