

ANNUAL REPORT

For the period:
May 1, 2023 to April 30, 2024

Equity	Équité
Diversity	Diversité
Human Rights	Droits de la personne



Laurentian University
Université Laurentienne

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Annual Report is provided in accordance with Laurentian University's Policy and Program on a Respectful Workplace and Learning Environment, Policy on Response and Prevention of Sexual Violence and Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities. The report provides details as to the number, type, and disposition of matters brought forward to the Equity, Diversity and Human Rights Office (EDHRO) as well as education, training and other initiatives completed by the EDHRO during the fiscal year. A copy of this report is available to the members of the Laurentian University community by contacting the EDHRO or on the EDHRO's website at <https://laurentian.ca/human-rights>.

Continuing the trend seen in 2022-2023, the EDHRO continues to provide services to a large number of Laurentian community members. A total of 450 case contacts is being reported in 2023-2024.

THE EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICE

The mandate of the EDHRO is to lead the Laurentian University community in fostering an inclusive and respectful learning and working environment for all students, staff and faculty by providing expertise, guidance and counsel to members of the University community in order to ensure compliance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA), the anti-harassment sections of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1990* (OHSA), the *Ontario Human Rights Code, 1990* (Code), the *Sexual Violence and Harassment Action Plan Act* (Supporting Survivors and Challenging Sexual Violence and Harassment) (Bill 132), the *Strengthening Post-Secondary Institutions and Students Act, 2022* (Bill 26), as well as Laurentian University's Policy on a Respectful Workplace and Learning Environment, Policy on Response and Prevention of Sexual Violence, Policy on Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities and any other related policies.

The key functions of the EDHRO during the 2023-2024 fiscal year included:

- 1) Assisting individuals with complaints of harassment, bullying, discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual violence and student rights and responsibilities to understand the range of options available for responding, and help them to pursue a resolution;
- 2) Providing information and training to the community to increase awareness about the importance of promoting a respectful workplace and learning environment;

- 3) Providing information and training to the community to increase awareness about human rights, student rights and responsibilities and sexual violence response and prevention.
- 4) Administering the Policy and Program on a Respectful Workplace and Learning Environment, the Policy on Response and Prevention of Sexual Violence, Policy on Accessibility Standards for Customer Service and the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities.
- 5) Providing policy and procedural guidance to members of the Laurentian University community.

RESOLUTION SERVICES

A function of the EDHRO is to receive and provide guidance on concerns/complaints of discrimination, harassment/bullying, sexual harassment, sexual violence, accessibility and non-academic behaviour of students and assist individuals in understanding the range of options available for responding, and help pursue a resolution.

Not only does the resolution function minimize the potential for the externalization of complaints, the service also informs, in part, the EDHRO's education agenda. In turn, the abilities of the EDHRO staff to address areas of vulnerability across the institution based on the evidence from case services reduces the potential for unmanaged conflict.

Case Contacts

A case contact is an individual or unit who brings forward a complaint, consultation or enquiry to the EDHRO. In this context, the case contact does not need to have made a complaint to be named as such. "Case contact" is simply the term used for the individual or unit who initially makes contact with the EDHRO, which includes contact for the purpose of an enquiry, consultation, or complaint.

Case Contact Composition

Each case contact with the EDHRO can be broken down into the following three (3) categories:

- (1) **Complaint:** a written complaint received by the EDHRO by an individual who believes that they have been subjected to behaviour that may breach one of the policies under the EDHRO mandate. Note that once the EDHRO receives a Written Case Resolution

Request Form, the case is categorized as a complaint. A consultation with respect to concerns about an individual and/or unit may also result in the triggering of a University-led alternative dispute resolution and/or investigation process under the policies and thereafter be categorized as a complaint. Complaints may be addressed both through formal and informal resolution processes;

