

FALL NEWSLETTER

# Queen's Health Outreach



*A vision of healthy and resilient communities built by youth driven to lead conversations about health and well-being.*



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# A LETTER FROM OUR CO-DIRECTORS

As our organization enters a new academic year, we are still working within the re-envisioning direction that began during the COVID-19 Pandemic. QHO has made immense progress in this direction and we see a new level of normalcy returning to our pre-COVID organizational structure and functioning. The process has not been easy, but as an organization we continue to uphold QHO's mission and values throughout all the decisions we make and actions we perform.

We began our year strong by hiring 14 Kingston Peer Educators, who have been successfully running in-person workshops for youth in the Kingston community since October. As Co-Ds, we spent the first two months of fall considering the actuality of travel for our initiatives that are currently in the repiloting process: Guyana and Northern. With review and feedback from our Advisory Committee, Guyana will aim to travel in May of 2024. Along with our Guyana Initiative Directors, two Guyana Pilot Interns have been hired to plan and execute an initiative in Guyana this Spring. Our Northern initiative is not running in-person this year. That being said, we have hired three Northern Pilot Interns in order to assist our Northern Initiative Directors in repiloting our work in new communities. We additionally hired fiscal and public relations interns that work to support their respective directors with various projects.

As repiloting takes place, we have a number of goals focused on assisting a smooth transition in the return to traveling for initiatives. Our Strategic Planning (SP) team is working to implement a new, comprehensive pre-departure training program to ensure all IDs/Pis are well prepared to return to travel in the wake of COVID-19, where we no longer have any current QHO members with travel experience. Additionally, the SP team is working to re-structure and improve the needs-assessment and evaluation tools as we prepare to repilot the Northern & Guyana initiatives. This will help to ensure that we are meeting all of our goals and working within QHO's values when developing new plans for conducting initiatives. With a return to traveling, there is a need to begin implementing fundraisers, which had been suspended due to COVID-19 restricting our ability to travel. We are also working to redevelop an accessibility policy and implement training for PE/Pis to ensure that all individuals have equitable access to the health information and workshops within our partner communities. Our policy coordinators are also working to develop a PE manual with comprehensive youth interaction policies, including: uniforms, harassment, transportation, media, and incident/accident reporting procedures.

As we look ahead to the rest of the year, we are very excited to see the progress made in repiloting our Guyana and Northern initiatives. We look forward to a year that involves many more events that will allow for critical discussions as an organization including our mid-year retreat and more organization-wide socials. We plan for a year of continual improvement and reflection that will bring forth many new opportunities for our members and partner communities.

All the QHO love,

*Miller Lee & Kylie Bertrim*

General Co-Directors 2023-2024



# LOGISTICS

During the fall term, Logistics has primarily focused on reorganizing the administrative aspect of QHO, such as sorting out the PI, PE, and intern signed contracts, keeping track of the executive team's attendance, and monitoring QHO's mail. Furthermore, QHO had its first on-campus fundraiser this year with an exciting bake sale that happened this December. Logistics took care of all the forms behind the bake sale to ensure that our event followed all the community and on-campus guidelines!

*Anna Ishechuk*

Logistics Director



# STRATEGIC PLANNING

In light of repiloting, the Strategic Planning (SP) Pod has done a lot of work to prepare QHO to return to travel initiative locations. With no current initiative alumni present on our executive team, SP has been developing a Pre-Departure Training Manual to help guide the Initiative Directors and Education Pod to lead pre-departure training for peer educators and pilot interns. This manual covers important topics such as cultural sensitivity, risk management, socio-political context, and logistics. The training will be conducted through modules, pod activities, and an in-person boot camp with leading professors to best prepare our members for an in-person initiative. Additionally, the SP pod has been working on updating the strategic planning toolkit to better fit repiloting and piloting in new locations, such as Curaçao. This includes the Needs assessment process, Evaluation Framework, and Initiative Models. It is expected that the toolkit and Pre-Departure Training Manual to be completed by the end of this semester. The SP Pod has also been involved in the education of new QHO members, presenting at Crash Course and working with initiative directors to explain the updated tools and implement feedback.

