



**20TH ANNIVERSARY**

*2002-2022*

**SPECIAL EDITION**



# **ANNUAL REPORT 2022**

## **Ontario Justice Education Network**

# Celebrating 20 years of OJEN



2022 was a busy year for OJEN. As we transitioned from pandemic to endemic, opportunities to offer core OJEN programs in person became possible once again.

We wrapped up our three-year, province-wide Youth-Police Dialogues project, along with the Family Law for Young Parents pilot programs in Hamilton, Navigating Police Encounters initiatives in Ottawa, and the new Francophone youth-focused Défi de la Charte program. The OJEN board and staff conducted 18 interviews and 12 focus groups, reviewed dozens of reports and stakeholder surveys, before coming together to produce a new four-year strategic plan.

OJEN also turned twenty this year. It amazes me that I have been a part of this wonderful organization for fourteen of those years. In 2008, I left my immigration and refugee law practice to join OJEN and develop newcomer youth-focused justice education initiatives. I was delighted to discover a community of talented educators, legal professionals and community workers who all shared the same passion for public legal education (PLE) and social justice.

It has been such a great pleasure and honour to be part of this organization, but it is time to move on and make space for new leadership at OJEN. Happily, my good friend and OJEN colleague, Kristy Pagnutti, has taken this on. As I step away from OJEN in 2023 to join our partner PLE organization, Community Legal Education Ontario (CLEO), I know that Kristy and the rest of the OJEN team will continue the great work of this organization and like many of you, I can't wait to see where they take OJEN next!

*Jess Reekie, Executive Director*

Happy birthday, OJEN!  
The Law Foundation of Ontario is proud to have played a part in the creation of OJEN and is impressed by the thriving and innovative organization it is today. Congratulations on 20 years of demystifying the law for youth and inspiring mutual understanding between young people, the justice system, and legal professionals working within it.

**Lisa Cirillo, CEO,  
The Law Foundation of Ontario**



# Building on our successes



OJEN Co-chairs, Justice Breese Davies & Leigh MacDonald

In November 2022, OJEN's board of directors approved a 4-year strategic plan. This plan will guide OJEN's activities through to our 25th anniversary in 2027.

Our planning process focused first on listening to the needs, priorities, opinions and experiences of young people, teachers, youth workers, legal professionals, and funders. After hearing many diverse perspectives, we considered the potential implications for OJEN's future programs and services.

We decided to focus on five broad strategic directions for the next four years:

1. Engage youth directly to increase the diversity of youth served;
2. Listen, learn and seek guidance on implementing relevant Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Committee and incorporating First Nations, Inuit and Métis teachings in our work;
3. Implement a comprehensive strategy to recruit, train and retain volunteers;
4. Expand relationships with trusted intermediaries in schools and other communities;
5. Invest in cultivating greater sustainability.

“2022 was a busy year at OJEN. We adopted an ambitious, exciting strategic plan. Over the next four years, we will focus on increasing the diversity of the youth we serve. We will work towards implementing the Calls to Action from the TRC Commission that are relevant to the work we do in the education and justice sectors. We will work to improve our volunteer program and our network of trusted intermediaries. I am very excited to work with our new Executive Director, Kristy Pagnutti, on all of these initiatives and to see OJEN continue to evolve in the years to come.

**The Honourable Justice Breese Davies, Superior Court of Justice, OJEN co-chair**

# Highlights

## 20 years of OJEN



**2002**

OJEN is founded by  
Ontario's 3 Chief Justices

**2003**

30,000 students visit  
Ontario courthouses

**2005**

Youth programs for  
Indigenous communities  
launch in northwestern  
Ontario in partnership  
with Nishnawbe-Aski  
Legal Services