- (2) **Consultation:** guidance and/or direction provided by the EDHRO on concerns, questions or potential complaints. Consultations may include (but are not limited to) requests for assistance or clarification from members of the Laurentian University community, including academic or administrative leaders (i.e. those with the authority or responsibility to address concerns), requests for information and/or assistance by third parties (i.e. friends, co-workers seeking assistance to support others), or the provision of information with appropriate guidance. Typically, this would entail a longer interaction or more than one meeting to address questions or a possible concern relating to a matter falling under the EDHRO mandate. Some consultation services may also require follow up with other individuals or administrative or academic units, and in certain appropriate cases, involve the employment of various early conflict resolution practices. Consultations also include the provision of support and accommodations to individuals under EDHRO's policies, including survivors under the Policy on Response and Prevention of Sexual Violence as a follow up to a report of sexual violence;
- (3) **Enquiry:** a basic clarification, reference or provision of information.

Case Contacts by Policy or by Subject Matter

Case contacts are categorized by either the applicable Policy under which the case contact correlates, or where the case contact does not relate to a specific policy, under the following categories: AODA, EDHRO General, EDI, Training Request, or Non-Mandate.

The EDHRO received and responded to a total of 450 case contacts in 2023-2024, the breakdown of which are particularized in the following two subsections.

Case Contacts by Non-Policy Subject Matter

The EDHRO received and responded to a total of 83 non-policy case contacts in 2023-2024, the breakdown of which are particularized below:

- Individuals requesting information or collaboration relating to the **AODA**: 8 case contacts.

- Individuals requesting general assistance, information and/or collaboration with respect to the **EDHRO’s broader mandate**, that includes multiple policies/subjects or is not specific to one particular policy: 48 case contacts.
- Individuals requesting information or collaboration relating to **equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) initiatives**: 27 case contacts.

Training Request

Training requests are those that are requested specifically by the case contact, and may be a customized session or training relating to any matter under the EDHRO mandate, including human rights, discrimination, harassment/bullying, sexual violence prevention and response, accessibility or student rights and responsibilities. Training requests that are specifically requested are separate from the other education/training/awareness activities that the EDHRO undertakes as part of its mandate each year.

During the 2023-2024 reporting year, the EDHRO received 17 requests for specific training.

Non-Mandate

Case contacts that are categorized as non-mandate are those that do not fall under one of the Policies administered by the EDHRO, or within the general mandate of the Office. In such cases, the EDHRO will assist the individual in connecting with the appropriate university official and/or department which is able to address the circumstances, and/or assist with connecting with other resources including community partners.

During the 2023-2024 reporting year, the EDHRO received 58 case contacts as non-mandate.

Case Contacts by Policy

Respectful Workplace and Learning Environment

There were 172 case contacts with the EDHRO in 2023- 2024 that were dealt with under the Policy and Program on a Respectful Workplace and Learning Environment (“RWLE”). These case contacts consisted of 21 complaints, 137 consultations, and 14 enquiries. All case contacts under the RWLE Policy were also categorized by type, either discrimination/accommodation (*Ontario Human Rights Code*) or Bullying/Psychological Harassment (which includes workplace harassment under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*) as illustrated, below in Figures 1(a).

Case contacts falling under the *Ontario Human Rights Code* were further broken down based on the protected grounds raised (Figure 1(b)).

