

ANNUAL REPORT

2020-2021



Waterloo Region's
Rainbow Community Space

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Visit Our Space

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Kitchener, Ontario Canada N2H 3X7

Or Follow Us Online!

web: ourspectrum.com

email: info@ourspectrum.com

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Greetings!

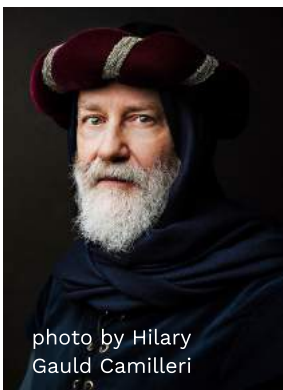
From the President



Hi! What a year it's been. Our grant-writing team did a fantastic job of landing us a huge grant, and the employees we were able to hire did an even better job of bringing us up to speed as a professionalizing organization. Through the hard work of these people, and our incredible volunteers, we've been able to keep the Centre running despite the pandemic, of which we're really proud.

We're also proud to have been founding members of the Enchante Network as it begins its journey of interconnecting centres like ours across the country. It has been my pleasure and honour to represent SPECTRUM in the community as President of the Board, but I've had my time in the spotlight - time to bring on someone else to lead the next phase of SPECTRUM's development. Thank you all for your support and dedication. - Cait Glasson

From the Outgoing Executive Director



1973 marked the first attempt to set up a community centre for the 2SLGBTQ+ community in Waterloo Region. It did not succeed, nor did any of the later attempts to do so in the following four decades, until SPECTRUM opened its doors on August 7, 2012. I took a leadership role early on, eventually becoming Executive Director in 2014.

I recall how excited we were to create a physical space where community members could feel safe, but also an organization dedicated to providing support for our community and educating the broader public. We have made amazing progress since then, and in the last 12 months we secured funding that allowed us to staff Project Excelsior for 2021 to create much-needed infrastructure (read more about this on later pages), and also to hire a full-time staff member. SPECTRUM is now much strengthened.

Serving with SPECTRUM has been a profoundly rewarding experience. After leaving the position of Executive Director in March 2021, I have been proud to watch SPECTRUM evolve to serve our community better than ever. We are already the envy of much of Southwestern Ontario. I look forward to even more growth and vitality. Excelsior! - Jim Parrott

From the Acting ED



When I came to SPECTRUM in January, I had no idea of the challenges, twists, turns, and rewards that laid before me. 2021 has been a season of transformation for the organization, and I could not be more proud of the Project Excelsior team for their hard work, dedication, action in bringing the new vision to life, and their voices challenging the Board of Directors and myself regularly.

I am grateful for the businesses, organizations, and individuals that met with us, provided feedback, donated, and partnered with SPECTRUM. It was a personal goal of mine to push SPECTRUM beyond its physical walls. With the support of our community, I saw that goal begin to realize.

I know that the tools are in place to continue this trajectory after the end of the capacity project, and I am excited to watch it unfold. - Kristy Skelton



About SPECTRUM

Vision:

An inclusive community where all LGBTQ2+ individuals are welcomed, celebrated, and supported as their authentic selves.

Values:

Accountability & Transparency:

SPECTRUM operates with integrity and is accountable to our community, partners, and supporters. We will do this by being transparent with our volunteers, service users, and the greater community about our finances, goals, operations, and outcomes.

Collaboration:

SPECTRUM is committed to creating and sustaining meaningful relationships with community partners for the benefit of other agencies, organizations, SPECTRUM, and the broader community.

Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion:

SPECTRUM is committed to being an anti-oppressive, anti-racist, and accessible organization. We are committed to increasing the Black, Indigenous, racialized, and other equity-seeking group representation amongst our leadership, volunteers, employees, and members. Further, we are committed to offering an accessible experience to all who use our services.

Mission:

SPECTRUM is an organization that serves, affirms, and supports the well-being of LGBTQ2+ individuals in Waterloo Region and the broader community through peer support, community partnerships, education and training, resources, and events.

Service & Volunteerism:

SPECTRUM is in service to the LGBTQ2+ communities of Waterloo Region and surrounding areas. Our programs and services will be driven and shaped by the needs of our community. We aim to provide meaningful volunteer opportunities to LGBTQ2+ people where they can contribute to the success of our programs and services and give back to the community as a whole.