*Wendy Li*

Strategic Planning Director



# STRATEGIC PLANNING

QHO is committed to establishing an institutional memory of all initiative locations and ensuring the information about each initiative is available to all community partners and donors. The Research Coordinator works alongside the rest of the Strategic Planning pod to evaluate QHO's efforts to improve the sustainability of all initiatives through establishing an institutional memory for QHO. This term, the Research Coordinator has been reading through past initiative report binders, primarily Guyana, and summarizing the key information throughout into organized documents. The plan is to take this information and compile summary tables and reports, as well as infographics, to effectively distribute this information and share with QHO, community partners, donors, and the general public. Additionally, the Research Coordinator has updated the website, such as creating a new section containing information about past initiatives that have now closed and updating the "Executive Team" page. Going forward for the rest of the year, the Research Coordinator will collaborate with PR, marketing, and the Co-Directors to update the website in any way necessary.

*Griffin Leveque*

Research Coordinator



Queen's Health Outreach is dedicated to navigating challenges with professionalism to ensure youth wellbeing during our health-promoting initiatives. As such, the Policy Coordinators have been working hard to develop a manual to help peer educators and pilot interns understand their roles and responsibilities as well as to work through challenging situations that may arise. This manual will include QHO policies pertaining to various topics (e.g., media, harassment, incidents/accidents, etc.), situational examples and solutions, documentation strategies, and other useful information. This manual will be implemented as our initiatives are re-piloted.

*Leah Ramsey and Avery McGinnis*

Policy Coordinators



QHO is committed to monitoring the progress and effectiveness of our Initiatives, ensuring that each member fulfills their specific role in alignment with QHO's vision and mission. This semester, the Monitoring and Evaluation coordinator conducted debrief calls with past Kingston Peer Educators, Northern and Guyana Pilot Interns, allowing them to share their past experiences and feedback. Following these debrief calls, the M&E coordinator worked on summarizing the responses. The goal was to distill the key takeaways and identify areas where we could make improvements. The summarized feedback was then presented to the executive team, allowing them to gain a comprehensive understanding of the insights shared by our team members.

*Cecile Woo*

Monitoring & Evaluations Coordinator



# A LOCAL LENS: KINGSTON INITIATIVE

The Kingston Initiative consists of 14 Peer Educators (PEs) trained in facilitating open discussion and health-related workshops with youth. In pairs, PEs are assigned a classroom for the year to deliver interactive, needs-based workshops to on a weekly basis. Overall, PE-led sessions serve as extensions of the traditional health curriculum and strive to establish peer-to-peer relationships while empowering students with the tools they need to make informed health decisions. The initiative gathers internally each week to share workshop experiences and insights.

As an initiative, the Kingston Initiative is currently partnered with 7 different classrooms in the Kingston community. This year, our team is working with teachers and classrooms at Lancaster Drive Public School, Polson Park Public School, Loyalist Collegiate and Vocational Institute (LCVI), and JR Henderson Public School.

*Abbey McCreery & Salony Sharma*

Kingston Initiative Directors



# A LOCAL LENS: KINGSTON OUTREACH

This fall, we have been able to reconnect with partners from previous years to steadily organize workshops within the Kingston community, specifically at the Kingston Boys and Girls Club and with Beyond the Classroom. We are working on establishing a QHO club in a local public school with the goal to promote positive and open health based discussions among youth. As well, we are in the works of organizing a community event for all ages to take place in the new year.

*Dianna Tedesco*

Kingston Outreach Coordinator



# REPILOTING PROCESS – NORTHERN

Over the summer, we attempted to reconnect with previous partners in Northern Canada but did not receive any interest. This led to us reflecting on the previous structure of the Northern Initiative during the fall semester. With guidance from the advisory board, we have decided to restructure the Northern Initiative. Our goal is to focus on the sustainability of QHO in northern communities. To do this, we are hoping to connect with post-secondary institutions who may be interested in starting a program similar to the Kingston initiative in their own communities. This would eventually lead to the club being able to run without our support.