RWLE Case Contact Composition Type

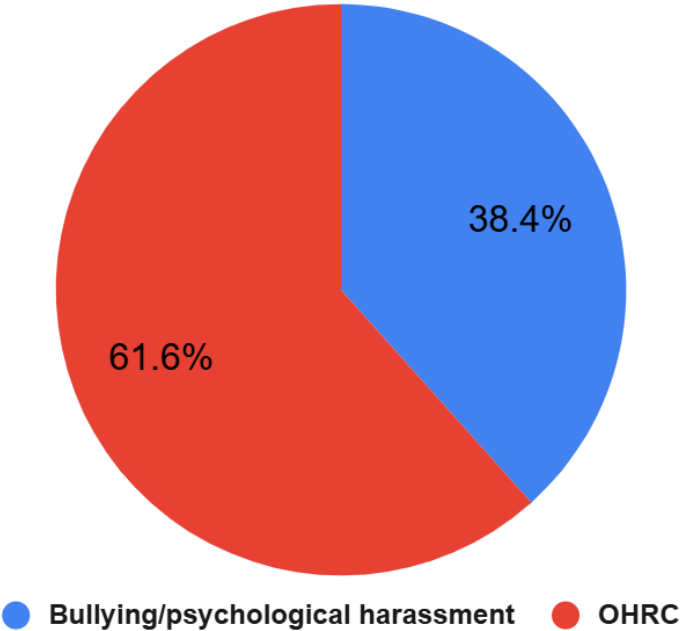


Figure 1(a) – RWLE Case Contact Composition Type Chart

RWLE Case contacts by protected ground

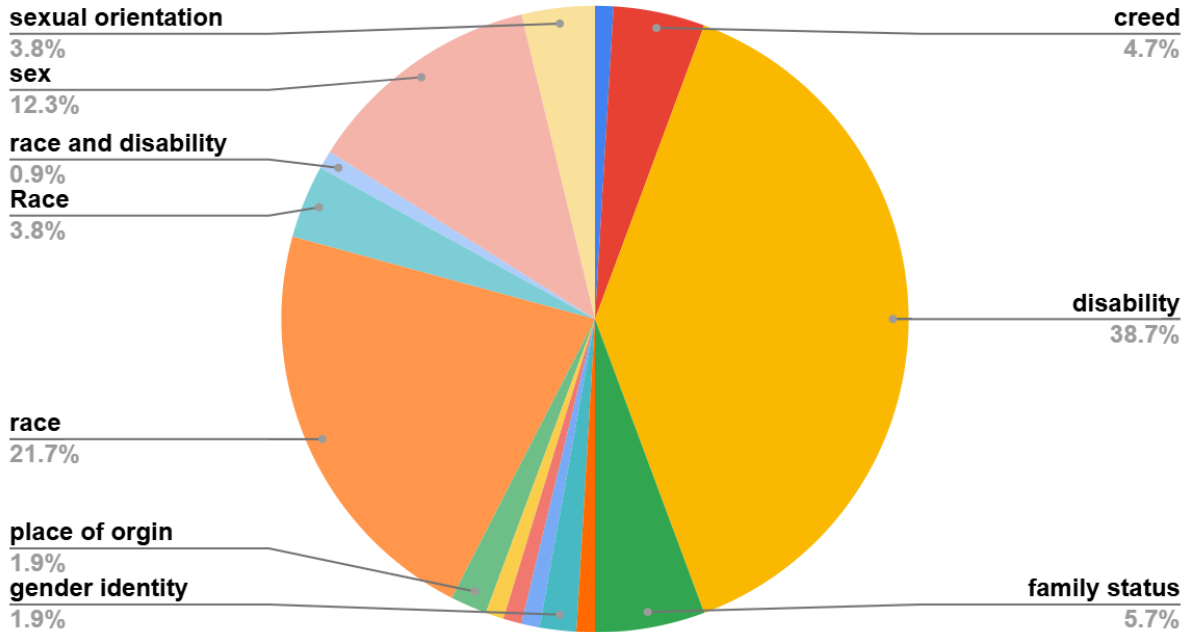


Figure 1(b) – OHRC case contacts by protected ground

Response and Prevention of Sexual Violence

There were 32 total case contacts with the EDHRO in 2023-24 that were dealt with under the Policy on Response and Prevention of Sexual Violence. These case contacts consisted of 7 complaints, 21 consultations, and 4 enquiries.

Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities

There were a total of 87 case contacts with the EDHRO in 2023-24 under the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities. These case contacts consisted of 23 complaints, 54 consultations, and 10 enquiries.