Well-being:

We are committed to supporting and celebrating LGBTQ2+ communities by providing information services and bolstering the efforts of health and wellness services required by our community.

Advocacy

SPECTRUM will continue to champion and support the needs of LGBTQ2+ communities within our region, as well as across Canada, and uplift the voices of those who need to be heard.

Organization: People & Strategic Priorities



SPECTRUM's Board

(as of July 2021)

Tom Connelly, **Vice President**

Cait Glasson, **President**

Catherine Harrington

Melissa Paige Kennedy

Luke Runstedler

Suzie Taka

Roger Witzel, **Treasurer**

Olivia Yu

Staff

Shannon Henderson, **Program & Partnership Coordinator**

Ash Kreider, **Marketing & Development Coordinator**

Kristy Skelton, **Acting Executive Director**

Scott Williams, **Project Coordinator**

SPECTRUM's Volunteers

Athena Caesura

Emily Cox

Chiara Elliot

Randy Farrell

Hollee George

Ethan Grayson

Mark Hartburg

Kalyna Horocholyn

Sasa Kahrimanovic

Prabhjot Kaur Sekhon

Rachael Lake

Tyson Loker

Lyn McGinnis

Jim Parrott

Yvana Richards

Dianne Roedding

Don Ross

Sue Senior

Owen Whitmell

Strategic Priorities: 2021-2023

- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- Leadership and People Development
- Financial Sustainability
- Communications and Collaboration

SPECTRUM Programs, Services, & Resources

- The Rainbow Pages
- Rainbow Community Calendar
- Lending Library
- Drop-In Hours
- Converse and Connect
- day5games
- PFLAG
- Rainbow Immigrant and Refugee Services including Rainbow Multicultural Connect
- SPECTRUM Prime
- Aging with Pride Training
- Transgender Peer Support Groups
- Rainbow Diversity Training
- Chrysalis Fund for Mental Health, providing counselling through the OK2BME program at KW Counselling Services
- Legal Aid Clinic with Waterloo Region Community Legal Services
- Gender Neutral Washrooms Map
- TransNAV GPS
- Grand River Rainbow Historical Project



Project Excelsior

SPECTRUM is grateful to have received a grant of \$279,782 from the LGBTQ2 Community Capacity Fund through Women and Gender Equality Canada and the LGBTQ2 Secretariat. These funds allowed us to hire three employees to engage in a year-long capacity-building project in 2021.

The project includes four pillars:

- 1.Improve corporate governance and sustainability
- 2.Improve community outreach
- 3.Improve support for volunteers
- 4.Increase financial resources

Halfway through the project, the team has already facilitated the development of SPECTRUM's 2021-2023 Strategic Plan, researched and written an extensive policy and procedure manual, established new orientation and training processes for board members, drafted revised bylaws, and assisted the Board with new processes for committee meetings, evaluations, and recruitment.

We conducted several community surveys and focus groups to help us better understand the needs of 2SLGBTQ+ people in Waterloo Region. We researched and wrote an extensive communications and content plan, implementing changes to our social media presence, redesigning our website, working with The Public studio to develop a new logo and brand guidelines, and creating a series of shareable resources including a Media and Terminology Guide.

We conducted interviews with our existing volunteers, and did research into best practices to develop new volunteer recruitment and retention strategies. We have begun to work with a new volunteer database that will help us to schedule, track hours, and be more responsive to our volunteers. We have also developed new orientation and training materials which we will begin to implement in the coming months.

We conducted the organization's first major fundraising campaign in June of 2021, raising more than \$10,000 to support our ongoing operations. Our goal is to be able to support full-time employees on an ongoing basis to increase our capacity to deliver service. We developed an annual grant calendar and have applied for 19 different grants so far, raising over \$155,000 to help us take on new projects and offer new programming.

This summer, our physical space in the Boehmer Box Building has been renovated and more than doubled in size! We look forward to being able to invite the community back to the physical space when the pandemic allows.

Finally, we have done extensive community outreach, meeting with similar 2SLGBTQ+ organizations across the country, and also with community organizations across Waterloo Region. We have developed new partnerships and renewed connections with old friends to help increase our capacity. And this was just the first half of the project!



