



**Ontario Society of Senior Citizens Organizations**  
*La Société des Organisations des Citoyens Aînés de l'Ontario*



# **OUTREACH**

**Annual Report Edition**

**April 2019-March 2020**

### **A Message from the Chair and Executive Director**

Dear Friends,

Our board was entering its last year of its Strategic Plan which outlined our role and purpose: As a network of organizations, OSSCO enables Ontario's aging population to enhance their quality of life through education, consultation and influencing policy makers. OSSCO's annual *Premier Senior's Conference and Information Fair* had the largest number of exhibitors and program registrants ever.

Our staff held a planning retreat to build on the educational momentum. Our next step would be to become a Learning Hub. Educational program partners were being reviewed to become OSSCO's Regional Learning Hubs, removing barriers to access learning for seniors. It was unimaginable that in the last quarter, an unknown "flu" called COVID-19 put a halt to all of OSSCO's activities.

We worked on three grants this year. OSSCO's *Step Up to Elder Abuse* project was nearing completed when COVID-19 happened. Another program called, Get Set to Reconnect funded by the Province of Ontario's Seniors Community grant is a four part learning series to help older people regain or learn social networking skills, also stopped due to COVID-19. The Ontario Trillium Foundation grant was in its second year, when we had a change in partners. We were pleased that Times Change Women joined onto the project as we welcomed a new 5th regional partner, YMCA Markham.

When the State of Emergency was declared, everything came to a halt. Everyone's hard work was shelved and in class learning programs cancelled indefinitely. The last few weeks of March saw our staff reaching out to seniors' to see how they fared in this pandemic and creating TeleLearning programs in response help sufficiently.

Our **Outreach Annual Report Edition**, highlights OSSCO's achievements and pro-active work supported at both the provincial and federal levels. We are proud of the contributions each and every board member has made. We would like to acknowledge their efforts and thank outgoing Board of Directors - Megan McElwain and Shesan Govindasamy - as well as members whose terms ended in November - Larry Duffield, Evelyn Theriault, and Claude Hould. Outgoing board member Ghazy Mujahid continues on as Advisor to the Board. We could not have accomplished as much as we did without the dedication and commitment of our staff - Margaret Mathur, Jean Raymond Soulodre, Stacy Chung, Daren Dandie, Nghy Nyugen, Susan McDougall and summer intern Monica Steiger as well as our many volunteers and program contributors.

Subhash Rai  
Chair

Elizabeth Nykorowysch Macnab  
Executive Director

**Ontario Society of Senior Citizens Organizations'  
Volunteers and Program Contributors**

**Board of Directors**

Mark Adler  
Claude Hould  
Megan McElwain  
Ghazy Mujahid  
Shaukat Rizvi  
Valerie Smith-Waines  
Mohan Viswan

Larry Duffield  
Shesan Govindasamy  
Sharon Mooney  
Subhash Rai  
Ken Schafer  
Evelyn Theriault  
Ellen Yachnin

**Training Program Consultants**

Sara Abdolvahabi  
Ami Au-Yeung  
Richard Bourdeau  
Maziar Hassanzadeh  
Noreen Horowitz  
Susan Lutz  
Tracey McGruthers  
Brenda Quaile  
Curt Skene

Samantha Adebeyi  
Caroline Bourdeau  
Gerald Gauthier  
Jill Holliday  
Adina Lebo  
Katherine G. MacRae  
Colin McClean  
Patti Shevlin

**Program Volunteers**

Naima Akter  
Mary Allen Armiento  
Aggie Jenkinson  
Margariet Langley  
Loy Manning  
Ismay Murray  
Ghazy Mujahid  
Valda Russell  
Anna Zachariah

Grace Arnedo  
Pam Hope  
Jamie Lynn-Parker  
Mawora Lewis  
Rodelita Maturingam  
Lisa Mudie  
Pam Reynolds  
Michelle Wilson

### Program Contributors: Individuals

Tammy Adams  
Gary Banks  
Phyllis DePoe  
Nicky Guadagni  
Adina Lebo  
Jamie Lynn-Parker  
Natalie Mehra  
Stephanie Tan  
Michelle Wilson

Mary Allen Armiento  
Einat Danieli  
Dr. Deborah Nixon  
Claude Hould  
Lezlie Lee-Cam  
Dorothy Mazeau  
Jacob Milligan  
Jane Teasdale  
Anna Zachariah