Constituency Groups

The case contacts in each file are broken down into seven (7) constituency groups as follows:

- (1) **Faculty:** this group includes all members of the Laurentian University Faculty Association (LUFA) as well as department Chairs/Directors (who are members of LUFA);
- (2) **Faculty Unit/Department:** this group includes cases brought forward on behalf of a faculty unit or department as a whole and not by any one individual.
- (3) **Employees:** this includes all employees other than Faculty. Included are members of the Laurentian University Staff Union (LUSU), graduate teaching assistants represented by the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), and members of the Laurentian University Administrative and Professional Staff (LUAPS) who do not fall into the leadership group personnel category listed below as well as all other employees who do not belong to a union or association;
- (4) **Staff Unit:** this group includes cases brought forward on behalf of a staff unit or department as a whole and not by any one individual.
- (5) **Students:** this group includes all students at Laurentian University;
- (6) **Leadership group personnel:** this category includes all leadership personnel including Executive Team members, Associate Vice-Presidents, Deans and Directors. It does not include Chairs of departments as they are included as members of Faculty, as noted above, and;
- (7) **“Other”:** Included in this category are case contacts who are not a member of the Laurentian University community. This group may also include Laurentian University addressing a complaint as an institution.

The following is a breakdown by constituency group of case contacts who sought services through the EDHRO under both under non-policy subject matters of inquiry (Figure 2(a)) and under the Policy and Program on a Respectful Workplace and Learning Environment (RWLE), the Policy on Response and Prevention of Sexual Violence (RPSV) and the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities (CSRR) (Figure 2(b)).

Case Contacts by Constituency Groups under Non-Policy Subject Matters

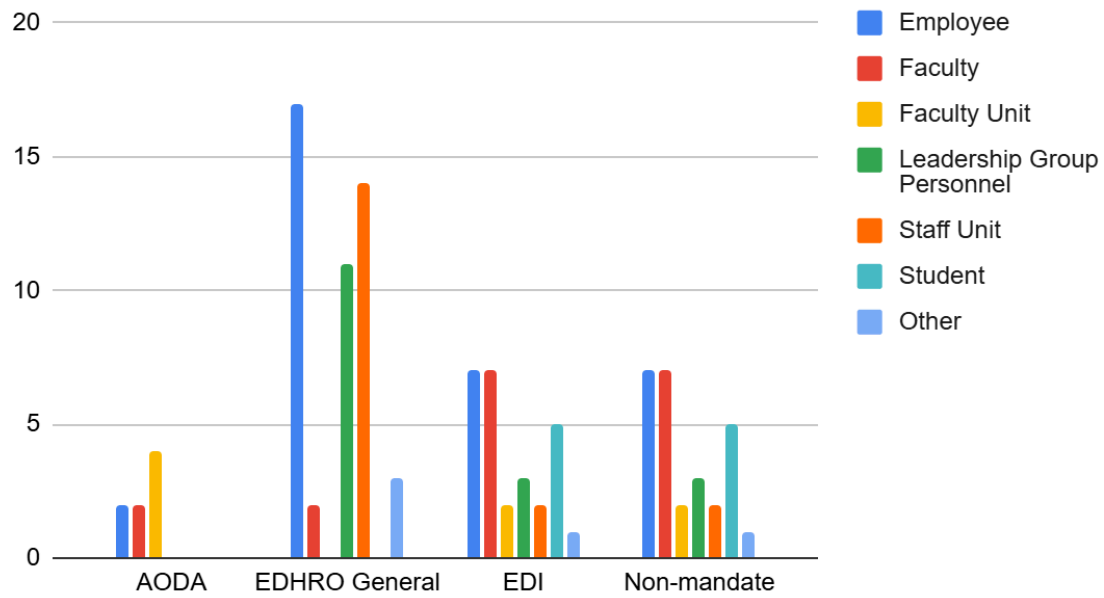


Figure 2(a) - Percentage of case contacts by non-policy subject matter based on constituency group