New in 2021

Visit our Resources page for a number of great tools created by the Project Excelsior Team, including: a 2SLGBTQ+ Terminology and Media Guide; an infographic on the intricacies of gender; a guide on responding to a child's coming out; and fact sheets exploring community support and anti-2SLGBTQ+ violence, 2SLGBTQ+ stigma in education, 2SLGBTQ+ housing instability and inequality, the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on 2SLGBTQ+ people, 2SLGBTQ+ minority stress, mental health and self-harm, anti-2SLGBTQ+ workplace and hiring discrimination, and bi/panphobia.

For Pride month, we held 11 events attended by 178 people, including: a walking tour of the University of Waterloo campus with the Glow Centre and City of Waterloo Museum; a series of three "Not Queer Enough" focus groups in partnership with Waterloo Region Rainbow Coalition; a virtual trivia night with Waterloo Public Library; a virtual variety show with THEMUSEUM; and a series of virtual panel discussions which explored 2SLGBTQ+ parenting and intergenerational connections. Thank you to everyone who participated in these events! In addition, we created a pop-up Pride shop to sell stickers, buttons, and flags to help raise funds for our work.

This Fall

Thanks to generous support from the Kitchener Waterloo Community Foundation and the Uvaro Community Fund, the Cambridge and North Dumfries Community Foundation, and the Bell Let's Talk Community Fund we will launch seven new groups this fall: a Transgender Peer Support Group for Cambridge, a Queer Crafting Circle in partnership with Button Factory Arts, a 2SLGBTQ+ Book Club in partnership with Waterloo Public Library, a 2SLGBTQ+ Yoga Group in partnership with The Branches, a Mindful Movement Group, a Young Adult (25-40) Networking Group, and a Youth (18-25) Peer Support Group.

In partnership with Wisdom2Action, thanks to a grant from the Canadian Women's Foundation, we will soon publish a Transgender Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Toolkit. Also this fall, expect a re-launch of our Rainbow Pages directory both online and as a print magazine.

What's Next

When the pandemic allows, SPECTRUM's physical space will re-open at more than double our original size! Thanks to a grant from the Region of Waterloo Arts Fund, Trisha Abe will be creating a new mural for the space to make it even more welcoming and vibrant. We look forward to being able to invite people in!

By the Numbers



796 Zoom sessions



344,345 minutes of Zoom



An average of **180 Zoom participants** each month



270 people participated in our Rainbow Diversity Training workshops



178 people attended our virtual Pride events

Counselling with OK2BME
August 2020 - June 2021
129 sessions for 48 clients



SPECTRUM's New Branding

Thanks to a generous grant from the LGBTQ2 Community Capacity Fund that has allowed us to engage in a year-long capacity-building project, SPECTRUM has been able to complete a re-brand that speaks to some of the changes we've made to the organization this year and the direction we are working towards.



Our Project Excelsior team worked with The Public studio, a community-centered, social justice design studio, to develop a new logo and brand standards. The new logo speaks to the way SPECTRUM provides 2SLGBTQ+ communities with a space for refuge, which in turn, leads to both personal and political growth, to challenging conversations, and, with time, a more joyful world.

In the new logo, we see the idea of “space” and “refuge” represented by a rainbow form. As letterforms move toward this space, we see them coming to life. We are introduced to a sense of playfulness, optimism, joy, and resiliency. This concept also allows space to explore the dichotomies in this work, namely, the joyful, playful, unapologetic ways of being within the space, alongside the professionalism needed to speak truth to power and advocate on behalf of our communities in the more public sphere.

Spotlight on SPECTRUM

Multicultural Connect

Many decades ago in Canada, 2SLGBTQ+ individuals lived in fear of being arrested, assaulted or even murdered because of who they were. After many long years of work, the situation here is much improved, although human rights and the safety of trans people lag a good 25 years behind that for other rainbow folk. The situation in many other regions of the world is unfortunately even worse than it was in Canada in the mid-20th century: several countries prescribe the death penalty for people belonging to sexual and gender minorities.

SPECTRUM hears regularly from 2SLGBTQ+ people around the world who are living in challenging or even life-threatening situations because of the laws or cultural taboos about their gender and sexual identities where they live. They tell us heart-wrenching stories of persecution.

