



Annual Report

2019 | 20

Ontario Aboriginal HIV / AIDS Strategy



Oahas Bundle

VISION

Oahas exists to end HIV infections in Indigenous communities in Ontario



MISSION

Oahas leads culturally distinct and sensitive programs and supports to prevent the transmission of HIV and other STBBIs* through safety knowledge and care with Indigenous People to achieve well-being.

*Sexually Transmitted Blood Borne Infections
(Oahas 5-year Strategic Plan 2019-2024)

Cover Art,
untitled, by S.H., Thunder Bay Painting Group, 2019

Message from the President

Sarah Tilley



In keeping with the restructuring from last fiscal year, 2019-20 was a year for capacity building and stabilization of the day-to-day operations. While Oahas worked to strengthen the Board and fulfill its governance role, milestones for the year included the 5-year Strategic Plan, support of the capacity building of Oahas operations, and management of the transition in leadership with the departure of the Board President and Executive Director.

Approved in June of 2019, the new Strategic Plan was the first step in solidifying our foundation, putting the Oahas vision at the front and centre of all the work that we do. To achieve this vision, the three pillars of the Oahas activities were identified as harm reduction, HIV Testing and extending practical supports to Indigenous Peoples Living With HIV/AIDS (IPHAs) through culturally distinct and sensitive programs.

In order to effectively implement the Board's direction, the year was spent in capacity building – through professional development of all staff, enhanced operational supports, and changes in physical location to accommodate the growth of Oahas. One major outcome of this capacity building was the expansion of the Oahas “flagship” harm reduction program in Toronto, to the other five sites. I am pleased to note that by fiscal year-end, harm reduction programs were in place in London, Sault Ste-Marie, Thunder Bay, Ottawa, and Sudbury. All six sites continue to work on building a robust harm reduction program through consistent community outreach, education, and advocacy.

Finally, the year saw a change in leadership with the departure of the Board Chair and Executive Director. Midway through the year, I was fortunate to have the opportunity for greater involvement with Oahas, succeeding former Presidents, Duane Morrisseau-Beck and Jasmine Cotnam. Having joined during their tenure, I feel privileged to have learned from their leadership. Towards the end of the fiscal year, Executive Director Mark Atanasoff moved on, having secured a measure of stability for the organization. I thank them all for their leadership and unwavering commitment to the organization; for steering Oahas in the right direction, and for their personal guidance along the way as a new member of the Board.

It is with gratitude to those who have come before me, and deep humility to the community that we serve, that I continue my tenure at Oahas. Each day is a challenge in which we present our best selves, and I am committed, along with my Board colleagues, to work towards a greater and meaningful involvement of IPHAs, and to work in harmony with the community, funding and agency partners, and staff, to fulfil the Oahas vision.

Message from the Interim Executive Director

Glenn Checkley

2019-2020 was another year of transition, growth and development for Ontario Aboriginal HIV/AIDS Strategy. This Annual Report captures the highlights of our work over the past year, demonstrating our commitment to implementing our mission in ways that are culturally grounded, and community driven.

Having only recently, and temporarily, stepped into this role, I am particularly grateful for the work of the previous Executive Director, Mark Atanasoff. His stewardship of the agency has laid the groundwork that we will build off of for years to come. While the organization's leadership was exceptional, I also have to acknowledge the skill, and commitment that our team has demonstrated, as the direction of the ED and Board could not have been implemented without the diverse capabilities and strengths of our frontline team. We have made incredible progress as people, and as an organization – and this is something we see clearly reflected in the outcomes of our work over the past year.

While most of Oahas' response to COVID-19 and Indigenous and Black solidarity in the face of racism and structural violence will be detailed in our next annual report, I will say that these challenges have brought us closer together across the Sector, with our partners, and with community. We will continue to navigate these challenges together, and emerge stronger, I am certain.