Case Contacts by Constituency Groups under each Policy

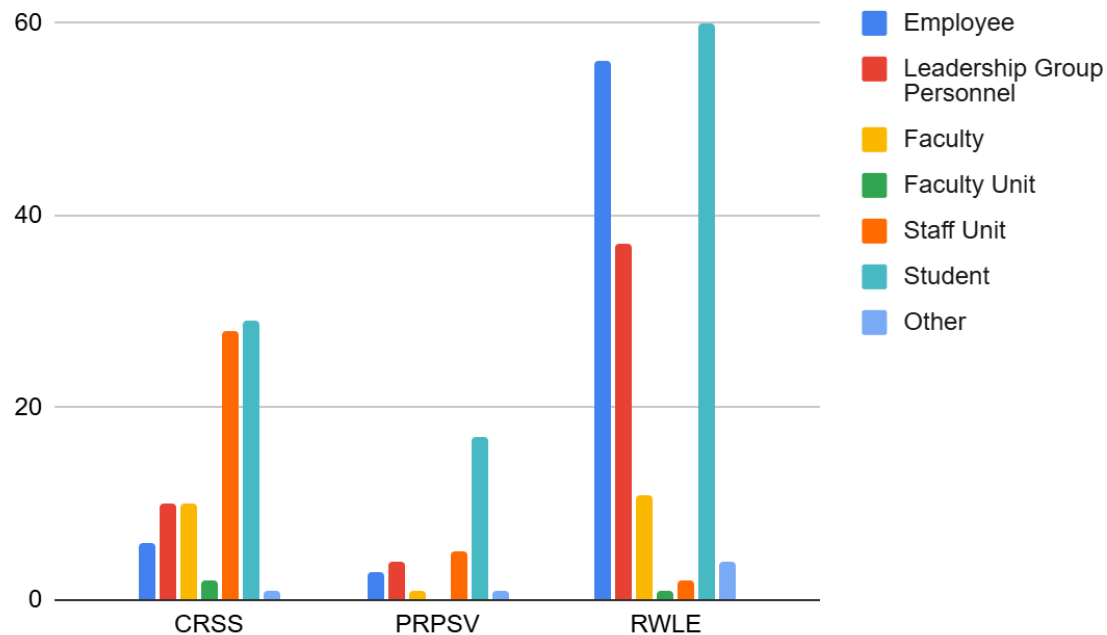


Figure 2 (b) – Percentage of case contacts by policy based on constituency group

Resolution of Complaints

Respectful Workplace and Learning Environment

Of the 21 complaints made in 2023-24 under the RWLE and 24 brought forward from 2022-23, there were a total of 16 complaints resolved in 2023-24 and 29 brought forward to 2023-24. Of the 16 resolved complaints:

- 10 complaints were resolved by way of informal resolution /early resolution using various mediation/ADR techniques;
- 1 complaint was resolved through formal investigation;
- 2 complaints were referred;
- 1 complaint was abandoned;
- 2 complaints required no further action.*

* Please note that some of these complaints involved the clarification of information and once the clarification was made, the complaint was either withdrawn, or no further action or follow-up was necessary. In certain cases, a complaint can also be resolved by providing

guidance which enables the case contact to address the complaint through self-managed resolution, or at the local level.

Policy on Response and Prevention of Sexual Violence

Of the 7 complaints made in 2023-2024 under the Policy on Response and Prevention of Sexual Violence and 2 brought forward from 2022-23, there were a total of 3 complaint resolved in 2023-24 and 6 brought forward to 2024-25. Of the resolved complaints,

- 1 complaint was abandoned or withdrawn.
- 1 complaint was resolved through formal investigation;
- 1 complaints were resolved by way of informal resolution using various mediation/ADR techniques

Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities

Of the 23 complaints made in 2023-24 under the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities and 8 brought forward from 2022-23, there were 24 resolved during this period and 7 brought forward to 2024-25. Of the 24 resolved cases:

- 16 complaints were resolved by way of informal resolution using various mediation/ADR techniques;
- 1 complaint was resolved by way of a formal investigation;
- 1 complaint was referred;
- 2 complaints were abandoned;
- 4 complaints either required no further action and/or were resolved through the provision of information or guidance*.

