Annual Report 2008

Ontario AIDS Network

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

15 years, a milestone in our evolution...

2008-09 was a year of growth and fulfillment at the OAN, as we marked the 15th anniversary of our formal existence since incorporation on August 13, 1993. What began as a community-driven vision to support a collective voice in Ontario has emerged as a member-led organization that works both provincially and nationally to contribute to a just and effective response to HIV and AIDS.

In 2008, we continued the important work as outlined in the final year of our current strategic plan. We also determined that the OAN needs to remain focused on its core work of skills

development, knowledge exchange and policy development. We also recognized the OAN does not have the mandate to raise funds for client services and as a result, with membership approval we made the difficult decision to discontinue the OAN's Positive support fund.

At the same time, we began our strategic planning process that will take our work into the next five years and beyond-and that establishes new directions for the OAN including some exciting and innovative employment initiatives. We are pleased to now be in a position to put forth a strategic plan

that reflects not only the aspirations of our membership but that demonstrates our commitment to provide supportive leadership to all those involved.

This past year was also one of the busiest ones in our recent history. At the federal level, the OAN successfully advocated to reverse the \$1 million cut in government funding that provides crucial community programs for HIV education, prevention and support services. It was also an election year in which our membership worked to ensure that issues related to HIV and AIDS were made known to the candidates of all five major political parties, and during which members of the HIV community were actively encouraged to vote.

At the provincial level, we were pleased to meet with the Honourable David Caplan, the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care and thank him directly for Ontario's leadership in response to the HIV pandemic and for the invaluable assistance we continue to receive through the AIDS Bureau. The AIDS Bureau's commitment to our work and its understanding of the complexity of HIV/AIDS in the community context is a model for other provinces.

Over the past year we have made inroads

towards our commitment of ensuring that people with HIV and AIDS continue to be integral to how the OAN develops its responses to the HIV movement in Ontario. And it is for these reasons that we are especially grateful to the Public Health Agency of Canada-AIDS Community Action Program (ACAP)—for their active support of our PHA Leadership Development Program. Thanks to the support from ACAP we were able to host our first ever leadership alumni event that attracted more than 70 leadership graduates from throughout the province-allowing them to reflect on the roles, responsibilities and challenges of PHA leadership.

We are pleased to report two new partnerships that will contribute to the success of the OAN. One particularly notable accomplishment this past year was the formation of our partnership with the Pacific AIDS Network—a partnership that now ensures a mutually supportive relationship in offering the leadership development program in both provinces. Another new partnership that continues to develop is our relationship with the Anglican Diocese of Greater Toronto. Most importantly, the Diocese has made HIV and spiritual care a priority and has been active on

a number of social justice issues related to HIV and AIDS.

The Board has also worked to reinvigorate the OAN Honour Roll Banquet and Awards Ceremony. As such, the OAN Board took the lead in the creation of new categories of recognition and worked closely with OAN staff to revitalize the event with a new format and venue.

We are confident that you will agree that although much remains to be done, much has been accomplished this past year-including a growth in funding and services provided to our members, as well as growth in the ranks of our membership. Our Board met diligently throughout the year, and, among other things, held an orientation session for new Board members, reviewed finance and administration policies to further ensure efficiency and accountability, and developed a workplace anti-harassment policy.

The Board would also like to say thanks to the members elected last year who won't be continuing in 2009/2010, many thanks to Rene Boucher and Brandon Williams for their work over the past year. Yet for all this we understand that our accomplishments would be nothing without the contributions and

support of our dedicated volunteers, community partners, member organizations, and staff. We also extend our heartfelt thanks to our membership as well as the people who confront the challenges of HIV and AIDS in their daily lives. You continue to inspire us and we look forward to working on your behalf over the coming year.

Sincerely.



Joseph Babcock (Co-Chair)



AIDS, alliances, activism and action...

Over the past year, the OAN has continued its advocacy work to restore the federal funding cuts of \$1 million to Ontario-monies that were designated to support people with HIV and AIDS, to educate the public and to prevent new infections.