**2009**

Trailblazers: Meeting  
Women in Law launches  
in partnership with LEAF

**2012**

OJEN celebrates  
10 years with an  
anniversary gala





**2014**

OBA-OJEN Competitive Mock Trial (OOCMT) program begins

**2015**

Youth-Police Dialogues pilot program begins

**2017**

Justice Education Fellowship program is launched

**2020**

Défi de la Charte is launched

**2022**

OJEN celebrates its 20th anniversary and launches a 4-year strategic plan

## 20 years of justice education in schools

130 secondary school students attended the inaugural Law Day event that launched OJEN in 2002. Developing programs and resources to enrich the experiences of secondary school students learning about the law was OJEN's starting point. Enhanced courthouse visits give students the opportunity to see court in session and connect with judges, lawyers and other court staff. Province-wide mock trial tournaments and other experiential activities offer insight into court processes and build legal reasoning and advocacy skills. Over 200 curriculum-based resources and dozens of justice education programs, help bring the law to life in classrooms throughout the province. Twenty years later, hundreds of thousands of Ontario students and youth have had a close-up look at the justice system, learned about careers in law, and gained practical legal life skills that they can use throughout their lives.

“Congratulations to OJEN for providing innovative and engaging real-world opportunities for students for 20 years! In providing so many varied learning opportunities, OJEN has helped to shape and enhance the lives of countless students and has made a positive impact for so many in the justice and education sectors.

**Jason Hatch, Law Teacher, Thames Valley District School Board**





## Charter Challenge

*Launched in 2005*

OJEN's Charter Challenge is the only mock appeal program for secondary school students in the province. Twice a year, student teams compete for the opportunity to make their arguments at the Court of Appeal for Ontario. While many students enjoy the competitive aspect of the program, teachers appreciate the many learning opportunities it provides. Through the program, students are exposed to sophisticated problems that arise when individual freedoms conflict with societies' values. In the process, they also develop important skills such as researching, teamwork, critical thinking, and advocacy while building self-confidence.

“ I don't think I appreciated then as I do now, just how much of a cool experience it was. I didn't get to moot in front of a Court of Appeal judge in all of law school. But I got to do it in high school. That's a pretty cool experience to have at that age.

**Matthew Patterson, Former Charter Challenge participant, now a Court of Appeal Clerk**

### *COURTROOMS & CLASSROOMS HIGHLIGHTS IN 2022*

- 72 students participated in 3 in-person and 4 virtual OBA-OJEN Competitive Mock Trial tournaments
- 345 students took part in 2 Charter Challenges
- 238 Francophone students engaged in the Défi de la Charte
- 10,717 students visited Ontario courthouses
- 2,040 students connected with justice sector volunteers through classroom visits



## Community

# 20 years of justice education in the community

In 2004, multi-year funding from the Ontario Trillium Foundation allowed OJEN to expand programming beyond the classroom. Community-based initiatives respond to the needs of unique youth audiences - newcomer, Francophone and Indigenous youth, those living in communities with historically negative relationships with the justice system and those in custody or on parole. Through engaging interactive workshops, OJEN helps youth understand the justice system and build the knowledge, skills, and attitudes they need to manage legal issues in their own lives. Thousands of justice sector volunteers, including judges, lawyers, justices of the peace, court staff, police officers, and others, not only share expertise with the youth, they gain valuable insight into the communities they serve.

Establishing partnerships with hundreds of community organizations throughout the province has been key to connecting with youth outside of the formal educational setting in every region of the province.

“ The program gave me an opportunity to learn about my rights, think about the way I communicate and advocate for myself and others.

**Youth participant, Youth-Police Dialogues**





## Family Law for Young Parents

*Launched in 2013*

Family Law for Young Parents (FLYP) is a multi-session program for pregnant teens and young parents that equips them with information and legal life skills necessary to manage common family law issues. Using an interactive, dialogue-based approach, participants explore issues of child support, parenting time, decision-making responsibility, and child protection. Young mothers learn and practise legal life skills such as record-keeping and effective communication. Since it was launched a decade ago, the program has evolved to include greater opportunities for young parents and justice sector professionals to connect. Participants are encouraged to share their experiences with the family law system and propose ways in which justice professionals could better support them.

“ When I attended these workshops, it was in the early stages of my family court process and so it was nice to get a breakdown of what was about to happen in the process, how to access specific services and even just understanding the definition of specific terms.