### Program Contributors: Organizations

Advocacy for the Elderly  
Caregiver Collaborators' Forum  
Kuumba25, Harbourfront  
Ontario Health Coalition

Ahha Enterprise  
Carewatch  
North York Elder Abuse

**Total number of volunteer and contributor hours: 1487**



Volunteers giving out information bags  
at the 2019 Seniors Conference



Volunteer receiving  
information from an approved  
OSSCO Exhibitor

## **BOARD OF DIRECTOR REPORTS**

### **Finance Committee: Treasurer Mark Adler**

**Members: Larry Duffield, Mohan Viswan, Subhash Rai**

The auditing firm, Edwards Manning reviewed our finances. With the province removing the administrative tax, OSSCO received an additional \$32,000 which offset the revenue decline through early March. We have been successful during this fiscal year in obtaining two grants for educational programming. Funds of approximately \$150,000 continue to be earmarked for wellness workshops across the Province which includes computer training to adults 55+. Once the COVID-19 State of Emergency was declared OSSCO lost more than 30% of revenues in a two-week period. It is not anticipated that these monies will be recovered in 2020-2021.

### **Education & Research Committee: Chair, Ellen Yachnin**

**Members: Ghazy Mujahid, Sharon Mooney**

This Committee ensures that learning experiences take place in other communities. With a staff of 2.8 full time equivalents plus training consultants and volunteers, we delivered training programs in St. Catharines, London, Kingsville, Sault Ste Marie, Sudbury, Greater Toronto Area and various locations across Toronto. OSSCO's 2020 Education Plan was approved at the Board's January meeting. However, as COVID-19 happened, all in classroom training was suspended indefinitely. All programs will have to be re-developed to become virtual using Zoom or teleconference technology.

**Enhancing Economic Opportunities Project** . In April 2018, OSSCO received its three year grant application from Ontario Trillium Foundation. We thank the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) for funding this project, which is reviewed every six months to ensure project goals are achieved. In year two, OSSCO focused half of its organizational efforts on this project with the support of Educational Program Assistants Jean Raymond Soulodre and Margaret Mathur.

Three partner agencies (JobStart, COSTI Brampton, YMCA Whitby) continued on with our project from year one, and a new agency, Times Change Women, replaced Dixon Hall. An additional fifth partner (YMCA Markham) joined April 2019, and will continue through to year three.



**Photo:** YMCA Whitby Job Search Strategies Participants

The goal is to have 1718 participants access the program over a three year period. This year, 658 participants accessed the program, an increase of 40% over the previous year. As of this fiscal year, 13% found employment, up slightly which was 11% the previous year.



**Project Focus:** This project addresses the many challenges of finding employment by older workers. Our two-programs were designed to help people 50 to 70 gain new knowledge and skills of the job search process, to address their employability barriers and issues such as ageism, lack of Ontario experience, intergenerational recruiters and more. The two programs are delivered over a twelve week period. The components are: two full day job search strategies workshop and four and a half-day ENG (Employment Networking Group) sessions spread over an eight-week period. Coaching and follow-up is also done to help the program participants take a hard look at the type of job and industry they wish to pursue. Completing introspective surveys and deciding on a single job path to follow are among the more difficult activities participants undertake. Our two Employment Program Associates facilitate the learning process and are dedicated to specific partners. This enables them to better understand the type of participants who access the two programs. They personally connect with participants after the workshops and networking sessions to ensure they gained the knowledge and have the maximum assistance to successfully finding work.

*“Great workshop! Facilitator challenged the group with thoughtful questions - had an empathetic approach. Group work was well organized.” - Participant, Times Change Women’s Employment Services, January 2020*

**Validating Success:** Based on the feedback gathered through multiple surveys (OTF and OSSCO's) , this project continues to receive overall positive responses from participants at all locations.

As was the case last year, more than 95% continued to feel satisfied and willing to recommend the program to others. Over the course of the program, facilitators communicate to participants that they are valued and encourage positive thinking and social interaction among the group. Facilitators received more than 95% satisfaction in delivering the program.