For those 2SLGBTQ+ newcomers to Canada, some do get support, if only emotional, from the local immigrant population from their country of origin, but many rainbow newcomers do not get that kind of support, since the culture in their country of origin does not support rainbow-identified individuals.

Though we do not offer legal advice or work in immigration or with refugee sponsorship we do host a monthly Rainbow Multicultural Connect gathering. The main purpose of these social gatherings is for us to learn from each other as a diverse community. We are not only all members of the Rainbow community but we also come from a variety of cultural backgrounds. SPECTRUM's Rainbow Multicultural Connect provides emotional support for newcomers that they may not be able to find in their local immigrant communities.

Although our catchment area is, strictly speaking, Waterloo Region, we serve a broader community in Southwestern Ontario because we are one of very few strong rainbow organizations doing this work.

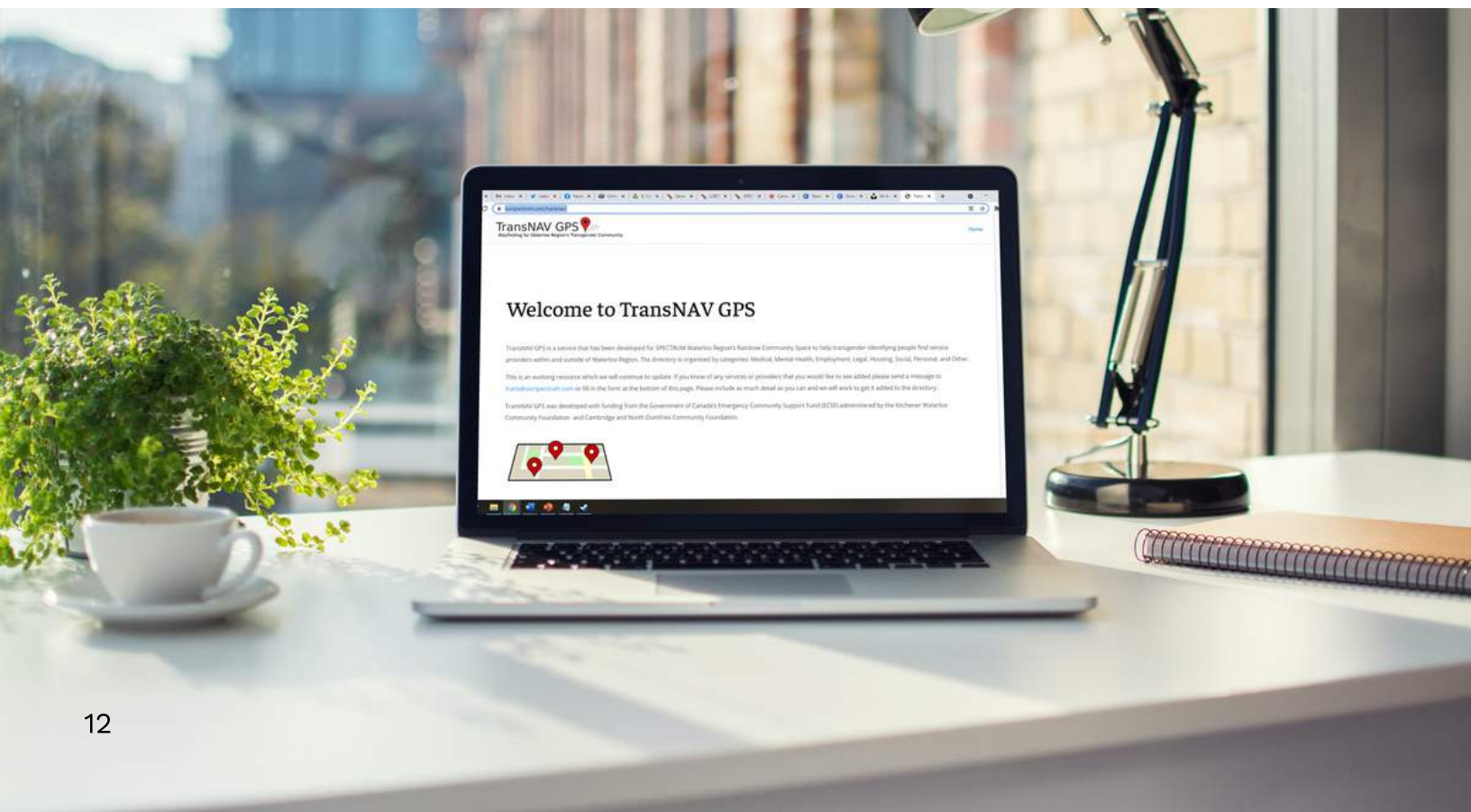


Spotlight on Transgender Services

Our Board member, Melissa Paige Kennedy, oversees the organization's programs and services for transgender people.

