

## *A message from the* **President**

As the seasons go in a cycle, so does OTF's business. For every season, there are déjà vu activities but also new surprises.

Looking back to September, when I returned to the OTF office for a second term, it was like a flashback of four years ago. I relived Word on the Street, an activity which involves OTF staff, Secretariat and family members volunteering at the OTF booth. I met and talked with hundreds of parents and teachers.

Then, we had the ever-popular OTIP Teaching Awards, highlighting three exceptional teachers in the categories of elementary, secondary and beginning. OTF is very appreciative of OTIP's generous sponsorship of this event.

October saw the longest ever federal campaign. Everyone knows the end result—Justin Trudeau was elected Prime Minister.

On November 11, I had the honour of being the first OTF President to lay a wreath at the Remembrance Day ceremony at Queen's Park—the beginning of a long overdue tradition.

In the spring, we had a very successful Pension Forum and the OTPP Annual General Meeting at which we received the good news of a rate of return on investments of 13.0% for 2015.

At the Spring Board of Governors' meeting, I had the honour of presenting the Greer Award to Taylor Gunn (CIVIX/Student Vote).

We have had many successes this year—the TLLP program, the NORCAN Project and OTF Connects, to name a few. The summer brings professional learning programs such as the Teacher Learning

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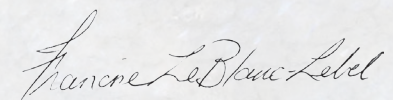


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Throughout the year, I have had the opportunity to meet and discuss issues of importance with teacher leaders across the province and Canada.

As I reflect on the past year, I will always be appreciative of the opportunity to represent Ontario's teaching profession at many varied events. I wish to humbly thank you for graciously allowing me this exceptional opportunity to work on behalf of our profession.

I dearly hold these times and this work close to my heart.



**Francine LeBlanc-Lebel**  
OTF President



# TLLP celebrates 10<sup>th</sup> cohort

In early May, 232 Ontario teachers, pursuing 112 projects, participated in a three-day training session, *Leadership Skills for Classroom Teachers*. Experienced keynote speakers and OTF and Ministry personnel led numerous workshops to assist the participants in developing the skills to effectively manage their learning projects and to share their learning with others.



These teachers mark the 10th TLLP cohort; their projects will be completed by Fall 2017.

For more information on the TLLP program, go to <http://www.otffeo.on.ca/en/learning/teacher-learning-and-leadership-program/>.

## 2016 Greer Award

Taylor Gunn, CIVIX/Student Vote, received the 2016 Greer Award for outstanding contribution to publicly funded education in Ontario at the OTF Spring Board of Governors' meeting in April.



L to R: Francine LeBlanc-Lebel, OTF President; Taylor Gunn, CIVIX/Student Vote; and Paul Elliott, OSSTF President



## Learning from Ontario's teachers

This spring, OTF has met with delegations from Sweden, Denmark and the Netherlands to share and discuss what makes a positive teacher professional learning experience.



# 2016 NORCAN

Ontario • April 30 - May 6, 2016

As an extension of the Teacher Learning and Leadership Program (TLLP), OTF has been engaged for over a year in the NORCAN project, a partnership initiative with the Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) and the Union of Education Norway (Utdanningsforbundet). The project connected two TLLP school teams in Ontario (Monsignor Pereyma in Oshawa and Tecumseh Vista Academy in Windsor) with four schools in Alberta and three in Norway.

Educators and students involved in NORCAN are investigating diverse approaches to improving student learning in mathematics, and to developing teacher, principal and student leadership in their respective schools. The project also includes an explicit focus on equity since math is often used as a mechanism for sorting and ranking students in both developed and developing countries.

From April 30-May 6, 2016, OTF and the Ontario Ministry of Education jointly hosted a meeting

of the NORCAN schools. On May 4, teacher candidates in the Faculty of Education (FE) at The University of Ontario Institute of Technology (UOIT) hosted a math and science enrichment day for the student delegates. Participants engaged in math geocaching exercises as well as used applied math in robotics.

The university was just one of the stops for the NORCAN delegation, which also spent May 2-4 participating in math and learning exercises at Monsignor John Pereyma Catholic Secondary School and Tecumseh Vista Academy K-12.

[norcan.ning.com](http://norcan.ning.com)

# A message from the Secretary-Treasurer



**Rhonda Kimberley-Young**  
Secretary-Treasurer

I recently had the opportunity to listen to a panel discussion at OISE at its 50th Anniversary celebration. One panelist keenly observed that education was, and always will be, a human enterprise. Even paraphrased, it bears repeating.

There have been many changes in education over those 50 years. One might like to think that education is not political, but nothing could be further from the truth. In politics, as in war, truth is often the first casualty. We have all heard enough political rhetoric about education and enough online commentary about teachers to last us a lifetime, no doubt. Sometimes, it is difficult not to be offended. We are human, after all.

Recently, OTF has had a succession of international education delegates visit to learn from Ontario's success. By international measures and results such as the improved graduation rate and narrowing gap between higher and lower performing students, Ontario has become a model in the last decade. We've even had visitors from Finland, generally recognized as best in the world, to learn from us.