**Photo:** Margaret Mathur facilitating Employment Networking Group, Times Change Women’s Employment Services

*“Well worth it! Glad I came! Coming to these workshops provides me with momentum for my job search.” Participant, Times Change Women’s Employment Services, October 2019*

**Key Program Learnings:** Program activities help participants decide on the job they want to pursue, how to conduct job research and the steps to finding that job. Our participants reconfirmed that conventional job ads whether digital or analogue is not the solution. Networking and net giving interactions provide better outcomes. Participants acknowledged that the workshop concepts of “Networking/net-giving”, “Personal branding”, and “Elevator speech (sound

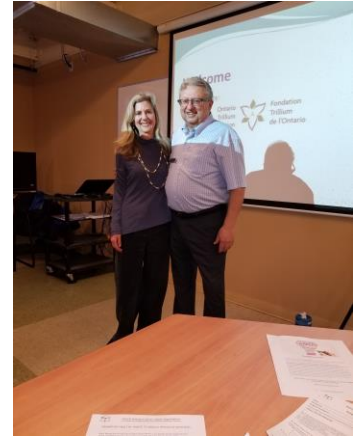
bite)” is what they retained the most. These concepts also are ranked as the top three reasons for taking the Job Search workshop. Personal Branding - deciding who you are and what you are known for - is applied in every learning session. By the end of twelve weeks, participants have memorable and clear sound bite (elevator speech) identifying who they are and what job they want.

*“I have attended many workshops and this was very good in summarizing what one needs to take away, i.e. Elevator speech, skills inventory...” Participant, COSTI Brampton, July 2019*

**Challenges and Resolutions:** Some of the project challenges from the previous year continued during this fiscal year. Partner staff changes resulted in re-educating multiple staff, or simply adding the work to someone’s day-to-day; and therefore, taking time away from more extensive outreach.

**Photo:** Jean Raymond Soulodre with Job Search Strategies Participant

Without broader communication and a dedicated partner effort, in 2019-2020 we did not achieve the projected numbers of 750 participants accessing this program - and only had 658 access it.



The COVID-19 pandemic forced dramatic changes to program delivery. The government’s state of emergency was declared on March 17, 2020, just as the OSSCO classroom programming was ending. The on-site programs were completed just before the shutdown. Reaching the participants for follow-up calls and survey completion proved extremely challenging, as people simply weren’t answering calls or emails. The number of survey responses was lower in the final quarter than previous sessions as a result. For those we reached, the pandemic further challenged their job search. Most indicated that any job-related activity they were engaged in came to a dead stop in the remaining weeks of this fiscal year. The future for them was an unknown.

**Moving Forward:** Due to government health & safety guidelines, and OSSCO’s commitment to keeping it employees and program participants safe during this pandemic, all workshops and ENGs will now be conducted virtually. Former program participants received outreach to see if they would volunteer to pilot test program changes and formats. This resulted in the Employment Networking Group continuing and piloting the online program. The Job Search Strategies program was redesigned with participant feedback into a six week program instead of two day workshops.

### **Signature Programs: Elder Abuse Awareness Learning**

*Step Up To Elder Abuse* project was funded by New Horizons for Seniors (NHS) Program. The purpose of the project was to create a learning program for older people 55+ and older people who are disabled and who may be at greater risk of harm, from any of the 7 types of elder abuse (physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, financial abuse, abandonment, neglect and self-

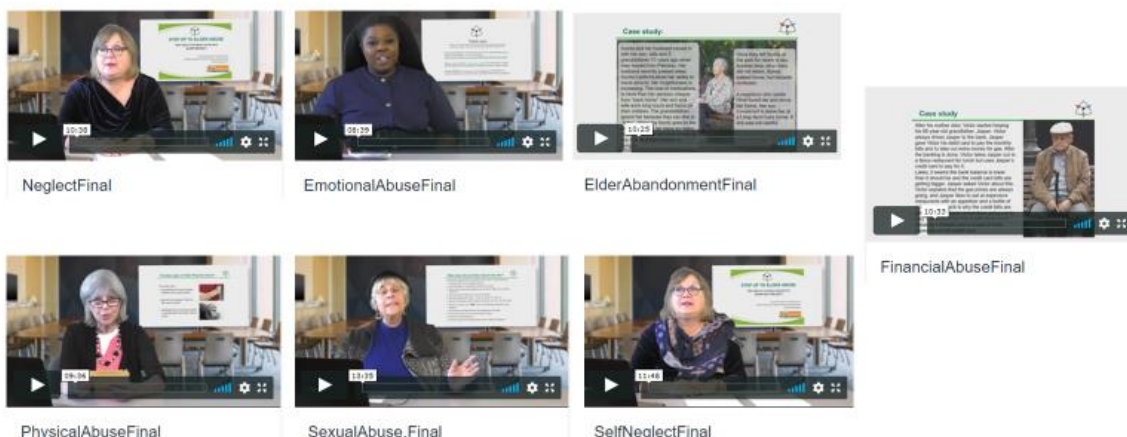
neglect). In this project, seniors learned about the specific type of abuse, how to identify inappropriate behaviours and reduce risk associated with elder abuse as a result of isolation, cognitive impairment, disability and frailty. Nghy Ngyugen was the Project lead who worked to develop program for seniors to learn about the increased risks of elder abuse associated with disabilities either physical or cognitive. Seniors also learned what to do when they experience or witness situation and list of resources when they need support.