**Youth participant, Family Law for Young Parents**

### *OUTREACH PROGRAMS IN 2022*

- Approximately **730** youth participated in the Youth-Police Dialogues & Navigating Police Encounters programs, in partnership with **34** community organizations
- The Together 180 pilot program reached **95** youth in custody
- The Family Law for Young Parents program engaged **85** young mothers
- OJEN piloted a condensed Family Law for Young Parents program to **58** young parents
- **26** youth participated in **3** piloted Serious Legal Problems Workshops



## Training

# 20 years of training and PD for adults working with youth

Volunteer training and professional development (PD) initiatives for teachers, lawyers and other adults who work with youth, are a significant part of OJEN's work. Providing accurate legal information, as well as tips and techniques for engaging with youth audiences extends OJEN's reach far beyond what our small staff can do ourselves.

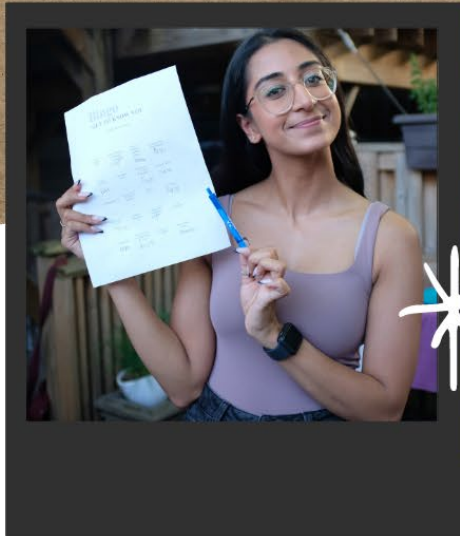
In its first year, OJEN launched the annual Summer Law Institute, a two-day professional development conference for teachers. Law institutes and professional development workshops continue to connect educators with legal experts on a wide range of legal topics. In 2008, responding to requests from our community partners, we launched a full day workshop on Navigating the Justice System. We continue to provide training to community workers on current legal information, and specific legal issues as requested.

Today, OJEN's training programs have expanded to include law and paralegal students through our Justice Education Fellowships. We hire Youth Leadership Team members to assist with justice education projects in their communities.

“ I hope you know how many young people you are impacting with your sessions, support and resources

**Teacher, Summer Law Institute participant**





## OJEN's Justice Education Fellowships

*Launched in 2017*

OJEN's Justice Education Fellowship program trains law and paralegal students to deliver public legal education (PLE) workshops to youth. In 2022, the program included students from all 8 law schools in Ontario, and for the first time, 2 paralegal students. Fellows receive in-depth training in public legal education theory and practice focusing on community outreach, public speaking, access to justice and plain language. Each Fellow organises and delivers a minimum of 3 youth-focused justice education projects in their communities over the school year. The Justice Education Fellowship program expands OJEN's reach and prepares the next generation of legal professionals with the skills to deliver PLE.

“Through my involvement with OJEN, I learned the value of justice education, specifically, the ways in which it can empower young people. In the present, they are able to understand laws that impact them and, in the future, they are able to see themselves represented in legal careers.

**Amanda Cutinha, OJEN Justice Education Fellow**

### TRAINING PROGRAMS IN 2022

- 8 law students and 2 paralegal students participated in OJEN's Justice Education Fellowship program
- 6 one-hour professional development webinars were produced for teachers
- The annual Summer Law Institute for teachers featured 7 new webinars on current legal issues
- 46 trusted intermediaries for youth in vulnerable environments participated in training workshops
- Orientation materials were created for volunteers working in community-based programs



## Public Legal Education (PLE) leadership

# 20 years of youth-focused PLE

Within the Public Legal Education (PLE) community, OJEN fills a unique role. Our youth-focused approach to justice education goes beyond providing information about the law. Our experiential, scenario-based programs have the overarching goal of building the legal capability of our youth audiences. Justice sector volunteers play a key role in program delivery. They share expertise, engage in dialogue and often act as role models. Connecting with justice sector volunteers helps youth establish a level of comfort with the justice system. Both volunteers and youth learn from each other, challenge their assumptions of one another and build better relationships. Each year, thousands of justice sector professionals across the province volunteer with OJEN to help deliver justice education programs for youth. OJEN supports the legal community by providing resources and specialized training in effective PLE facilitation strategies for youth audiences.

