EQUITY

> 66 The University of Toronto's goal is to "eliminate, reduce, or mitigate the adverse effects of any barriers to full participation in University life [and create] the conditions for our diverse staff and student body to maximize their creativity and their contributions."

Statement of Equity, Diversity, and Excellence, 2006

Elevating and cementing U of T's role as a leader in Equity

INTRODUCTION

Supporting the world-class teaching, learning, and working community that flourishes at the University of Toronto takes commitment and dedication from all U of T community members. By providing the resources, training, advocacy, and support needed to create this community at the University of Toronto, Equity Offices and those individuals with equity responsibilities, play a pivotal role across all three campuses.

Together this group is responsible for ensuring that the University of Toronto is an equitable, fair, and safe place for all members of its community. They are responsible for reporting and responding to complaints, policy questions, for providing training and resources to ensure everyone at U of T understands their rights and responsibilities, and promoting dialogue about equity issues. The Equity Offices provide services to both students and employees, and all play important roles raising awareness of diversity & equity issues both internal and external to the university.

NEW FACES

To support our growing community, Equity Offices across all three campuses welcomed new members to their teams in 2012.

The **AccessAbility Resource Centre** at University of Toronto Mississauga (UTM) created and filled a new Mental Health Advisor position to provide support to students with mental health concerns.

First Nations House on St. George Campus named a new Elder: Andrew Wesley from Fort Albany. Cat Criger, the Traditional Teacher at UTM for the past two years, is now also supporting UTSC and OISE.

Allison Burgess joined the Sexual & Gender Diversity Office (SGDO) as the new Sexual & Gender Diversity Officer in March, followed by the addition of Scott Clarke as the new Program Coordinator in July.

☷ ENGAGING WITH EQUITY

Following the success of the many equity and diversity initiatives introduced in 2011, 2012 saw the implementation of a number of events, workshops, and conferences designed to educate the U of T community about emerging equity & diversity issues. Examples include:

- The **Anti-Racism & Cultural Diversity Office (ARCDO)** and the **Sexual & Gender Diversity Office (SGDO)** were among the sponsors of 'Pride at Toronto 2015', a one-day symposium organized to discuss opportunities for LGBTQ inclusion during the upcoming Pan Am and Parapan Am Games. Among the ideas considered: the development of a Pride House.

- The 20th Anniversary of **First Nations House** was marked by three main activities: a reception at First Nations House, the 5th Indigenous Writers' Gathering and a 20th Anniversary Social Gathering. These three events were attended by over 450 university and community members.

- The **Community Safety Office** continued to fund and support the December 6th – National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women campaigns and activities in collaboration with the **Sexual Assault and Counselling Coordinator** and **Health & Well-Being Programs & Services**.

- The **ARCDO** was a partner in The Living Library Project - 'Don't Judge a Book by its Cover' initiative, led by Hart House. The Living Library project is an event designed to create dialogue, promote understanding and reduce prejudice.

- In partnership with the **Health & Wellness Centre, AccessAbility Services** hosted Mental Health Awareness Month.

- The **Anti-Racism & Cultural Diversity Office** successfully led and launched an institution-wide communication campaign entitled 'Race, Racism, Anti-Racism: Let's talk about it'. This event was designed to increase awareness and promote the International / Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (IDERD), March 21st.

ACCESSIBILITY

The University of Toronto strives to provide its services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities and facilitate their inclusion into all aspects of university life. In 2012, specific initiatives included:

Educators' Accessibility Resource Kit

The University of Toronto partnered with the Council of Ontario Universities (COU), the University of Guelph and York University to develop the Educators' Accessibility Resource Kit. The project included a number of new resources to support educators with accessible program/course delivery and instruction.

> ❝ *The staff members are very friendly and helpful and the support workers worked very hard to help me and I appreciated how they tailored their approach to my needs.*❞
>
> **Student feedback on UTSC AccessABILITY Office**

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)

On December 14, 2012, the Design of Public Spaces Standards (Accessibility Standards for the Built Environment) came into effect. An ongoing review of how this will impact U of T (and other institutions) is underway through the Council of Ontario Universities and involves U of T representatives from Facilities & Services and Capital Planning.

On January 1, 2014, sections of the Information and Communications and Employment Standards come into effect. As a result, the office continues to prepare and engage with members of the university community to meet expectations of the standards.

MAKING EQUITY VISIBLE

- The **Anti-Racism & Cultural Diversity Office (ARCDO)** redesigned their website in 2012, making their policies, programs, and resources clearer to the university community.

- The **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) Office**, in partnership with the Human Resources & Equity Communications team, launched an updated website that improved upon the content and information

available to the U of T community.

- The **Family Care Office** developed an 'International Student Families' section on their website to address a growing segment of U of T families accessing their material.

- In 2012, many Equity Offices began adopting social media to connect with students and employees, with the **Sexual & Gender Diversity Office (SGDO)** leading the way on their active SGDO Facebook page.

- To facilitate conversation between all Equity Offices and partners at U of T, a new Equity email listserv was launched through which the University's equity officers could promote and collaborate on projects, resources, and events that take place throughout the year. The SGDO also launched a new listserv in September 2012, used for weekly email updates about SGDO-specific programming and events.