The project had three components:

1. Educational workshops on taking steps to recognize 7 types of elder abuse and preventing them from happening, seven workshops were delivered at different community centres and senior groups
2. Online learning videos with 7 videos on each type of elder abuse were posted on OSSCO's YouTube channel as an online learning resource Link of 7 videos:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBHxZyUfZtj7Bc7yEdqJj0A/videos>

### 7 videos of elder abuse on OSSCO YouTube channel



<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBHxZyUfZtj7Bc7yEdqJj0A/videos>

3. Assembly/ Conference on identifying types of elder abuse and preventative responses, with distribution of a brochure/ information guide . Unfortunately the Assembly with its panel discussions, and knowledge experts, had to be cancelled as a result of COVID-19 State of Emergency. This was disappointing as on March 1st, we were cancelled 116 registrants.

Seniors were involved from the development of this project to its ending. There were two volunteer committees contributing. Seniors Advisory Committee (SAC) with six members steered

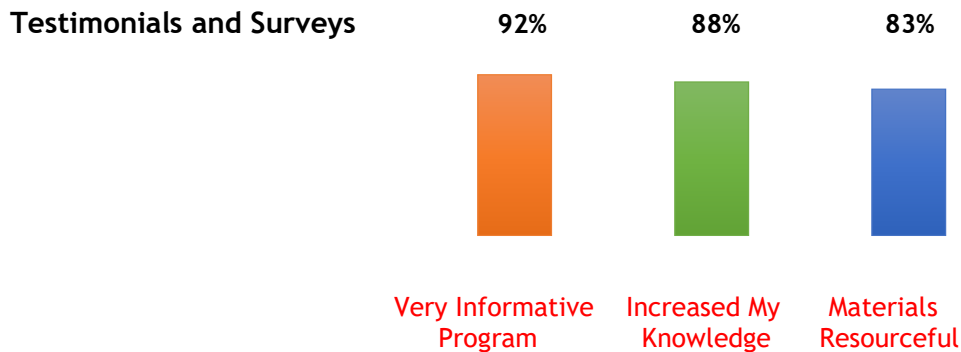


the direction of the project, providing input into the development of the Elder Abuse Workshop content, editing brochure content and design. Seniors Assembly Planning Committee (SAP) with three members developed conference format, identified speakers and promoted the conference.

There were 234 seniors who participated in the community workshops; 223 people were seniors and 11 were non-seniors. Nghy also organized and edited the seven self-directed learning videos which covered every type of elder abuse, as well as the resource material on OSSCO's website, Education section.

### Feedbacks from workshop participants

The workshops received positive feedbacks from participants and community partners. We received 101 evaluation forms among 234 workshop participants. Where 92% of participants thought the workshops were informative, 88% of participants perceived their knowledge on elder abuse was improved and 83% found the materials (presentation slides, handouts) were helpful.



*"The entire presentation was excellent"* (Participant at Islamic Foundation of Toronto)

*"I learned all of new things from what the trainer explained, I am looking forward to hearing more and more"* (Participant at Jamaican Canadian Association)

*"The presentation was very knowledgeable & important to me"* (Participant at Sunshine Centres for Seniors)

**Get Set to Reconnect:** This four workshop series offered in a lunch and learn format, was funded by the Province of Ontario's Seniors Community Grant. Susan McDougall was rehired to take the lead to develop the workshops' content and Power Point Presentations. Her focus was to deliver this educational program to 30 seniors per workshop, with a larger learning day event.

Although the four workshops were developed: Belonging, Social Engagement, Ageism: The Barriers to Participation for Seniors, and Resilience, four locations cancelled the workshops as a result of

COVID-19. Only one workshop on *belonging* was presented on March 12, 2020 with 36 seniors attending this two hour lunch and learn program. OSSCO asked the Ministry to permit it to finish this project once the pandemic decreases, and State of Emergency ends.