* Please note that some of these complaints involved the clarification of information and once the clarification was made, the complaint was either withdrawn, or no further action or follow-up was necessary.

INITIATIVES

Education and Training

The EDHRO conducted a number of training and education activities throughout the 2023-2024 fiscal year. It should be noted that education and training services were also delivered at times

as a hybrid model to ensure inclusion of online students and staff/faculty who may be working remotely. A number of training sessions were planned and offered by the EDHRO and were also delivered by request. Topics included:

- Sexual Violence Reponse and Prevention - definition of sexual violence, consent, responding to disclosures, resources on/off campus
 - Upstander workshops (bystander training for efficient responses and interventions for the prevention of sexual violence)
- Human rights, including discrimination and harassment
- Building a Respectful Workplace and Learning Environment
- Unconscious bias
- Student rights and responsibilities
- Laurentian policies within the EDHRO mandate

EDHRO also provided targeted training to groups such as Residence Life staff, Varsity student athletes, Varsity Athletics coaches, student leaders, Peer Wellness student mentors, Residence students, International Student orientation, Graduate students and various administrative and academic units.

The EDHRO participated in new employee training on a monthly basis.

Several other training and educational opportunities were facilitated through EDHRO's awareness and community engagement initiatives as outlined below.

Awareness and Community Engagement

During Orientation 2023, the EDHRO participated in many orientation activities, including virtual and in-person service fairs and orientation sessions.

EDHRO also hosted Consent Awareness Days on September 13, 2023 for fall orientation and on January 11 during winter "Frost Week" orientation to share information and engage the community in conversations focused on consent, healthy relationships and sexual violence response and prevention. The EDHRO staff, along with student members of the CISAT and external community partners connected with and actively engaged with many students, staff and faculty to build knowledge of a consent culture through games and discussions.

The EDHRO continued to bring awareness of a consent culture to the university community throughout the year with its "Consent is Simple #iask" messaging and branding, including t-shirts, coffee cups, lanyards, magnets, stickers and various other "swag items" for students.

The EDHRO has resource materials disseminated regularly by pamphlets as well as through

online means focused on consent and sexual violence prevention and response. Pamphlets on responding to disclosures and consent were distributed in all kit bags provided to first year students.

Residence staff were provided with “Consent is Simple #iask” t-shirts to bring awareness to building a consent culture.

The EDHRO, with campus and community partners, held its annual Consent Awareness activities, which engages the Laurentian community in discussions focused on consent, healthy relationships and sexual violence response and prevention, alongside the #16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence campaign. During the #16 Days, the EDHRO planned various events held daily between November 25, 2023 and December 10, 2023 including:

- Varsity athletics basketball game night:
 - The Women’s and Men’s Basketball teams and the Cheer team wore purple #16 Days of Activism t-shirts to raise awareness on eliminating gender-based violence
- “Wrapped in Courage” Purple Flag raising:
 - Highlighting the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women in collaboration with community partners in the Atrium, including presentations discussing the importance of demonstrating support and commitment to ending gender- based violence on the Laurentian campus and beyond
- Healthy Relationships workshop facilitated by the the Sudbury Women’s Centre
- A Draw- the- Line workshop facilitated by White Ribbon:
 - Exploring many forms of sexual violence, building a sense of preparedness and confidence to respond using a survivor-centric approach and identifying actions male-identified community members can take to promote gender equality and prevent sexual violence
- Safer Space workshops (one for students and one for staff/faculty) were facilitated by the Réseau ACCESS Network to:
 - Reflect on the shared human experiences of sex, gender, expression, and orientation, explore barriers communities might experience to accessing services, experience new perspectives and understandings through critical consideration of language, practices, and history, identify strategies towards greater inclusion to implement moving forward, reflect and challenge the roots of biases
- Human Trafficking Awareness workshop facilitated by Sudbury Area and Victim Services:
 - Bringing awareness to human trafficking, learning how to identify and provide supports
- Traçons les limites workshop facilitated by Centre Victoria pour les femmes

- Leading a conversation on the prevention of and response to gender-based and sexual violence
- The Laurentian University Women’s Centre hosted:
 - Drop-in classes to engage community members while creating a safe space to practice yoga and learn self defense techniques
 - Social activities, including a drop-in paint activity and providing wellness kits
- International Human Rights Day social media campaign:
 - Community members were asked to engage on social media by sharing their experiences of human rights and what it means to them
- On December 6, a vigil was held to commemorate the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women

Information was also shared throughout the #16 Days of Activism via social media, promoting a consent culture by highlighting all of the events and activities.