Ontario AIDS Network

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

It is thanks to the actions of our membership, and the development of the OAN's postcard campaign *Cutting Funding=Cutting Lives* and the voices of the HIV community throughout Canada that we are pleased to report that the funding cuts to Ontario have been reversed. However, funding will continue to be a vital

concern, and this concern was the driving force behind another OAN-led awareness campaign, Stick it in! A campaign that served as a reminder to vote during the 2008 federal election.

The OAN's campaign work also expanded to include HIV prevention efforts in Ontario. More specifically, the OAN worked closely with the Gay Men's Sexual Health Alliance (GMSH) in the central coordination of the HIV Stigma Campaign (www.hivstigma.com). The campaign challenged all gay men to reflect on the stigma related to HIV and AIDS within the gay community, and its effects upon increased

rates of HIV transmission in Ontario.

Beyond these varied campaign activities the OAN was administratively very active. The organization managed the province-wide scholarship programs for both the 2008 CAHR conference in Montreal and the International AIDS Conference in Mexico City.

Yet another development for 2008 was the development of our new strategic plan and within this the identification of the growing importance of HIV and employment. As such, the OAN has supported the initial formation of a provincial working group that will help to address the barriers faced by people who are

HIV positive in the workplace from the perspectives of both policy and practice.

The OAN also continues to place increased emphasis on communications and stakeholder relationships. This has led to the addition of three new staff members responsible for community engagement, social marketing and administrative coordination.

Further, some of the landmark programs of the OAN continued to develop and expand in 2008. The OAN Skills program continued to be a vital resource in supporting the education and relationship building of volunteers and staff. This year 224 participants

attended our seven training sessions held throughout 2008 and assigned a 4.6 rating out of 5 as the overall positive evaluation of the program.

The PHA leadership program introduced two more levels of training into what has become a tri-part process of PHA Leadership development. We also partnered with the AIDS Bereavement Project of Ontario to enable PHAs to become group facilitators.

The OAN Honour Roll is an inspiring event that pays tribute to individuals who have given tirelessly their time and talent towards the HIV and AIDS movement in Ontario. The Honour Roll

was a successful fundraising event this year and we are very grateful for the support of our sponsor Glaxo SmithKline Canada Inc. and our brand new sponsor BMO Financial Group for their partnership in support of this event which recognizes exceptional achievement in Ontario.

The Community-Based research program actively developed the HIV research café concept that helped to bring research to life and enabled stakeholders to sit as equals around the table in spirited discussions. This innovative approach has helped to open the doors of CBR and we are very appreciative of the leadership and engagement that our

Network has demonstrated.

My thanks to our individual donors and our funders the AIDS Bureau, Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-term Care; the AIDS Community Action Program (ACAP), Public Health Agency of Canada; Federated Health Charities: the Ontario Trillium Foundation; and the Canadian Institute of Health Research (CIHR), Pfizer Canada Inc. and the Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU). We honour the contributions that all have made to the OAN in helping us to build an effective community led organization, and we thank you

provincial partner the Ontario HIV Treatment

for your continued confidence and trust.

My thanks to the OAN Board members who led and inspired our organization and to the OAN staff whose commitment and abilities continue to raise the bar in Ontario's response to HIV and AIDS.

Together we stand on the threshold of hope leading to a world without AIDS.



Executive Director

2008 OAN Honour Roll Inuctees

OAN HONOUR ROLL

The thirteenth annual Honour Roll Banquet and Awards Ceremony was held on Saturday, November 15th, 2008 at the Intercontinental Hotel in Toronto. The event was presented by the OAN with the generous support of our co-sponsors GlaxoSmithKline in partnership with Shire Canada and BMO Financial Group.

The Honour Roll recognizes innovative and pioneering work towards developing best practices and increasing the capacity of the community-based AIDS movement in Ontario. The work of the 2008 inductees continues to exemplify these standards with passion and vigour. Inductees have historically contributed to reducing the stigma and discrimination associated with HIV/AIDS, promoted the empowerment of People Living with HIV/AIDS and extended the capacity of the community to respond to the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Ontario.