## OJEN's local committees

*Launched pre-2002*

OJEN's local committees are the driving force behind hundreds of justice education programs across Ontario. Consisting of volunteers from the justice and education sectors, committees support OJEN's province-wide initiatives and develop programming specific to each community's needs. They build lasting connections between educators and legal professionals and strengthen links between the public and the justice system. From the initial 8 committees established before OJEN was incorporated in 2002, that number has more than doubled to 17 committees across the province. Committees deliver programs ranging from courtroom and classroom visits, Law Day events, teacher law institutes, secondary school mock trials, and much more.







## F v N: A Discussion

### *Halton Committee Program*

When Halton Region's Committee Chair, Inga Andriessen, heard that local lawyers would be arguing at the Supreme Court of Canada (SCC), she saw a rare learning opportunity for Halton secondary school students. Inga arranged for the lawyers involved to address law classes in an engaging webinar.

Their presentation outlined the steps that led to appealing the case to the SCC. The lawyers also shared how they were preparing for their day at Canada's highest court. This is just one example of an excellent local committee initiative.

“Congratulations to OJEN on 20 fantastic years of justice education. The engagement with students in the Halton region through OJEN programs has sparked interest in legal topics for thousands of students, many of whom didn't have that interest before the OJEN programs. Not only does this impact future careers in law, it also informs students about their legal rights and empowers them to stand up for those rights. It is a fantastic organization with a bright future.

**Inga B. Andriessen, Chair, Halton OJEN Committee**

### *2022 COMMITTEE HIGHLIGHTS*

- More than **70** grade 5 classes participated by Zoom in Durham's Grade 5 Law Day Event
- **10** schools registered classes in Halton Committee's *F v N*: A Discussion
- **40** young women attended the online Kitchener-Waterloo Braiding Diversity into Justice event
- **7** committees organized local OBA-OJEN Mock Trial Tournaments
- The London local committee held a law institute for teachers in the region



## OJEN committees in 2022

- Algoma
- Durham
- Halton
- Hamilton
- Hastings
- Kingston
- London
- Ottawa
- Peel
- Peterborough
- Simcoe-Muskoka
- Sudbury
- Thunder Bay
- Toronto
- Waterloo
- Wellington County
- Windsor-Sussex



# 20 years of OJEN volunteers

Volunteers are a vital part of OJEN's success. Each year, hundreds of judges, lawyers, justices of the peace, court staff, police officers, law students, educators and others throughout Ontario offer their time and expertise to support OJEN's justice education initiatives.

## Volunteers:

- draft and review classroom teaching resources
- speak to students about careers in law
- explain courtroom procedures to classes visiting local courthouses
- deliver justice education programs to youth
- share up-to-date legal information to teachers and community workers

...and much more.

Connecting with justice sector volunteers helps youth establish a level of comfort with the justice system. Both volunteers and youth learn from each other, challenge their assumptions of one another, and build better relationships.

We are immensely grateful to everyone who supports OJEN programs province-wide.

Thank you for 20 years of volunteering!



# OJEN Awards

## Chief Justices' Award

Launched in 2005

The Chief Justices' Award recognises an individual who has made an exceptional contribution in promoting public understanding, education and dialogue in support of a responsive and inclusive justice system.

**Adam Cox** - York Region District School Board

## Hux-Kiteley Exemplary Justice Educator Award

Launched in 2011

The Hux-Kiteley award recognises an Ontario educator who has demonstrated exceptional leadership in the area of justice education. In 2022, for the first time, the award was shared by two educators.

