



# fall 2021 updates

Volume 4 - Issue 1



## A MESSAGE FROM OUR CO-DIRECTORS

During a tumultuous year and a half of the COVID-19 pandemic, QHO has stayed strong in its mission and vision. The members of this organization have only worked harder to make QHO better and more effective in the face of uncertainty and we could not be more excited about the people and the projects making up the organization this year. After a busy start to the year with virtual orientation week and social media promotion, we hired a total of five interns and 18 Peer Educators and ran a PE Crash Course to introduce them to everything QHO and get them started on their training. Training will continue with bi-weekly Education sessions already underway. The Kingston Peer Educators have already started to run virtual health workshops with partner classrooms in Kingston, and the Guyana

and Northern Peer Educators are in full swing with cultural sensitivity training and virtual initiative preparation. These two Initiatives are set to begin virtual programming in January. We have made the decision not to hire Belize Peer Educators this year so as to allow our Belize Initiative Directors to focus on developing, exploring and critically re-evaluating our partnerships in our partner communities.

One project of note to highlight this semester is the QHO Youth-Led Health Initiative Grant. Our Sponsorship team has been hard at work implementing the beginnings of this community-based project and we are very excited to collaborate with youth in Fort Providence and see what comes of this pilot! In addition, back in Kingston another project of note is the QHO Affiliated Health Outreach Club. Currently in the works for the winter semester, this project will aim to establish a youth-led high school club focused on promoting health conversations within students' own school. We are looking forward to the next steps of this pilot project as we continue to lay down the groundwork with our community partners in the coming weeks. For all of the challenges that QHO has been faced with in the past two years, we are thoroughly impressed with the resilience of the organization and everyone on the team. We are so thankful for our executive members this year who, despite having to continue working virtually for a second year in a row, have not faltered in their passion and dedication to the organization. Although we remain virtual for the time being, we are hopeful that we might finally be able to get the team together in person next semester as public health regulations begin to loosen!

All the QHO love,

*Isabelle Strang & Emma Schotanus*

General Co-Directors 2021-22

## WHO WE ARE

Queen's Health Outreach is a student run registered charity based on the campus of Queen's University in Kingston, ON. Our goal is to facilitate needs-based, peer-to-peer health discussions surrounding topics of mental, sexual, and physical health locally, nationally, and internationally. QHO was founded by a group of medical students in 1987, as Queen's Medical Aid.

As QHO has expanded over the years, our mandate has shifted from providing clinical services to the establishment of health education initiatives, collaborating with communities to work towards sustainable opportunities for youth engagement, leadership, and health conversations.



[www.qho.ca](http://www.qho.ca)



Queen's Health Outreach



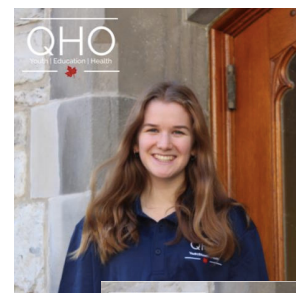
@qhealthoutreach



[codirectors@qho.ca](mailto:codirectors@qho.ca)

# Belize Initiative

Written by: Rachel Green & Evelyn Widner  
Belize Initiative Directors



This year, the Belize Initiative has been hard at work communicating with community partners and brainstorming future projects! During the pandemic, the education system in Belize has been greatly impacted and has resulted in multiple barriers preventing students from gaining access to educational resources. In October, we had a meeting with the education officer from the Belize Ministry of Education and they gave us great insight into future QHO endeavours in the community, and better awareness of the pressing concerns in Belize. We are currently working to develop accessible and interactive live sessions with students through online platforms to answer questions, facilitate conversation and promote healthy behaviours. We are so excited for what the rest of the year has to offer!

Live Laugh Belize!

# Kingston Initiative

Written by: Nicole Coman & Kathryn Macrae  
Kingston Initiative Directors



This year we have hired 10 amazing PE's that we are super excited to work with! So far, the Kingston Initiative has attended two crash course sessions, and have had about 2 initiative meetings as a team! In these meetings we have gotten to know each other, learn about QHO, and work on practice lessons for the upcoming school year!

Our plans for the year are to work with our partners to create sustainable discussions surrounding health topics relating to the health curriculums of elementary schools in Kingston. Our partners this year include Polson Elementary School, Lancaster Elementary School, Central Public School, James R. Henderson Public School, and the School to Community program at LCVI.

We are excited to get our PE's in the classroom and are looking forward to our own initiative collaborations with the Northern PE's for the pen-pals program and with Kingston Outreach!