**Computer Training:** Each class is two hours long and is offered on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. OSSCO's computer program is different. After six weeks of basic instruction, 60% of the students are proficient. After completing basic level 1, 90% of the students include technology in their everyday lives. OSSCO has three core computer trainers who deliver computer classes at Loyola Arrupe Centres (Rankin Crescent), Jamaican Canadian Association and 345 Wilson Avenue. This year we pilot tested computer classes at COSTI on College Avenue to 19 Cantonese speaking Seniors and at the Polycultural Centre on Kingston Road to 15 linguistically diverse seniors.

Baycrest has also sent us their patients, who are affected by a stroke, and included OSSCO's compute activity as part of rehab for their patient because they saw improvements. We also introduced Level II a program teaching older people how to use various technologies i.e. cell phone, laptop, tablets as well as *photography* using cell phones. However, all in class room training has been suspended until 2021 due to COVID-19.

**Community Workshops:** The Speaker's Bureau program evolved into the Learning Hub. The Learning Hub consolidates all educational workshops offered in select areas in the province, with some presented in the French language. Due to COVID-19 all Learning Hub workshops will be redesigned for distance and remote learning using teleconference (rebranded as TeleLearning) and virtual using Zoom technology. In addition, workshops were delivered under the Enhancing Economic Opportunities project.

In the 2019-2020 fiscal year, OSSCO training consultants and staff delivered a total of 50 workshops in the following communities: Sudbury(1), Sault Ste. Marie(2), Windsor/Essex (Kingsville)(1), London (2), St. Catharines (1), Hamilton (1), Toronto(23), York Region (6), Peel Region (6), and Durham Region (Whitby & Ajax) (7).

**Ontario's Premier Seniors' Conference and Information Fair.** This event offers older people access to educational information on available products and services to Ontario's largest growing demographic, seniors. Under Daren Dandie's leadership, the 2019 *Ontario's Premier Seniors Conference and Information Fair*, which OSSCO has organized for more than 8 years, has grown to include 40 exhibitors, it is a full learning day with more than six workshops and 250 attendees.

**Photos:**  
Conference Program  
Participants



Each attendee received an information bag filled with brochures and educational resources from the 40+ exhibitors and gift bag contributors in the hall as well as from Conference and Educational Program Sponsors.

There were three seniors' groups who requested transportation for their members. Attendees came from across the GTA as far west as Brampton, and east from Oshawa.

**Tuesday's with OSSCO Program:** Attendance in this program continues to grow, indicating relevance to older adults. The rebranded programming engaged seniors through a variety of topics and provided learning opportunities. Between 10 - 12 seniors regularly attend this monthly, *free of charge* learning program. This year, Tuesdays with OSSCO was also held offsite with an educational art tour organized by Daren Dandie at Harbourfront during Black History month.

### **Joint Educational Programming:**

**North York Elder Abuse Network (NYEAN):** OSSCO, its member organizations Mosaic, Susan Knisch, Circle of Care and more than 15 other agencies continue to work in partnership as the North York Elder Abuse Network (NYEAN) to raise awareness of this topic and how to prevent vulnerable adults from becoming targeted. As a result, OSSCO staff and consultant were trained in a program developed by University of Western Ontario called *It's Not Right! You Power Workshops*. This workshop is funded by Ministry of Seniors Affairs, and reached 10,000 people by the end of 2019. OSSCO delivered 2 training sessions during this reporting period.

NYEAN members were also involved in reviewing OSSCO's Step Up to Elder Abuse program. They had input into the case studies and learning outcomes which are used for group activities on each type of elder abuse. As well they provided feedback on the overall program, including the scripts which were used in the seven videos.

### **Communications Committee: Chair, Megan McElwain**

Committee Chair McElwain resigned from the board mid-fiscal year, and was not replaced. This committee was inactive for the remainder of the year. The communications plan which included focusing on developing an online social media presence continued. Challenges associated with OSSCO's website which was finalized in March 2018. This is attributed to changes in staff mid-year, and the web developer's upgrades to OSSCO's website.

To continue to build an online presence, OSSCO posted seven new elder abuse awareness videos as part of its self-directed learning programs on its YouTube channel, as well as the revised I-pad resources. You can like us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/OSSCOlearning/>

## COUNSELLING, INFORMATION AND REFERRAL

OSSCO continues to provide information, referral and counselling (mediated access) to seniors. As we are providing more information on line to educate seniors on resources and programming of interest, we have found that the number of clients per month has decreased.

The top areas where information and assistance was needed dealt with: Educational programs; Healthcare Options - CCAC, Homecare; Accommodation, and Elder Abuse. We provided guidance regarding the best options in an older persons' community or redirected them to 211 providers or other service providers in their community. The number of inquiries for this fiscal year were 2,017.