Chi-Miigwetch

Board of Directors 2019 - 2020



SARAH TILLEY | President

DON TURNER | Vice President

MICHAEL BAXTER | Treasurer

WILLIAM REYNOLDS | Director

DAVID DRAKEFORD | Director

TRISHA LONGBOAT | Director

K'MESHA MALONEY | Director

KEEGAN HOBSON | Director

JASON STAATS | Director

Staff

Toronto Administration

Mark Atanasoff
Glenn Checkley
Carol Buenafé
Amber Gooden
Sam MacLeod

Toronto Program Office

Sarah Luey
Pesokas McKay-Loescher
Ames McCloskey
Alison Bray
Allen Woodhouse

Thunder Bay

Melissa Deschamps
Rene Boucher
Sarah Kaukinen

London

Christina Doxtator
Delores Doxtator
Holly Taylor
Destini Millar

Sault Ste-Marie

Kristine Lalonde
Jennifer Cheryk

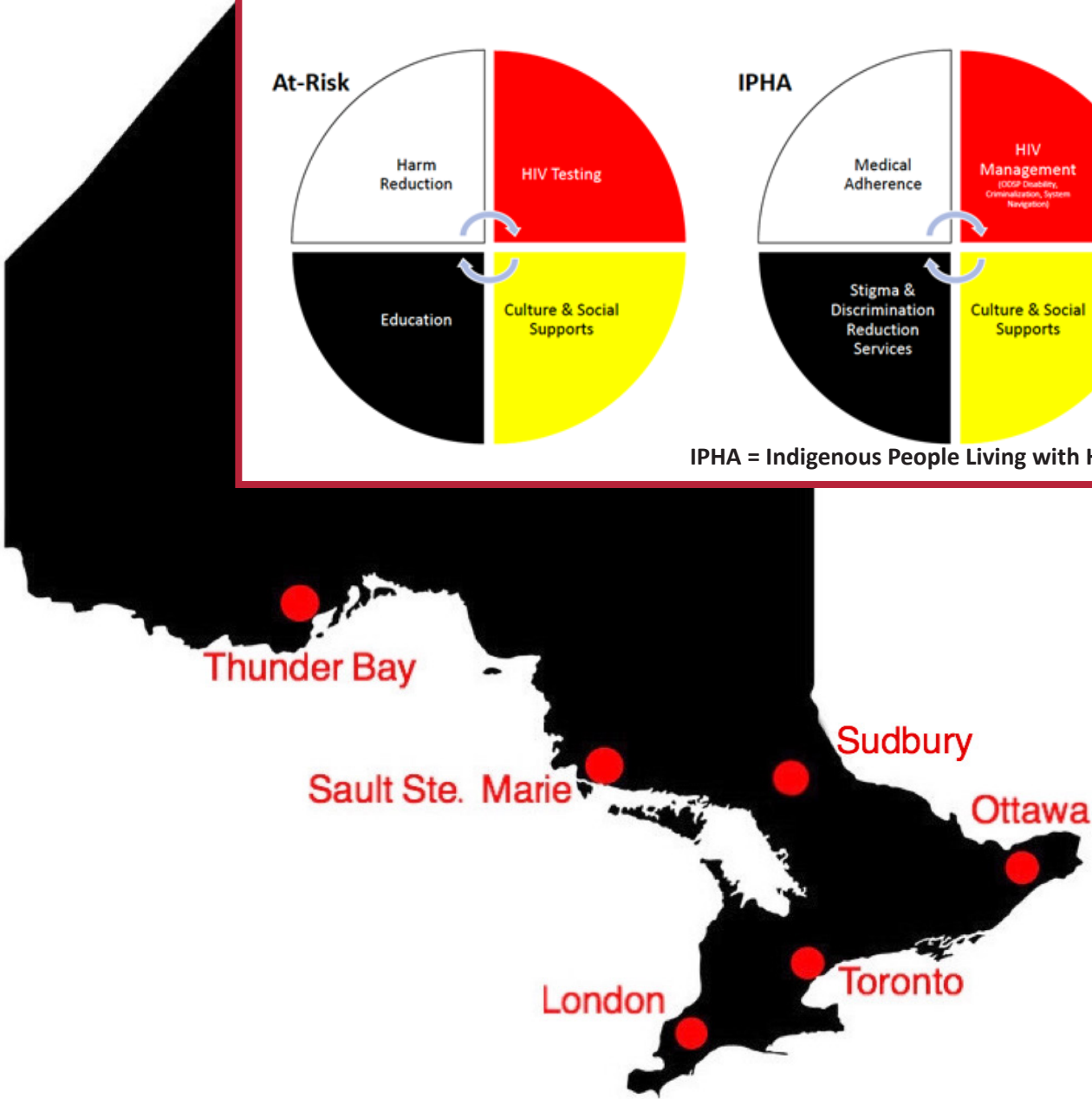
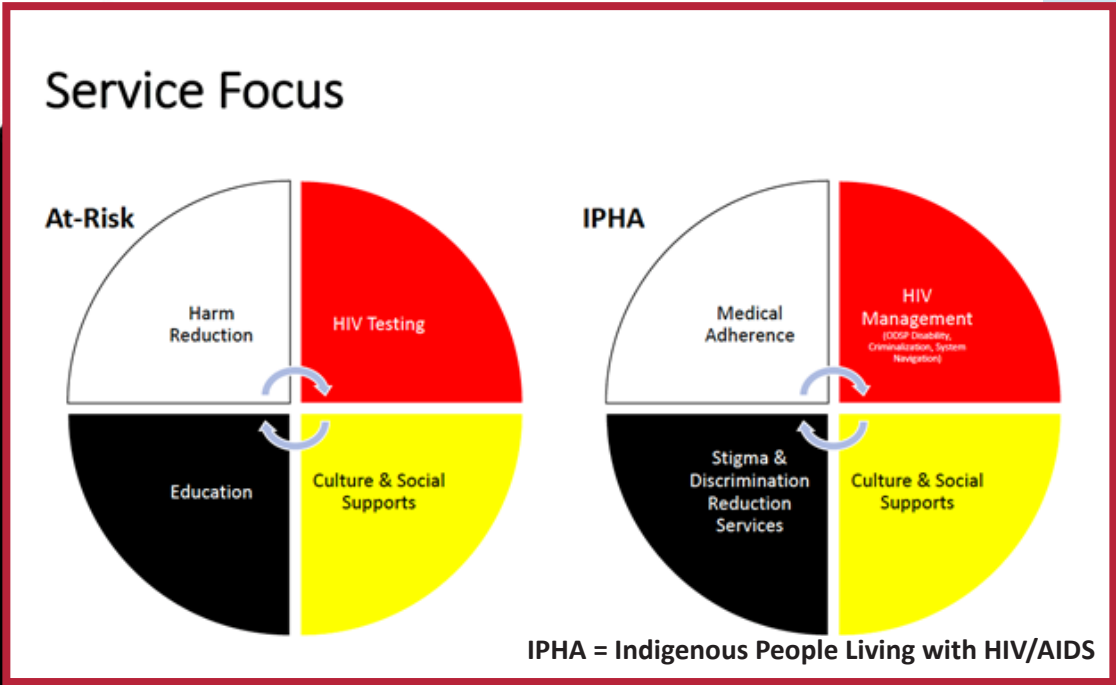
Ottawa