This year we added two new peer support groups to our existing roster (a third new group just for Cambridge is in the works now). That's nine different groups each month -- and of course they've been happening virtually during the pandemic.

Thanks to an Emergency Community Support Fund grant administered by the Kitchener Waterloo Community Foundation and the Cambridge and North Dumfries Community Foundation, we have recently launched TransNAV GPS, an online directory where local trans folks can find appropriate, safe, and helpful service providers in our community and throughout southern Ontario.





Spotlight on Rainbow Diversity Training

Rainbow Diversity Training is SPECTRUM's 2SLGBTQ+ cultural competency education program. In 2020-2021 we provided 13 sessions to clients including 270 participants.

As part of Project Excelsior, we were able to spend time re-designing our curriculum, including the development of new interactive activities, workbooks, and online learning modules. We're grateful to our partners at Waterloo Brewing, Waterloo Public Library, and Volunteer Action Centre for taking part in test sessions that allowed us to refine our curriculum.

The Rainbow Diversity Training program will be officially re-launched this fall. Stay tuned to our website for updates.

Statement of Activities

For the Year Ending July 31, 2021

Revenue and Support	2021	2020
Earned Income (Interest)	\$271.00	\$186.00
Donations and Memberships	\$38,730.00	\$38,320.00
Federal Grants	\$131,943.00	\$0.00
Provincial Grants	\$0.00	\$6,430.00
Municipal Grants	\$6,150.00	\$6,891.00
Other Grants	\$128,239.00	\$0.00
Net Sales of Merchandise	\$1,226.00	\$0.00
Training and Presentation Fees	\$1,335.00	\$1,330.00
Less Restricted Funds	-\$5,588.00	-\$4,947.00
	\$302,306.00	\$48,210.00
Expenditures	2021	2020
Occupancy Costs	\$5,509.00	\$7,380.00
Office Supplies/Furniture	\$100.00	\$2,650.00
Insurance	\$1,586.00	\$1,542.00
Program Supplies	\$2,531.00	\$5,676.00
Bank and Service Fees	\$689.00	\$646.00
Events	\$472.00	\$1,099.00
Leasehold Improvements	\$5,633.00	\$0.00
TransNAV GPS (ECSF Grant)	\$36,725.00	\$0.00
Trans Toolkit (Canadian Women's Foundation Grant)	\$28,937.00	\$0.00
Capacity Building (WAGE Grant)	\$131,943.00	\$0.00
Admin Salary (United Way)	\$46,077.00	\$0.00
OTF Grant Project	\$0.00	\$3,993.00
Audit Fees	\$2,000.00	\$0.00
Chrysalis Fund for Mental Health	\$19,665.00	\$9,415.00
Prior Year adjustments	-\$2,779.00	-\$756.00
	\$279,088.00	\$31,645.00
Net Surplus	\$23,218.00	\$16,565.00

Thank You!

We are grateful to our funding partners including Women and Gender Equality Canada, United Way Waterloo Region Communities, the Canadian Women's Foundation, the Bell Let's Talk Community Fund, the Kitchener Waterloo Community Foundation, Region of Waterloo Arts Fund, the Cambridge and North Dumfries Community Foundation, the City of Kitchener, the City of Waterloo, and the City of Cambridge.

We are also grateful to the individuals, families, and businesses who have so generously donated to keep SPECTRUM operating. Until this year, we have not formally requested permission to share our donors names publicly but going forward, it will be our pleasure to recognize our supporters (if they give us permission to do so). Your name may not be listed here but please know that we truly appreciate your support.



- Community Fund
- Uvaco Community Fund





Waterloo Region's
Rainbow Community Space

