

President's Message

January 10, 2022

Local Equity Representatives

In the spring of 2021, the OPC District Recognition Policy was modified and approved by our Provincial Council, based on the recommendations of the EDI Advisory Committee and Provincial Executive, to create the position of an Equity Representative to serve on each local District Executive. This position confirms our ongoing commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion entrenched in our structure and actions, and aligns with our [Strategic Plan](#) and the recommendations from the [OPC Member Census Report](#). In December 2021, the first meetings for this group were held, and we are looking forward to supporting them as they work within each local Executive. We're also pleased to be able to invite this group to attend our next Provincial Council meeting and look forward to their participation.

Positive Results for our Advocacy Efforts

Following the advocacy efforts of the three provincial P/VP associations, we are pleased that the government and the OTF have agreed to [extend the number of days some retirees can work](#) without pension penalty from 50 to 95. This will help efforts to fill in gaps caused by ongoing staff shortages. We are also pleased that the government is now setting up additional clinics to ensure educators are able to [access their booster shots on a priority basis](#). We will continue to bring your issues and concerns to the ministry's attention in an effort to address the challenges you continue to face on a daily basis.

Robyne Hanley-Dafoe Presentation

We have engaged Dr. Robyne Hanley-Dafoe, Expert on Resiliency and Workplace Wellness, to present on **February 4, 2022, at 9:00 a.m. EST**. This opportunity [will also be open to all Members](#), and it will be recorded and shared with those who are registered to attend - for a limited time. Dr. Hanley-Dafoe's presentation, **Hope-Forward: Steadying Our Steps After a Challenging Season**, will explore her conceptual framework for re-entry readiness that is based on the principles of psychological safety, resiliency and productivity with purpose.

New Offerings from Starling Minds

To help support our Members' mental health, Starling Minds will be launching weekly live drop-in sessions to help build mindfulness. They will start on Monday January 17th and run weekly. The sessions include [Pattern Recognition Mondays](#), to identify and recognize key patterns impacting your mental health and how to better manage them; [Wellness Wednesdays](#), to gain a deeper understanding of how breath work and meditation can be used as powerful tools to balance your energy and ground you; and [Assertiveness Thursdays](#), learning how to create more assertive thoughts to better coach yourself and set goals. We encourage you to [sign up for](#)

[Starling Minds](#) to take part in these and other mental health initiatives. The program is available to Members, Supervisory Officers who are Associates of the OPC and your families, as part of your OPC membership or associate fees.

Media

- [Frustrations rise as schools close, classes go online](#)
- [Ontario to stop collecting case numbers from school boards](#)
- [High schools could re-open first due to higher immunization levels](#)
- [Why the flip flop on opening schools?](#)
- [Weary parents, students grapple with going back online](#)
- [Premier urges teachers to get boosters](#)
- [How do we ensure kids get back to class?](#)

Queen's Park

The House is in recess until February 22.