



ONTARIO COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

ZACHARY OSBORNE, PRESIDENT

OCULA

2022 OCULA Membership: 474

2022 was another year of taxing yet familiar challenges with COVID-19 as we persevered through an ongoing pandemic and adapted our work and lives to a fluctuating “new normal”. I am very pleased to conclude my OCULA Presidency with a positive message outlining many proud accomplishments, successes in collaboration, and my profound gratitude.

In my [summer President's message](#) I wrote about “slow library culture”, and its influence on my vision for OCULA in 2022. The slow movement “is a process, not a destination; it is an orientation towards our work, ourselves, and others that create positive change [...] it is an organizational philosophy that supports workers and builds stronger relationships with our communities”. This resonated with me for a variety of reasons, but centrally for its premise of prioritizing maintenance over innovation.

As a result, in 2022 OCULA Council set out to examine maintenance and identify improvements for OCULA's web presence, member engagement, the equity of its awards processes, and developing a community of practice for EDI initiatives. The important work undertaken on the OCULA website sought to make practical changes to webpage content to better reflect the current and future operations of OCULA, review community and professional resources, and remove outdated information and clutter. Council members also initiated project planning for a membership engagement drive, to better understand member needs and interests from OCULA; stay tuned for its implementation in 2023! Another valuable exercise by Council was a long-overdue review of its awards processes. With an equity lens, Council members examined the nomination criterion and evaluation rubrics to assess where barriers to access exist, and then made changes to both processes for fairness, equity, and to enable higher volume and greater diversity of award nominations. A final maintenance piece for OCULA Council was work to further establish the EDI Community of Practice, through formalizing its operations, working groups, web presence, programming and events. Look forward to more from the OCULA EDI Working Group in 2023!

Another proud accomplishment for OCULA Council and the broader library community was the hugely successful OCULA Spring Conference “Neurodiversity in the Library: Building Better for Staff and Students”. The event was held virtually on May 19, 2022, and it explored how libraries can provide welcoming, accessible, and inclusive spaces and services for neurodivergent community members, as well as supportive work environments and professional development opportunities for library staff. The program featured keynotes by Kay Sargent and Dr. Devon Price, panelists of library workers and students with neurodivergent lived experiences, and lightning talks aimed to draw awareness and propose solutions to ways of improving the environment for everyone; to reimagine working conditions, physical and virtual spaces, and the provision of library services and programming. In building this conference, planners sought to centre the lived experiences of people who are neurodivergent. These conversations aimed to de-stigmatize and normalize neurodiversity, and to discuss barriers to equitable and inclusive practices which exist in our environments. Nearly 200 attendees participated in the event, making it the most successful Spring Conference in history. Thank you to all who helped organize this event, and to the speakers and attendees.

Finally I wish to thank the OCULA Council members for their time, commitment, enthusiasm, and collaboration in undertaking many successful projects in 2022. In particular I wish to express my deep gratitude for outgoing Past-President Angela Henshilwood, Secretary Heather Buchansky, and Treasurer Natalie Colaiacovo. I have learned so much from these incredible women, and I'm grateful for their extended commitment to OCULA Council beyond their original terms due to the pandemic. They have been inspirational to me as leaders, collaborators, and colleagues, and they will certainly be missed by all remaining Council members. With that said, I'm also thrilled to continue on Council as OCULA Past-President with Graham Lavender as the new OCULA President. We look forward to your leadership, and the great things to come for the university and college library community in 2023.