Equity Recognition at U of T

- In 2012, U of T was notified that it would be honoured as one of Canada's Top Family-Friendly Employers for 2013 and as one of Canada's Top Diversity Employers for 2013 – the sixth consecutive year it has received this award.

- The University of Toronto and Council of Ontario Universities (COU) received an award from the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario commending our partnership and work on accessibility.

- Funding was awarded to the University of Toronto through the Ministry of Community and Social Services EnAbling Change Partnership Program for three projects related to AODA and accessibility in a university context. These projects are developed through partnerships with the Ministry of Community and Social Services (www.mcss.gov.on.ca) and the Council of Ontario Universities (COU) (www.cou.on.ca), along with our colleagues at York, Guelph and other Ontario Universities.

TRAINING INITIATIVES

- The **Community Safety Office (CSO)** participated in a development committee tasked with reviewing best practices in relation to threat and risk assessment.

- **LGBTQ & Allies in Science and Engineering (LGBTQase)** and the **Sexual & Gender Diversity Office (SGDO)** provided resources, feedback and training for LGBTQase student leaders to develop and execute anti-homophobia training for all Engineering Frosh Leaders.

> 66 *"Your 'New & Expectant Mothers Group' really made a big difference to my journey of motherhood. Thank you for sharing and letting me share."*
> **Graduate student**

- The **Sexual & Gender Diversity Office (SGDO)** co-developed and delivered many training sessions throughout 2012, including: 'Equity in Action: Don Training on St. George Campus', in partnership with the **Anti-Racism & Cultural Diversity Office**, the **Sexual Harassment Office**, the **AODA Office** and the **Multi-Faith Centre;** 'Making Inclusivity Happen' training at Victoria University in partnership with the **Anti-Racism & Cultural Diversity Office**; 'Sexual Harassment, Homophobia and Heterosexism' training for St. George campus police in partnership with the **Sexual Harassment Office**; 'Equity in Practice' orientation sessions at the Faculty of Law in partnership with other Equity Offices; and co-developed and delivered a 'Creating Positive Spaces' workshop in partnership with the **St. George Positive Space** chair.

- The **AccessAbility Office** at the University of Toronto Scarborough (UTSC) developed and delivered a presentation on 'Inclusion through Mobile Devices and Apps' to disability services personnel in universities across Ontario. As a result of this work, in April 2012 an Account Executive at Apple Canada requested to utilize the presentation as a tool to teach other disability services groups about the use of mobile devices and apps for post-secondary students with disabilities.

💕 SUPPORT, EDUCATION & OUTREACH

Creating opportunities for people to learn and interact with one another around issues of diversity and equity was a key focus in 2012.

- Focusing on transitioning into the University of Toronto Mississauga (UTM) successfully, the **AccessAbility Resource Centre's "**Leading Towards Inclusion" Peer Mentorship Program, pairs incoming first year students with disabilities with an upper year UTM student as their mentor.

- In 2012, the **Community Safety Office** participated in a new joint initiative between the partners at University of Toronto Scarborough and the Scarborough Women's Centre (SWC) to create the 'BUILD. ACT. CHANGE. – Preventing Violence Together (BAC) (UTSC)' program. This two year project's primary purpose is "to engage young people to prevent violence against women (VAW)".

- The **Multi-Faith Centre** significantly expanded its program of inter-faith cooperation through community service as result of its 'Religious Diversity Youth Leadership Project' with a grant of $500,000 funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada. 20 programs a month were facilitated by the Multi-Faith Centre

> ❝ *"I really appreciate you and your teams coming to UC to help increase the success (sUCcess!) of our ancillaries staff."*
>
> **Donald C. Ainslie, Principal, University College**

> ❝ *(I) loved that I was able to (participate) without having to leave my office."*
> **Participant, Health & Well-being Programs & Services webinar.**

across the St. George campus; 5 programs a month were facilitated in partnership with other Student Life units and / or community partners across campus; and 200 events were hosted per month at the Multi-Faith Centre.

• The **'Women's Wellness Program for Residents of Student Family Housing'** was developed in cooperation with the **Community Safety Office** and **Student Family Housing.** This four-week program for women included yoga, creative communication, reflective writing, and supportive discussion. The program was offered twice in 2012 and will be offered again in 2013.

• **The Health and Well-being Programs and Services Office** introduced a new webinar series on accommodation, return to work and mental health in the workplace. The three webinars attracted over 300 managers from across the university. The feedback was very positive and managers suggested a number of topics that they would like to see covered in the future. This has resulted in the development of a monthly series.

ISSUE RESOLUTION

Ensuring that people's voices and concerns are heard and

addressed is an integral part of the responsibilities of the Equity Offices at U of T.

For example, in 2012 the **Sexual Harassment Office** handled 18 formal complaints and provided advice and information in 83 informal complaints under the Sexual Harassment Policy. Six of the formal complaints were withdrawn; the rest were resolved in mediation. The Office provided information and referrals in 67 cases where the matter raised did not fall within the jurisdiction of the Sexual Harassment Policy. Complaint statistics can be found at: www.utoronto.ca/sho/reports.html.

> ✪ *Did you know?*
> 1,426 volunteer student notetakers provided 23,720 sets of lecture notes for students registered with Accessibility Services, St. George campus.