Although the partnership with the Ministry of Education hasn't been perfect at all times, the

current Government has respected the teaching profession and supported OTF and the Affiliates in delivering quality professional learning by teachers for teachers. OTF and the Affiliates are uniquely placed to do this. We have the professional capacity, the connections province-wide and relationships with subject and division associations and many partners in education, to deliver a depth and breadth of programs that other organizations are simply not as well positioned to deliver. We do it cost-effectively, transparently and with proper controls.

And we have an eager audience. Teachers go above and beyond to advance their own professional learning. Visiting delegations are always amazed at how many Ontario teachers engage in ongoing learning through in-school and out-of-school voluntary activities such as webinars, conferences, networked learning and courses such as AQs and ABQs. This is envied elsewhere and is building a professional capacity and leadership among Ontario's teachers which is remarkable.

It is more than disheartening to read the release of the Auditor General, insinuating other motives for the professional learning funding received by OTF and some Affiliates. One study after another is reinforcing the success of our programs and our model of a partnership with significant involvement by teacher federations. But hey, why let the truth get in the way of a good headline? Although the evidence speaks for itself,

“*One study after another is reinforcing the success of our programs and our model of a partnership with significant involvement by teacher federations. But hey, why let the truth get in the way of a good headline?*”

this story now puts teacher federations on the defensive. OTF doesn't do political advertising; there are no ulterior motives for working with the Government on PD. In fact, previous governments (NDP and PC) also provided funding for some professional learning programs, a fact given little attention in the report.

We know our programs are appreciated and valued by teachers. We know they are having a positive impact on our education system. It is important to OTF that we continue to offer opportunities, by teachers for teachers, for quality, voluntary professional learning. Our motivation is simply this: our members, and Ontario's students, deserve it.

## Your pension plan in 2015



On April 7, the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan (OTPP) held its annual meeting in Toronto. The Plan reported a rate of return on investments of 13.0% for the year ended December 31, 2015, resulting in an increase in net assets to a record \$171.4 billion from \$154.5 billion at the end of 2014.

A webcast of the meeting is available at <https://www.otpp.com/corporate/annual-reporting/annual-meeting-webcast>.

As well, you can read a summary of the Annual Report for active members and pensioners at <https://www.otpp.com/otppstatic/rtm-rap/>.



# OTF Professional Learning

## Summer Institutes are back! Not too late to apply

Get together with colleagues to reflect on teaching practice, draw on the expertise of teacher leaders and peers, share what works and what does not, examine resources and programs that are available from a variety of organizations and assess how these resources may be used in the classroom.

These three-day workshops are focused on support for implementing the revised curriculum, enhancing expertise in Mathematics, and using Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to enhance teaching and learning.

Workshops are offered in Kingston, London, Niagara, North Bay, Ottawa, Thunder Bay, Toronto and Windsor, starting July 4 and running until August 12.

You can apply up to one week before the workshop is scheduled.

Go to <http://bit.ly/OTFSI2016> to check the listing of workshops and to apply.



## Pedagogy b4 Technology

A professional interactive learning conference for teachers by teachers

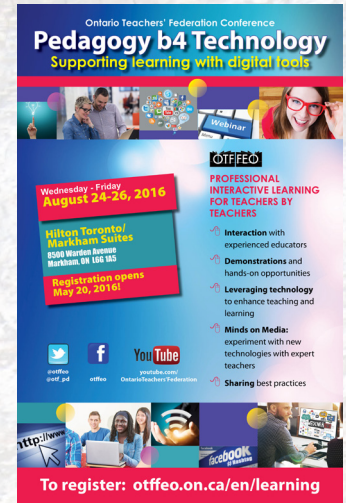
An opportunity to

- interact with experienced educators,
- experience demonstrations and hands-on opportunities,
- leverage technology to enhance teaching and learning,
- experiment with new technologies with expert teachers, and
- share best practices.

Wednesday, August 24 to Friday, August 26, 2016  
Hilton Toronto/Markham Suites, Markham

Registration is now open on a first-come, first-served basis.

Just go to <http://bit.ly/OTFPb4T2016>.



## TVO launches TeachOntario

"And TeachOntario is no exception. This platform is for teachers but, in turn, benefits our students. The shared learning of teachers will contribute to our students becoming more successful learners in key curriculum areas such as literacy math and science," added LeBlanc-Lebel.

TeachOntario was developed by TVO, in partnership with the Ontario Teachers' Federation (OTF), its Affiliates and the Ministry of Education, and in consultation with teachers from a variety of districts across the province. Created to support sharing, collaboration, and knowledge exchange amongst educators across Ontario, TeachOntario features content created by

Francine LeBlanc-Lebel, OTF President, stated at the launch that "the reason for everything we do in education is our students."

Ontario teachers for Ontario teachers. With its collaborative format, TeachOntario allows educators to stay up-to-date on the latest in teaching and learning, digital tools, and professional development, thereby helping them to improve student outcomes.

Maureen Asselin, a Grade 6 teacher at St. Mary Catholic School, has been involved in the development of TeachOntario and is an active user. "TeachOntario to me is transformational. We share in TeachOntario so that we can inspire and be inspired by what other teachers are doing. Sometimes you just need that extra nudge or push to try something new and TeachOntario gives me that push."

TeachOntario is available at [tvo.org/teachontario](http://tvo.org/teachontario).