



**2012-2013 Chairperson's Report
Queer Ontario Annual General Meeting
May 25, 2013**

My intent with this Chairperson's Report is to highlight some of Queer Ontario's accomplishments over the past six months, a number of needs we continue to have and priorities for the organization going forward.

Since our last AGM in November of 2012, Queer Ontario (QO) has been aligning its financial books with a fiscal year that reschedules our AGM's to the spring hence today's Annual General Meeting. We have seen a slow but steady interest from members outside the GTA in our work with a welcome consistency coming from the Ottawa area. We have continued our support of Bill C-279 as it made its way through Parliament and now continuing to be debated in the Senate, and through that, have engaged ourselves in a highly sensitized discussion regarding gender identity and gender expression towards the development of a position paper. We are also in the process of completing a position paper on religion and queers. Other initiatives that continue to be in progress include the Queer Liberation Theory Project that is now in the post-production phase, a template for a QO E-Newsletter is completed with distribution still to come, and with the assistance of a student on placement we have commenced the development of a provincial database of queer resources. All of this while addressing political issues that arise such as our deputing at Toronto City Hall regarding the threat to withhold funds from Pride Toronto this year and addressing a motion at the Toronto Catholic District School Board to restrict the formation of any GSAs in their board. Finally, earlier this month we held our second and very successful QO Salon on Queers and Poverty. This event not only had us begin to look at and discuss a difficult issue the LGBT communities have yet to adequately address, but opens the possibility of potential coalition work with the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty (OCAP) and/or expanding our agenda to support anti-poverty initiatives.

Despite all of these activities and progress in our work, one need only look at our Projects List to see that we are a group that is rich in ideas and poor in resources. There is no shortage on interesting, creative and innovative ideas that will further a progressive critical queer liberation perspective. What we do have a shortage of is a solid set of reliable volunteers that are willing to do the everyday grunt work that is

required of every group or organization, particularly if you are a grassroots, non-profit one without charitable status and a shoe string budget such as Queer Ontario. We also need a set of active activists, who are critical in their thinking, strategic in their actions, unafraid to challenge the status quo and prepared to fight the fight for liberation as opposed to assimilation. We currently have a talented, passionate and highly dedicated group of activists that are at the core of QO's work, but that work is getting increasingly heavier on all of us. Therefore, we need to attract new volunteers and activists who can bring the same kind passion, drive and skill level to help us further this important work. One need not serve in an elected position to take on any number of opportunities in QO. Also, we have discussed more than once, but taken little action on developing a more creative/artistic side to our liberation work. My hope is that we can encourage and support existing members with such ideas and attract new members who can contribute their creativeness to our activism.

This leads into a number of priorities I see for Queer Ontario going forward. In reflecting on these past six months and more, it is very clear to me we need to strengthen Queer Ontario's infrastructure, not only in terms of filling elected positions but filling also the many areas of support needed to keep our work going and to keep us relevant. I say this recognizing that we are also slowly but surely attracting the interest of queers outside the GTA that want to contribute their voice to our work as a progressive queer Ontarian. Therefore, I believe a priority that we need to take up as a major agenda item at our upcoming summer retreat is to look at the creation of a province-wide network of QO chapters as outlined by our bylaws and once again to ensure we have the material infrastructure in place to create and implement that apparatus. Speaking of bylaws and in respect to them, terms in elected positions are limited and it is rightfully expected that individuals who have served two terms step down to allow others the opportunity to lead and to refresh the organization in the process. As Queer Ontario moves on in years, it is important that attention is paid to our succession process and that those of us in leadership positions do what we can to mentor and groom future leaders of QO to ensure the continuation of our important work and accomplishment of many of our goals.

Thank you,

Nick Mulé
Chairperson,
Queer Ontario