In February, 2024, the EDHRO collaborated with the Laurentian University African and Caribbean Students Association (LUACSA), to facilitate events for Black History Month for Laurentian community members to learn and connect with each other including:

- Social outing for students at the Sudbury 5 game
- Public Speakers Convention “Living through stereotypes and microaggressions as a Black Person” with keynote speaker, Mnena Ibeneme as well as speakers from the Nigerian Association of Sudbury and CIFS Sudbury
- Black Entrepreneur Day held in the Parker Atrium showcasing Black owned businesses
- Games night held at LU Residence
- Movie screening of “Il a déjà tes yeux” at Place des Arts - a collaboration with Centre de santé communautaire du Grand Sudbury
- Cultural Day - a celebration of diversity which included:
 - Big Move dance academy and a team of dancers (high school students and LU students (Pierre-André Kayembe lead dancer) doing a dance flashmob and dance workshop
 - Cultural presentations: students presented on their home countries
 - Fashion show and food catering

During the week of March 4-8 2024, the EDHRO hosted an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Week in collaboration with campus partners and included the following:

- Launch of the Student Equity Centre (SEC)
- In collaboration with the Accessibility & Counselling Department - Accessibility and Self-Advocacy Presentation
- In collaboration with Pride LU - Pride Discussion Panel
- In collaboration with the Indigenous Student Affairs:
 - Presentation by Nicole Wemigwans
 - Anishinaabe Womanhood, Matriarchy and Parenting

- KAIROS Blanket Exercise facilitated by Cynthia Belfitt
- In collaboration with the Students for Social Action Committee (SSAC) - Multicultural Day in the Parker Atrium:
 - Activities included: hair drop-in, henna drop-in, local Vendors, bracelet making in collaboration with the Peer Wellness team
 - Cultural booths by the facilitated by international students
 - Live music (kamanche played by a student from Iran)
 - Booths by Laurentian University African and Caribbean Students Association (LUACSA) , Laurentian University Muslim Student Association (LUMSA), and Peer Wellness
- International Women's Day
 - Social Media Campaign highlighting achievements and celebrating women of Laurentian on Instagram @luwomencentre
 - LU Women’s Centre booth in the Parker Atrium to connect with LU community members and provide resources and also organized a tulip bouquet flower fundraiser with funds being donated to the Sudbury Women’s Centre and Centre Victoria pour femmes
 - In collaboration the Office of Research and Innovation a special presentation - Lessons in Leadership & Communication from Antarctica with Women in STEMM
 - In collaboration with the LU Women’s Centre and the Presidential Advisory Committee on the Status of Gender Equity - Outstanding Women of LU Awards Celebration
- In collaboration with Pride Laurentian - Pride Prom

The EDHRO supported and provided training to staff and cohort leads of the Electrifying the Future project in collaboration with the Goodman School of Mines.

The SEC participated as a panellist along with campus partners at the Greater Sudbury Immigration summit for International Day for the Elimination of Discrimination hosted by the Sudbury Local Immigration Partnership.

Student Equity Centre

The EDHRO through the Student Equity Centre continued to support and collaborate with the Consent is Simple Action Team (CISAT), a student-led group working to foster a community free from sexual violence and other forms of gender-based violence and creating a culture of consent and the Student Social Action Committee (SSAC), a student-led group working to foster a community that promotes inclusion, diversity and equity and in which the rights of all people are respected.