With the help of our three Pilot Interns, we are working on a Needs Assessment for Northern Canada to guide us through the next steps of repiloting. Moving into the winter semester, we look to establish strong communication with community partners whilst ensuring that we are communicating in an ethical and culturally sensitive way. We look forward to connecting with Four Directions to achieve this.

We are excited to see this new model of the Northern Initiative come together this year!

*Aamirya Sidhu & Victoria Taylor*

Northern Initiative Directors



# REPILOTING PROCESS – GUYANA

This semester we have continued to strengthen our partnership with the University of Guyana as we prepare to relaunch QHO's Guyana initiative this May. We have worked hard to increase interest and awareness of QHO's projects amongst the various clubs at UofG, holding multiple information sessions throughout November. These efforts have proven beneficial and we've successfully created a team of ten students at the UofG who are enthusiastic to share their ideas and collaborate with us throughout the re-piloting process. Through this partnership, we aim to create a more sustainable initiative, utilizing the students at UofG as peer educators, allowing in-class health workshops to run independently in Guyana throughout the school year. We had our first meeting with our UofG team and are in the process of completing a needs assessment to identify the main targets of our initiative. Our goals for the winter semester include building community partnership, logistics planning, pre-departure training, and fundraising, with the intention of visiting Guyana and our partnered student team for one to two weeks in May. We are excited to continue working with the University of Guyana and look forward to making a positive impact in the community.

*Alexa Dodds and Isabella Wong*

Guyana Initiative Directors



# EDUCATION

This semester, I have been working hard as the Education Director at helping our Peer Educators and Pilot Interns thrive in their new roles. I helped organize a crash course for our Kingston PE's and Guyana and Northern PI's that involved an introduction to QHO, expectations of a peer educator, understanding our privilege and voluntourism. Alayna and I successfully carried out an education session, and are currently planning two more for this semester. We were extremely fortunate to welcome Dr. Jennifer Carpenter to discuss voluntourism, positionality and pre departure training. Our next session will welcome Rebecca Rappeport from the Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Services to our second session. She will discuss consent, intersectionality and how it relates to sexual violence, and disclosure. Our third session will be a workshop with Alyssa Grimes from Revved Up who will discuss how to make our workshops accessible to students of all abilities!

I am also working on planning our QHO-wide retreat and education sessions for the winter. I am very excited to focus on repiloting our traveling initiatives and discussing QHO's direction as a whole at our retreat, while also focusing on team building!

*Grace Quinn*

Education Director



I have been working alongside Grace, the education director, to plan and facilitate workshops for our Peer Educators. We have successfully ran crash course to introduce them to QHO and help prepare them for their roles. We also hosted our first education session where Dr. Jenn Carpenter talked about the importance of pre-departure training. In our second education session, Rebecca Rappeport from the Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Services will be facilitating a workshop on consent and healthy relationships. Our third education session will be presented by Alyssa Grimes who will be discussing the importance of inclusivity. We have also started planning our QHO wide retreat that will happen in January. We are looking forward to have everyone come together to reflect on QHO's values and become closer as a club!

*Alayna Cusimano*

Education Coordinator



# QHO ON CAMPUS

In my role as the Public Relations Director, my responsibilities have spanned various aspects of enhancing our organization's presence online and on campus. At the start of the semester, collaborating with the Marketing and Campus Outreach Coordinators, we successfully promoted and filled key positions, including hiring a PR intern with valuable media and advertising skills. Further, together with our merchandise provider I designed and coordinated a number of garments with the QHO logo for the members of our organization. Lastly, I continue to work with the Fundraising Coordinator and members of the PR pod to establish partnerships for upcoming events, contributing to QHO's growth and success.

*Zoey Smith*

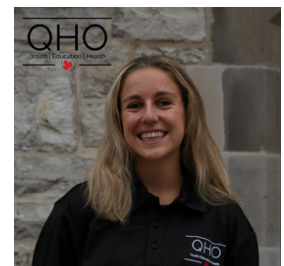
Public Relations Director



As marketing coordinator, I have completed several tasks over the course of the fall semester. In September, my priority was promoting Peer Educator and Intern hiring on our Instagram, as well as promoting the various club fairs we participated in, such as Queen's in the Park. I also worked alongside the Campus Outreach Coordinators and the PR Director to conduct interviews and hire a PR intern. As the semester progressed, I worked closely with our Campus Outreach Coordinators to promote their episodes of QHOnAir, as well as with our Fundraising Director to promote our bake sale and raffle. In November, I coordinated headshots with all of our executive members and newly hired Peer Educators and Interns. Last, I worked alongside our Research Coordinator to get our new headshots updated to the website!