2008 inductees were:

Trevor Gray-Caregivers Award

Alex McClelland—Person with HIV/AIDS Leadership Award

Dr. Robert Remis—Community Partner Award The Social Justice in HIV/AIDS award was created in 2004 to uniquely recognize the contributions that so many have made to create a just and effective response to HIV/ AIDS. The award recognizes the exceptional commitment and ongoing advocacy of an individual or group to improving the lives of people living with HIV/AIDS. The 2008 honouree of the Social Justice in HIV/AIDS was the **Honourable George Smitherman**.

Special thanks to Tiffany & Co., VIA Rail and Intercontinental Hotels and Resorts for providing raffle prizes. Ontario AIDS Network 2008 Annual Report

INTERNATIONAL AIDS CONFERENCE --- MEXICO CITY

In collaboration with the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care—AIDS Bureau—and the Ontario HIV Treatment Network (OHTN), the Ontario AIDS Network was selected to administer the 2008 International AIDS Conference Ontario Scholarship Program. The program made available 145 scholarships, 75 of which were formally designated for people living with HIV/ AIDS, and the remaining 70 allocated by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care to AIDS Bureau-supported AIDS Service Organizations (ASOs) and programs throughout Ontario.

All conference registrations, hotel

accommodations (both domestic and international), meal and transportation allowances, and health insurance were coordinated through the OAN and its partner agency, an internationally-recognized travel company. The OAN also managed the scholarship application process for both PHA (community) and ASO applicants, providing additional support in terms of reviewing documentation for all delegates, as well as assistance in securing additional documentation (e.g. travel visas) in cooperation with various ASO support staff as well as Mexican consular officials.

In its call for applications, the OAN received a total of 122 applications from PHAs throughout the Province of Ontario. A diverse adjudication committee of four PHAs carefully reviewed all applications and ultimately approved 88-that were then ordered numerically with 75 directly authorized and the remaining 13 placed on a waiting list pending the acceptance and final authorization of the initial 75 designated delegates (and in anticipation of possible changes and withdrawals). Through the generous support of the AIDS Bureau, the OAN was ultimately able to fund 79 PHA delegates and 66 agency (ASO) delegates to attend the

with HIV/AIDS.



XVII International AIDS Conference. Importantly, and in keeping with the GIPA Principle, of the 66 agency (ASO) delegates, at least 18 were also self-identified persons living To read the final report of the scholarship program administered by the OAN please feel free to contact Stephen G. Lincoln, Coordinator of Community Engagement, slincoln@ontarioaidsnetwork.on.ca

XVII INTERNATIONAL AIDS CONFERENCE 3-8 August 2008 | Mexico City Universal Action Now

CAHR 2008–MONTREAL

In collaboration with the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), the OAN was chosen to administer the 2008 CAHR Conference Ontario Scholarship Program, instituted to ensure the representation and participation of Ontariansas well as to provide economic assistance-at the XVII Annual Canadian Conference on HIV/ AIDS Research in Montreal from April 24-27. The scholarship program made available 129 scholarships—90 designated for community members (PHAs) and the remaining 39 designated for AIDS service organization staff (ASOs). More specifically, the scholarships provided all conference registrations, return

travel to Montreal, hotel accommodations, meal and transportation allowances, and a child care allowance for those eligible. Scholarship recipients were thus privileged to participate in a range of CAHR Conference activities, workshops, and plenary sessions and as a direct result of the program, the representation and participation of Ontario delegates (including PHAs) was perhaps the largest contingent in attendance.

Beyond the administration of the Ontario Scholarship Program, the participation of the OAN included support for the Canadian AIDS Treatment Exchange Pre-CAHR Learning Institute, as well as the sponsorship of a breakfast session entitled Toward an HIV Research Café Movement hosted by Shelley Cleverly, Director of Community Based Research at the Ontario AIDS Network. This particular session offered participants the opportunity to experience an HIV Research Café—an informal discussion on a controversial HIV/AIDS prevention topic.

Someone showed me I have potential, and I could put it to use. Now, I aim to show others they have potential. ??