**Patricia Valeri-Tortis** - Hamilton Wentworth Catholic District Board of Education

**Peter Voight** - Toronto District School Board

## Tate Herbert Post-Secondary Volunteer Award

Launched in 2015

This annual award commemorates the life of Tate Herbert. Tate lost his life to cancer at the age of 20 while studying Law and Society at Wilfrid Laurier University. This award recognizes a post-secondary student volunteer who has made a significant contribution to OJEN's justice education initiatives.

**Zoë Paddock** - Law student, Windsor University, Faculty of Law



Zoë Paddock receives the Tate Herbert Memorial Post Secondary Award from Ted Herbert. Zoë completed a Social Justice Fellowship from Windsor University's Faculty of Law with OJEN in the summer of 2021. She continued working part-time with OJEN after the Fellowship ended, impressing staff with her commitment to social justice.



# Fundraising

As a charitable, not-for-profit organization, OJEN is grateful for core funding from the Law Foundation of Ontario, as well as project-specific funding from government agencies. Donations from individuals can be directed to programs that respond to an urgent need.

## Tate's Tableaux

Each year, the Herbert family hosts an evening of music and improv to commemorate the life of their son, Tate. Since it was established in 2014, Tate's Tableaux has raised over \$50,000 for OJEN! Thank you very much to the Herbert family and friends, and all who support this wonderful event!



## OJEN's 20th anniversary campaign

Going into 2022, OJEN set a fundraising goal of \$20,000 to mark OJEN's 20 years. The Honourable Fran Kiteley, OJEN's first Board Chair, chaired a 20th-anniversary fundraising committee. Its members included educators, legal professionals, and law students. With their assistance, OJEN's friends and supporters made our anniversary year a great success by surpassing our fundraising goal. Thanks to everyone for your wonderful generosity!

As a founding Director, I am proud of the enormous impact OJEN has had. I applaud the commitment of OJEN's talented staff members and thousands of justice sector participants who have enthusiastically participated in dozens of programs for hundreds of thousands of young people. I thank the many stakeholders who contributed to the 20th anniversary fundraising campaign. I congratulate OJEN on its strategic plan for 2023 to 2026 that demonstrates ongoing commitment to engage increasingly diverse youth to have candid conversations about the legal system and its challenges and to have informed dialogue about how to work towards a more responsive and inclusive legal system.

**The Honourable Fran Kiteley**

## *20th anniversary donor wall*

Special thanks to OJEN's 20th Anniversary donors! For 20 years we have created justice education initiatives that help young people better understand the justice system and manage the legal aspects of their lives. Thank you for helping us celebrate this milestone year!

