



ONTARIO COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

ANGELA HENSHILWOOD, PRESIDENT

OCULA

2021 OCULA Membership: 337

Despite another difficult year, I am grateful to be able to write another president's message! As you know, OCULA Council members agreed to stay on for an additional year due to the pandemic and I feel fortunate to have had the extra time with our wonderful group.

As I write this, we are in the midst of a fifth wave including increased restrictions, school closures, and record high COVID-19 numbers. The stress and strain of the pandemic was the impetus for the theme of our OCULA Conference that we were able to host: *Switching Gears: Finding Time to Check In and Check Out*. It was an amazing day filled with sessions designed to help OCULA members reflect, recharge, take stock of the difficult times we are enduring, and acknowledge how the pandemic has highlighted the inequities in our society. As the conference description said: "We must... take time to acknowledge and validate this year of hardship, and the difficult labour of keeping well". While several council members contributed to the planning, a special shout-out goes to Aliya Dalfen who came up with the idea and took on much of the organization. Thank you also to Michelle Arbuckle, Destiny Laldeo and all the OLA staff who made the day possible.

The 2021 Super Conference was also a great success and while most attendees missed seeing colleagues and friends in person, the conference planning committee and OLA staff did an amazing job making the virtual experience just as fulfilling. I want to thank the OCULA conference planners, Andrew Colgoni and Mikayla Redden, who both also stayed on for an additional year, for planning the academic library stream. It's always a pleasure to learn from colleagues and Andrew and Mikayla selected talks that highlighted the major trends and interests of the academic library world. The OCULA Spotlight Speaker, author Angela Misri, gave an engaging presentation and led a lively discussion on issues related to social justice and social media platforms. I am sure this Super Conference will be just as thought-provoking and stimulating.

OCULA's recently formed Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Committee continues its excellent work. In regular

meetings, the group grapples with the difficult questions around race, equity and social justice in academic librarianship. After hosting the two open conversations for OCULA membership last year, the committee is working on a regular speaker series or webinar series so that our members can continue to learn and take practical steps to make libraries more equitable for library staff and users. I want to thank Heather Buchansky and Melanie Mills for their wonderful leadership of this group and I look forward to continuing to be a member even as I transition into a new role on Council.

Since this will be my final message as president, I want to take this opportunity to say a huge thank-you to all the current members of OCULA Council. It has been a pleasure to get to work with you and I look forward to continuing our connection and making a point of working together again in the future. I especially want to acknowledge and thank our outgoing OCULA Council members, Abeer Siddiqui and Aliya Delfan. You are a dream team and bright lights for all who work with you. Thank you for your dedication and effort in all you did for OCULA. Also, I want to thank Zack Osborne for being a wonderful VP! You are a gifted leader and OCULA Council is very fortunate to have you at the helm. Finally, thank you to our members for your engagement and continued support. I see your commitment to making our academic libraries safe and equitable spaces for everyone and I know we will get there one day soon because of all of you!