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PHA LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS

The PHA Leadership Development Program at the OAN continues to evolve as it recruits and engages PHAs throughout Ontario, offering profoundly unique opportunities to identify, develop, and nurture their leadership skills. The 2008 fiscal year saw many developments within the PHA Leadership programs of the OAN. Both quantitatively and gualitatively the PHA Leadership program expanded its efforts to empower PHAs in making strengthened contributions to their communities and the community-based agencies served by the OAN.

In 2008, the leadership program hosted:

- Four Leadership Development Level I: Who am I as a leader? Sessions
- Three Leadership Development Level II Communications Sessions
- One Leadership Development Level III: Organizational Governance Session
- A workshop on Fundraising Fundamentals
- A session on developing and running workshops for PHAs
- A 2nd alumni event with over 100 PHA Leadership graduates

The number of workshops translates into 191

new leadership graduates and a cumulative resource of 2194 years of lived experience in the HIV/AIDS movement.

The PHA Leadership program has also increased its profile in both the community and in terms of its human resources. An OAN Leadership delegation was mobilized and marched in the 2008 Toronto Gay Pride Parade, complete with banner and t-shirts. The Leadership program also hired, trained and supported two research assistants to help conduct an impact evaluation for the program.

Upcoming milestones for 2009 include a pilot project with the Pacific AIDS Network to

implement a leadership level 1 session in British Columbia and the launch of a coffee table book highlighting the inspirational stories of 20 graduates of the Leadership program.

I'm realizing that to do big changes, you cannot do it by yourself. It's better when you work in a group and promote the understanding that everyone has a leadership role. I have another understanding of leadership now.

GMSH

Throughout the 2008 fiscal year the OAN continued to work in HIV prevention programming through its direct involvement with the Ontario's Gay Men's Sexual Alliance (GMSH) previously known as the Gay Men's HIV Prevention Strategy.

GMSH is a provincial coalition of gay men and their allies from community-based HIV/AIDS service organizations, the HIV research community, public health and policy makers. All of whom are interested in strengthening the capacity of sexual health professionals to reduce rates of new HIV infections and support the health and well being of all gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men across Ontario.

The OAN continues to serve as clearinghouse for major GMSH developed resources that will reach ASOs throughout 2009. Central coordination for the Gay Men's Sexual Health Summit will provided by the OAN in the form of staff support.

Further OAN staff support towards GMSH is offered through communications endeavors coordinated by Jason Oliver and other administrative duties by Asif Ahmed.

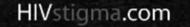
One major milestone of 2008 was the central



Gay Men's Sexual Health Alliance

role the OAN played in the administration, launch and management of day to day logistics of the GMSH HIV stigma campaign.

The OAN would like to thank the Gay Men's Sexual Alliance for its continued support.



If you were rejected every time you disclosed, would you?

HV STIGMA CAMPAIGN

After a comprehensive campaign development process the Gay Men's Sexual Health Alliance launched its HIV Stigma Social Marketing Campaign geared towards gay men in Ontario.

The campaign centered upon the core message of identifying HIV stigma as a fundamental issue that makes it harder for the gay community to prevent the transmission of HIV. The campaign also addressed the impact of HIV stigma on gay men's sexual health and their overall well-being. Dialogue was generated by both HIV negative and HIV positive men with the goal of bridging a divide

in the gay community, the HIV/AIDS movement, and addressing personalized strategies towards HIV prevention and health promotion.

The campaign was implemented using traditional forms of media and dissemination strategies such as billboards, transit advertisements, posters, and print and newspaper advertising. Another fundamental component to the advertising plan was the use of gay oriented websites used for cruising and sexual encounters to give the campaign message exposure in the environments in which men are having sex, to further this

objective the campaign was also prominently advertised in gay bars and bathhouses in Ontario.

The OAN was integral to the campaign in two key capacities. First, the OAN provided the social marketing support through the work of Jason Oliver who served as a liaison for educators and outreach workers who implemented the campaign at the community level throughout the Province. This involved working directly with OAN member agencies and maximizing their ability to leverage the HIV Stigma Campaign in their existing gay/bi/MSM sexual health endeavours. Other duties

consisted of the coordination of logistics related to the campaign launch, as well as media and public relations support.

involved the provision of ongoing

Second, the OAN provided ongoing support to the online facilitators on the campaign website www.hivstigma.com through Stephen G. Lincoln who served as the On-line

Facilitator Support Coordinator. Stephen's work

technical and psychosocial support, the coordination of regular meetings to address campaign issues and difficulties as they emerged, the provision of guidance and substantive topical support, and to act as a

liaison between the campaign facilitators and other campaign stakeholders.