# Guyana Initiative

Written by: Sydney Hutchinson & Ingrid Chen  
Guyana Initiative Directors

The Guyana Initiative is back with our second virtual initiative! This year, we are continuing our ongoing partnership with Service to Humanity as our primary contact in Berbice, facilitating health discussions through Zoom workshops and social media graphics on Facebook. In our Community Needs Assessment call with Ryan and Shanta (STH), we gained insight on the current COVID-19 situation in Guyana and assessed the feasibility of partnering with the Faculty of Education at the University of Guyana through Ryan's connections.

We strive to reach a wider audience in the Berbice community this year by making use of their most popular social media platforms. For WhatsApp, Ryan proposed we make a group chat with other NGOs and community members to share health resources directly, and for TikTok, we are exploring the idea of a joined QHOxSTH account.

In October, we hired four incredible Peer Educators. Through the first semester, we focused on training relevant skills and topics to use once we officially start our virtual initiative in January 2022. PEs had the opportunity to present their cultural sensitivity topics for Part A of the Needs Assessment, such as the education system, mental health-related rates, social norms, etc. In addition, they also developed practical skills, such as completing a practice lesson in Education, using Canva to create graphics, and making a workshop outline.

We will continue to foster new and existing partnerships for the rest of the 2021-2022 year, such as the Guyana Foundation and Humanitarian Mission Guyana.

We are excited to see our PEs continue to grow and make the Guyana Initiative their own, while simultaneously upholding QHO principles!



# Northern Canada Initiative

Written by: Miriam Muirhead, Mia Sheehan, & Paige Gascho  
Northern Initiative Directors

This year, the Northern Canada is partnering with with Fort Providence Youth Council and Webique Simon Jacob Memorial Centre. As well, we are currently piloting the QHO Grant in Fort Providence along side the sponsorship and partnership team. Through this initiative, we are planning to facilitate a mentorship program to assist the older Youth Council in running their own health-based event.

This semester, we hired four Peer Educators this year- Varun, Maddie, Kaitlyn, Sawyer. We have also finalized community partnerships for our initiative this year and came up with a virtual QHO plan. As well, we are brainstorming other ways we can sustainably support the communities. Finally, we conducted a community needs-assessment with Niroja in Fort Providence.

In the new year, we are going to continue to educate PE's and ourselves about Indigenous culture, terminology and cultural sensitivity. We will also fill out Needs Assessment with our community partners in Webequie. We are looking forward to carrying out the grant and have meetings with the youth to brainstorm and plan the events. Finally, we will be facilitating online workshops, ideally via Zoom, for both locations.



## QHO Grant Pilot

Written by: Tatum O'Reilly & Kylie Bertrim  
Sponsorship Coordinators

QHO is implementing a new pilot project, The QHO Youth-Led Initiative Grant, in Fort Providence, Northwest Territories this fall. The purpose of this grant is to promote the creation of a youth-led, health-related initiative which cultivates engagement in our partner communities. Our team has met multiple times with the Youth Engagement Coordinator at the Youth Council and the youth themselves to put this project in motion and it has picked up quickly! Thus far, the grant has been a success in Fort Providence and QHO is looking forward to implementing the grant in our other partnering communities in the months to come!

# QHO on Campus

Written by: Gabriella Ripstein & Hila Shnitzer  
Campus Outreach Coordinators

The past few months have been very busy for the Campus Outreach team as we have worked to get our podcast back up and running as well as plan and hold meaningful events for our Queen's community.

We held a wonderful workout class event where we invited Queen's students to learn about the benefits of physical activity as well as participate in a fun full-body strength class. We had a wonderful turnout and look forward to holding more events like this in the future. In the next month, we are hoping to hold another event for our Queen's students centred on wellness during exam preparation - stay tuned for more updates regarding this event.

We are also so excited to share that we published another new episode of QHO's podcast, QHOnAir. This first episode takes listeners on a journey through the involvement of QHO's Co-Directors throughout the years as well as their goals and hopes for the future. If you have not yet listened to the podcast, it can be found on Spotify or Apple Music unearh QHOnAir name. We are looking forward to producing more episodes in the months to come.

Overall, we have had a great start to the school year and are excited to share new events as they come!



## *Listen Up!*

The QHOnAir podcast is for all those who are interested in health, global health, global development, ethical engagement and education. It aims to give listeners insight into what types of discussions our organization has on a regular basis. Listen to learn about all things QHO as well as hear from guest experts on health themes surrounding mental, sexual, and physical health.



Spotify Podcasts



Apple Podcasts