*Paige Gascho*

Marketing Coordinator



This past semester, we have been working on raising awareness for Queen's Health Outreach through various promotional opportunities. This includes setting up booths at events such as Queens in the Park and Tricolour Open House. Additionally, we are hoping to organize some fun collaborations to raise money and educate others on everything QHO has to offer. Our goal is to have a bake sale before exams in the arc.

We have been spending a lot of time working on our podcast, QHOnAir. We interviewed Graham Oswald from Big Brothers Big Sisters to learn more about mentorship and its benefits for mental, social, and physical health. Graham took us through the programs BBBS offers and explained how to get involved! We also talked to Amanda Cunningham from Revved Up, an organization that supports physical activity opportunities for individuals with physical and developmental disabilities. Amanda shared her insight into the Revved Up gym and all the amazing achievements they have made. We are working on finding our next guest!

*Victoria Koczynasz & Orli Rich*

Campus Outreach Coordinators





The fall 2024 semester began with setting up all financial logistics, including the bank account, signing authority, reimbursement request form, budget plans, and more. Through transitional operations such as transferring the bank signing authority, initiating the bank account and setting up funds in saving plans, lessons were learned and knowledge regarding day-to-day bank-related operations were gained. Other regular procedures have also been set-up, including reimbursement and transaction-tracking forms. These forms are currently used by QHO members and/or actively updated (on a weekly basis) by me to ensure transparency and consistency. With Guyana operations expected to make a return after the long hiatus of COVID, budgeting needs to be done accordingly. I have done some preliminary search into trip-associated costs and have used budgeting sheets from pre-COVID years as reference, but more extensive planning will be done closer to the trip. Other procedures were done on a per-request basis, such as creating financial aid and/or bursary forms for different occasions. I will continue to monitor associated request forms and discuss with the co-directors to provide these aids. In the upcoming few weeks, a deposit will be sent for our QHO retreat next year. Reimbursements will continue to be sent no more than a week from when they are requested.

*Joy Cheung*

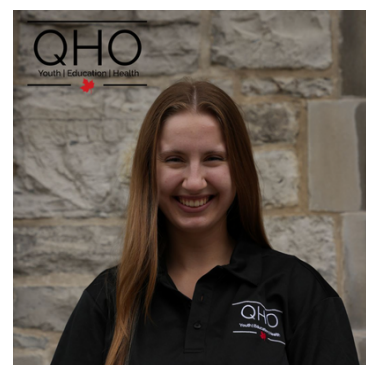
Finance Director



We have been working on planning both fundraising and community engaging events for our organization. We are also trying to work more with other health based clubs at Queen's next semester.

*Sarah Hopkins*

Fundraising Coordinator



# DONATE

To ensure the continued success of our initiatives in Kingston, Northern Canada and Guyana, Queen's Health Outreach (QHO) depends in large part on financial support from individuals and organizations (both public and private sector). Although QHO hosts a variety of fundraising events throughout the school year, charitable donations are critical to the viability of our organization. As such, we welcome and greatly appreciate financial contributions of all kind.

If you would like to donate, here are some options for you to consider

## **OPTION 1: ONLINE DONATION**

Visit our website [www.qho.ca/donate](http://www.qho.ca/donate)

## **OPTION 2: CHEQUE**

Send a cheque payable to:

Queen's Health Outreach  
Registered Charitable Organization #889124798  
P.O. Box 2045  
Kingston, ON - K7L 5J8

## **OPTION 3: CONTACT**

Contact the sponsorship director at [sponsorship@qho.ca](mailto:sponsorship@qho.ca) for more information on how you can donate to a specific initiative.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!**