The campaign officially concluded after a highly successful tenure in April, 2009boasting more than 25,000 unique visits to the campaign website alone.



would you?



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SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The Skills Development Program consists of skills-based educational workshops 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.

Over the 2008 fiscal year the Skills Development Program offered seven capacity building workshops for the following ASO professional roles: Support Workers, Administrative Coordinators, Fundraisers, Educators, Volunteer Coordinators, Executive Directors retreat, and Executive Directors and Chairs of the Board of Directors. 224 staff of OAN member agencies participated in the program throughout 2008. Emerging themes and topics that were discussed at the various workshops include but are not limited to: HIV non-disclosure and the law, greater PHA involvement within an

agency, HIV and depression, as well as the usage of social marketing in ASO programming.

A needs assessment survey has been disseminated to the staff of OAN member agencies and will help to inform the content of future sessions throughout 2009.

For more information please contact Michele Cherry, Coordinator of Skills Development, mcherry@ontarioaidsnetwork.on.ca

GG *I* feel like a voice for the voiceless. I'm bringing a positive face, full of joy, to HIV in the community. ??

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ONTARIO PROVINCIAL RESOURCE FOR ASOS IN HUMAN RESOURCES (OPRAH)

OPRAH is the provincial resource in Human Resources for ASOs helps build the capacity of ASOs through the ongoing delivery of HR tools and resources. Since 2007, Tracy Campbell, the face behind OPRAH, has facilitated fifteen HR training and education sessions offering practical advice in all areas on HR management. In addition, Tracy provides day-to-day support to assist Executive Directors on such issues as job design, recruitment, orientation, and policy development to health & safety compliance, performance management, compensation, policy development, union relations and

termination of employment.

Through the OPRAH program we have been able to strengthen provincial HR capacity through research, the recommendation and development of policies and practices, the provision of training to participants, and the exploration and creation of ongoing shared HR services.

The long-term goal is to enable the OAN's member agencies to effectively manage both the strategic and transactional elements of their HR needs, through a centralized support services model as well as internal skills and knowledge.

At the same time, the evolving landscape of HIV/AIDS and community-based services will require organizations to lead change, support growth and build leadership capacity.

These key areas for future development for ASOs include:

- Developing the skills necessary to effectively manage and lead change.
- Building leadership capacity through HR management skills development.
- Creating and delivering supportive HR training.
- Building and sustaining a focus on HR

- competencies and performance for people process and practice.

needs.

- Implementing effective engagement, reward and recognition strategies.
- The success of building HR capacity, initiatives and practices is critical for the well being of ASO staff and the delivery of client-centred services. The 2009 HR Discovery-Audit (currently underway) will help identify the HR knowledge and skills that currently exist in Ontario and future HR training

'It's not just sitting at the table and listening to people yak back and forth. It's listening and questioning and understanding the whole process.??

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COMMUNITY BASED RESEARCH PROGRAM

The OAN, as an integral part of the broader AIDS movement in Ontario, remains committed to community-based research (CBR), and our work within the field continues to support the engagement of AIDS Service Organizations (ASOs) as well as people with HIV and AIDS in both its development and practical application. Importantly, the HIV/AIDS Community-Based Research Program (CBR) provides direct assistance to community-based organizations, non-governmental organizations, as well as other institutional stakeholders in developing the knowledge necessary to carrying out their

HIV/AIDS work most effectively, and in creating and nurturing the expertise within these communities to conduct their own research.

The Community-Based Research Program has focused on three primary areas: the development of tools and mechanisms to support the HIV/AIDS community in creating meaningful and effective partnerships with other community-based organizations, agencies, academics, and decision makers; the building (in partnership with the OHTN) of capacity, tools, and skills for the ethical conduct and implementation of scientifically rigorous community-based research that address the social determinants of health driving the epidemic; and the application of research evidence on the front lines and with the key decision makers to more directly influence programs, practices, and policies that will ultimately lead to improvements in the health and well-being of people living with and those affected by HIV and AIDS.