## ISSUES AND CONSULTATIONS

### Bringing a Seniors Lens to Community, Stakeholder and Government Relations

OSSCO is an active member of the Ministry of Seniors Affairs Liaison Committee which meets semi-annually as does the Senior Advisory Committee (SAC) Federal level. These meetings enable OSSCO to reach out to its members for feedback before and after the meetings. OSSCO provided feedback and shared concerns on Seniors' issues at a consultation organized by the Wellesley Institute as well as the Law Commission of Ontario. As well OSSCO gave feedback the Federal Government in its national review and impact of the New Horizons for Senior's grant to the non-profit and seniors' sectors.



**Photo:** The Honorable Raymond Cho, Minister for Ministry of Seniors and Accessibility, with Elizabeth Macnab at a Seniors Affairs Liaison Committee meeting.

Through their commitment to you, our Board members and Executive Director raise awareness of issues that affect the quality of life for Ontario seniors.

In January, local GTA Conservative MP's under the leadership of Alice Wong, former Minister for Seniors, organized feedback from senior's organizations, especially those from the Asian Community. OSSCO participated in this half day feedback session and shared insight on issues and barriers affecting ethnocultural seniors in Ontario.

**Photo:** Alice Wong, former Minister for Ministry of Seniors at a community consultation with Elizabeth Macnab and seniors groups.





In February, Elizabeth Macnab participated in roundtable discussions on Zoomer TV on the topic of Elder Abuse awareness and prevention. We also submitted feedback to proposed amendments to the Long Term Care Act.

OSSCO is often contacted for a “seniors” perspective on policy and issues. We matched media to a member organization on the following: Global TV (health), CTV (poverty), National Post (health) and CBC (isolation). These media companies reached the appropriate groups for their stories through OSSCO’s connections.

Ghazy Mujahid, who is Adviser to the Board, continues to have his opinions published in The Hill Times on topics such as Parent-Grandparent Visa System.

### **THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT**

OSSCO would like to acknowledge and thank the following for the various supports for their monetary or in kind support given during the past year:

- 211
- ActivePro Nursing & Homecare
- Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario
- Alzheimer Society, Toronto Chapter
- Alumnae Theatre Company
- Bedford Medical Alert
- Bernard Betel Centre
- Breckles Insurance
- Canadian Association of Jewish Seniors
- Caribbean Seniors Club
- Chartwell
- Closing the Gap
- COSTI Immigrant Services, Brampton
- COSTI Immigrant Services, College Street
- Dr. Karen Hudes - Chiropractor & Rehab Specialist
- ECC Limited
- Enbridge Waterproofing Program
- ENRICHES Program
- Entrepreneur House
- First Student
- Golden Girls Canada
- Genie Home Services Incorporated
- Hanover Holiday Tours Ltd.
- Hearing Solutions
- Heart to Home Meals

- Home Instead
- 519 Seniors Committee
- JobStart
- Jamaican Canadian Association
- Manpower
- Mark Adler, President Gen4 Consulting
- Memoryz
- Ministry of Seniors and Accessibility
- Misty River Introductions
- Mosaic Home Health Care
- My Care Base
- New Horizons for Seniors Program
- North York Elder Abuse Network
- Ontario Health Coalition
- Ontario Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (ONPEA)
- Ontario Seniors Community Grant Program
- Ontario Trillium Foundation
- Polycultural Centre, Scarborough
- Personalized Prescribing Inc.
- Punjabi Community Health Services
- Purple Shield
- Regional Geriatric Programs of Ontario
- Retirement Homes Regulatory Authority
- Times Change Women Employment Services
- Toronto, Policy Service, Elder Abuse Unite
- The Mortgage Centre
- Sanofi Pasteur
- Seniors Advisory Committee, Ontario Region
- Seniors Community Grant, Province of Ontario
- Senior Discovery Tours
- Service Canada
- Silverts Clothing & Footwear
- Times Change Women Entrepreneurs Inc.
- Total Access Centre
- Totally Organized
- YMCA Markham
- YMCA Whitby
- University of Toronto
- Break Open Ticket marketing companies:
  - Bazaar Marketing
  - Bingo Pro Inc.,
  - Cedar Islands Sales and Services Ltd.
  - Nevada Man/ Nevada Ticket Services
  - Dr. Nevada
  - Party Novelties (Sudbury)