### Champion – \$5,000 – \$15,000

John Adair Professional Corporation

### Advocate – \$1000 – \$4999

Inga Andriessen

Allan Hux

Frances Kiteley

Anne Molloy

Anonymous

### Family – \$250 – \$999

Mara Clarke

Patricia Hennessy

Paul Howard

Ari Kaplan

Margaret Ann Scott

### Supporter – \$100 – \$249

Hum Law Firm

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Rosemarie Juginovic

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Robert Mewhinney

Katrina Mulligan

Joshua Patlik

Geoff Pollock

Lois Roberts

Isabel Rodriguez

Anonymous

### Friend – \$20 – \$99

Kevin Feheley

Jonathan Geiger

Jan Haskings-Winner

Jean-Frederic Hubsch

Kris Kozell

Caroline Law

Brian Lennox

Jay Passi

Scott Pearce

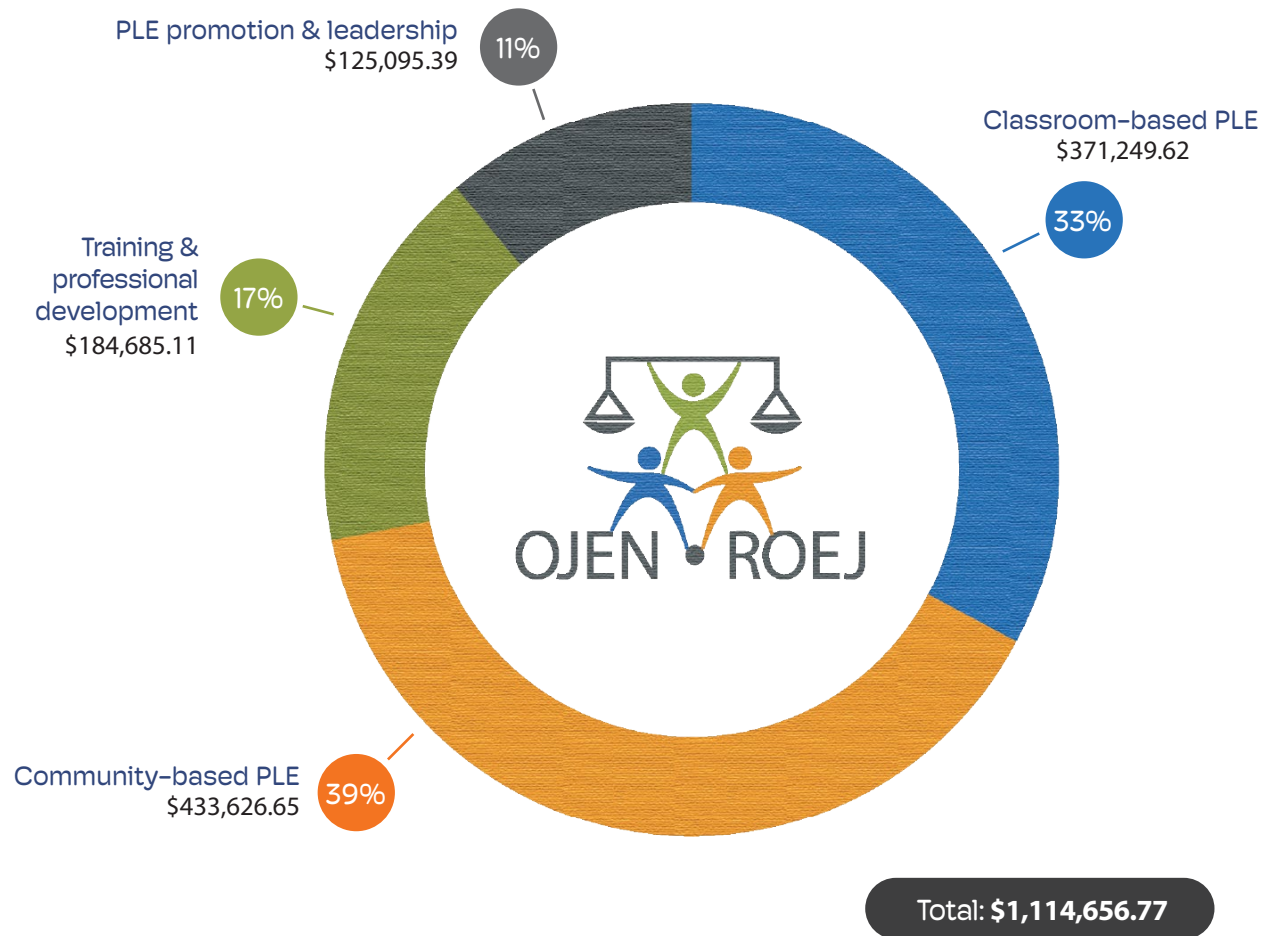
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# How we spent our funding in 2022



We are grateful for the generous support of the many individuals who have donated to OJEN throughout the past year. Special thanks to the Herbert family and friends who continue to support our activities with Tate's Tableaux.

## Funders

OJEN is funded by grants from: The Law Foundation of Ontario, the Ontario Trillium Foundation, Department of Justice Canada, Department of Canadian Heritage, the Ontario Bar Association, the Ontario Bar Association Foundation and Crime Prevention Ottawa.



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**Nat Paul**

Director of Educator Support (on leave)

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Director of Capacity Building and Engagement

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**Simone Bern**

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**Halime Celik**

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**Luis Filipe**

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