In even broader terms, this past year the OAN's community-based research program worked not only with AIDS service organizations and people who are HIV positive, but also with students, student organizations, and various health groups to increase their

awareness of the value of HIV/AIDS CBR to more fully assess and understand their needs as well as their capacity to actively engage in research thus building comfort as well as skills in carrying out all aspects of community-based research. In doing so, the OAN continued to support the building and development of relationships and partnerships that involved strategic collaborations on a range of research projects and that reaffirmed our organization's commitment to the Greater Involvement of People with HIV/AIDS (GIPA) Principle as fundamental to our research at all levels.

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You feel you can do anything you set your heart out to do. You have your friends to back you up. There's a power in you that surges and you say you can DO it. ??

LLEGAL SEX? OAN—HART HOUSE DEBATE

In the face of the current controversies and tremendous amount of press surrounding the criminalization of HIV (non-disclosure) in Canada, the Ontario AIDS Network partnered with the Hart House Debates Committee and members of its Debating Club at the University of Toronto in February, 2009 to host a debate featuring a critical examination of the arguments for and against the application of criminal law in addressing the non-disclosure of HIV status. The question for the debaters reflected the current status of the law in Canada that states that if an individual is HIV positive and does not disclose this status with

LEGA

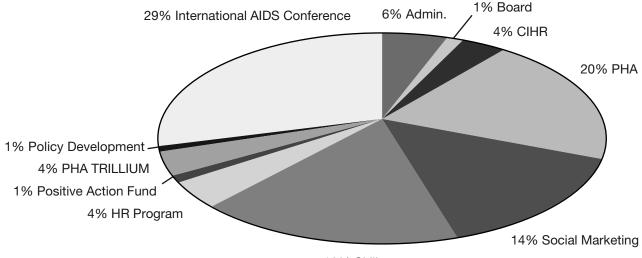
sexual partners, he or she may be subject to criminal charges in certain situations. While they were provided with guidance and professional support through the OAN and its stakeholders, all debaters were volunteers who worked to help illuminate the complex legal, moral, public health, and human realities involved - with the objective of better enabling others to hear and understand these and related issues, and in the hopes of challenging their own as well as others' assumptions.

While the debate was a singular event—that did involve much planning—it continues to

engage and inform through the OAN website and related links. It is now possible to watch the full debate as a streaming video as well as visit related links and materials as well. More specifically, the OAN through the work of Stephen Lincoln and Jason Oliver has put together a debate tool kit for those interested in hosting a debate in their own communities. 2008 Annual Report Ontar

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BUDGET ALLOCATION FOR THE YEAR 2008/2009



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THANKS TO OUR2008-2009 ONTARIO AIDS NETWORK BOARDDONORS & FUNDERSOF DIRECTORS

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

AIDS Bureau, Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care; AIDS Community Action Program, Public Health Agency of Canada; Via Rail Canada Inc.; Federated Health Charities; GlaxoSmithKline Canada Inc.; the Community Based Research Program of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research; The Ontario Trillium Foundation; Pfizer Canada Inc.; the Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU); BMO Financial Group Nesbitt Burns Inc., Murray Newman, Gavin Clarke and James Keene for their guidance.

Alphabetically Joseph Babcock (Co-Chair) Rene Boucher Les Bowman Kim Dolan Chuck Haskins Rick Kennedy (Executive Director) Kevin Murphy Marvelous Muchenje (Secretary) Shannon Thomas Ryan (Co-Chair) Joseph van Veen

Karen Vance-Wallace (Treasurer) Brandon Williams (2008)

Ontario AIDS Network

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Director of Human Resources

Coordinator of Skills Development

Director of Community-Based Research

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Rick Kennedy Executive Director

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OAN Website Design Original Individuals www.original-individuals.com

Volunteers: Brian Costey, Ed Argo.

Special thanks to all of our volunteers who ensure we are able to do the work we do.

Annual Report Design

Christina Habberjam, envy creative www.envycreative.ca



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