The SEC also provided mentorship and oversight of Pride Laurentian and the Women's Centre (including Laurentian University Women in Sport); student-led resource centres which provide information, peer support, referrals, education and facilitate events.

Laurentian Pride organized and hosted a multitude of social activities and events to educate students, staff and faculty and to raise awareness including, but not limited to: Pride crosswalk painting event, trans day of remembrance, World Aids Day Community Vigil. Pride hosted a workshop facilitated by Rahim Thawer, MSW - Beyond Eggplants & Peaches - a queer workshop about self-awareness & connection.

The Women's Centre partnered with Peer Programs to offer free menstrual products in campus washrooms.

The SEC also collaborated with several student groups throughout the year by providing mentorship and support of their initiatives and events including but not limited to: the Laurentian University Muslim Student Association (LUMSA) (i.e. sponsorship of iftar to students for Ramadan), Laurentian University African and Caribbean Students Association (LUACSA) and the Peer Programs team (i.e. sponsorship of Holi celebration).

POLICY REVIEW AND PROCEDURAL GUIDANCE

The Ontario government passed the *Strengthening Post-secondary Institutions and Students Act, 2022, S.O. 2022, c. 22 - Bill 26* on December 8, 2022 to further protect students by providing measures for postsecondary institutions to address faculty and staff sexual misconduct toward students on campus.

In particular, the amendments:

- Strengthen the tools available to institutions to address instances of faculty or staff sexual misconduct against students (i.e., deeming sexual abuse of a student to be just cause for dismissal and preventing the rehiring of employees found to have committed sexual abuse of a student)
- Prevent the use of non-disclosure agreements to address instances where an employee leaves an institution to be employed at another institution and their prior wrongdoing remains a secret; and,
- Require institutions to have employee sexual misconduct policies in place that provide rules for behavior between faculty, staff and students as well as disciplinary measures for faculty and staff who break these rules.

After a consultation with community stakeholders and a review of the Policy on Response

and Prevention of Sexual Violence to incorporate the applicable legislative provisions, the revised Policy was brought forward and approved by the Board of Governors on June 16, 2023 in order to meet the coming into force date of July 1, 2023.

ADMINISTRATIVE

The following was initiated and/or completed by the EDHRO in 2023-24:

- Ongoing support and leadership to the Laurentian University CARE team;
- Maintained legislative reporting compliance regarding Bill 132 and the AODA;
- Work-Study students were hired as the Women's Centre Coordinator, Pride Lu Coordinator and an EDI Coordinator;
- An Indigenous social work student completed their placement with the office;
- Created a new Equity and Community Engagement Coordinator role

Committee Representation and Collaborations

Laurentian University

- Transformation
 - Transformation Project Management Office (TPMO) and Human Resources Work Stream
- Presidential Task Force on the Prevention of Sexual Violence
- CARE Team
- Advisory Committee on Security and Parking
- Presidential Advisory Committee on the Status of Gender Equity
- Committee on Freedom of Expression Policy
- Student Fees Committee
- SPAD DEIB Committee

PSE Sector/Community

- Sexual Assault Review Committee with the Greater Sudbury Police Service in collaboration with community partner agencies
- COU Sexual Violence Reference Group
- AODA Community of Practice
- OUA Women in Sport Committee
- Thriving on Campus - institutional participant (https://lgbtq2sthivingoncampus.ca/en_ca/)

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

The EDHRO would like to thank its many partners, both internally within Laurentian University and its community partners for their collaboration and support throughout the year. Their commitment and dedication is integral to the EDHRO's efforts in creating a safe, inclusive, and welcoming campus community for our students, faculty and staff.

Ensuring that the Laurentian University campus remains a safe, welcoming and inclusive community remains a pivotal part of the mandate of the EDHRO and the new Student Equity Centre (SEC). However, the EDHRO could not further this mandate without the continued engagement of community members, in particular our students, along with our campus partners and partners in the Greater Sudbury community. With the launching of the new SEC this year, the EDHRO hopes to further its efforts on building a respectful and inclusive working and learning environment for all Laurentian community members.