Isabelle Aubé

Sudbury

Tina Rowe
Steven Loranger
Skylar Louttit





SAFETY | KNOWLEDGE | CARE

CELEBRATING COMMUNITY

YOU HAVE BEEN INVITED TO

October 28 2019
Monday
11:30 - 1:30 pm

OAHAS: LUNCH & LEARN

(HIV 101)

Join us for an interactive discussion, lunch and participate in Health Literacy Jeopardy

Topics include

- Harm Reduction
- Education
- Prevention of HIV/AIDS/STBBI
- Reducing Stigmas
- Spreading culturally specific awareness

ONTARIO ABORIGINAL HIV/AIDS STRATEGY (OAHAS) OTTAWA OFFICE
815 ST-LAURENT BLVD, SUITE 229
OTTAWA, ON | K1K 3A7

PLEASE RSVP AT GABEETHY@OHAS.ORG OR 905-364-9648 BY OCTOBER 26TH
(Space is limited for each session.)

Funded by:

Tea and Bannock with Nokomis

Come on out and visit
"Nokomis Martina"

We will be having tea and
bannock on

Monday November 25th, 2019
from 11:00 am – 2:00 pm

At Oahas New Office
95 Pine Street
back entrance of Sudbury
Action Centre

Nokomis
Martina will be able
to sit with you one on
one if you are
looking for Spiritual
guidance and
support.
Hope to see you out
Come visit with the
Elder

Niibii Shaaboo

Niibii Shaaboo

Oahas
ONTARIO ABORIGINAL
HIV/AIDS STRATEGY

Celebrate Your Superpower!

QUIT DODGING FUN!

MARCH 9TH, 2020
4-7PM @ INDIGENIOUS FRIENDSHIP CENTER

Come out and Join Oahas
in a Fun and Inpowering
Dodgeball Game followed
by Pizza & Conversations!



OAHAS INDIGENOUS EVENT

London InterCommunity Health Centre—Oasis Room

1:30pm — 3:30 pm

November 28, 2019

Teachings of Songs & Hand Drumming

By: Cliff Summers

For further information please contact Christina at 519-719-4983



Snacks and refreshments will be provided



Ontario
Aboriginal
HIV | AIDS
Strategy

**282 PARLIAMENT STREET
TORONTO, ON**

COMMUNITY MOVIE NIGHTS

EVERY MONDAY FROM

07:00PM - 09:00PM

ALL SUMMER LONG

ALL ARE WELCOME

**AT 282 PARLIAMENT STREET
SOUTH OF DUNDAS ST E**

STARTING MONDAY JUNE 3RD

FALL EQUINOX CEREMONY & FEAST

Tuesday, Sept 17

5-8pm

Elevate NWO

102-106 Cumberland St., N.

everyone welcome



Program Highlights

Sault Ste. Marie

Sault Ste Marie has been a busy site for Oahas this past year. With our continued Monday brunches (held at NRC) and harm reduction outreach (walks and drop offs). We were able to secure a safe testing site with our partners Algoma Public Health, HARP and the Neighborhood Resources Centre who provided the space. We began to test once a month starting with our first ever testing event in December for World AIDS Day, Oahas provided the community with a delicious brunch and a dreamcatcher making event. We were able to part take in various tabling and educational events which were well received by the community. Oahas continues to build and develop strong partnerships within our community. This year SSM welcomed two new staff to the team Jennifer Cheryk and Skylar Louttit, we are very excited to have them both, the community and our partnered agencies have been extremely welcoming to the new team members. We are looking forward to the planning and implementation of various programs and events this coming year! Stay Tuned!

-Jennifer C.



Tabling in SSM

Ottawa

It has been a challenging year for the Ottawa office and we have tried our best to respond to the needs of the community. One of the highlights of the year was hosting the Indigenous AIDS Awareness

Week in the Ottawa office, in collaboration with the AIDS Committee of Ottawa

on November 29, 2019. It was a well-attended community gathering

that included a potluck, an HIV 101 presentation, singing and

drumming. Indigenous participants included Elder Malcom Sauls,

Inuit throat singers Tarniriik

Samantha and Caitlyn Metcalfe and

Indigenous artists David Charette and

David Finkle. Aside from

cultural events, we have focused on

strengthening our partnerships with the

local community.

-Carol B.



Elder Malcom Sauls



Inuit Throat Singers

Thunder Bay

We had a very busy year this last fiscal here in the Thunder Bay. We had our Spring, and Fall Equinox, as well as our Summer and Winter Solstice Ceremonies that are always a sacred part of our work. We also took part in Thunder Pride Parade and had an information booth at the Pride Celebration. I dressed up as Mr. Condom Guy and our members helped us create an Oahas logo sign that volunteers carried in the parade. It was a great opportunity for us to get the word out of who Oahas is. Looking forward to other events. This year we did an art project like last year's. We put together a quilt over a couple of sessions for Aboriginal AIDS Awareness Week and World AIDS Day. Each of the PHAs created a square that was eventually sewn onto the quilt. Then we drew a circle and square around the smaller ones to represent how PHAs are supported by a non-indigenous ASO and an Indigenous one. It showcased how our

ElevateNWO and Oahas work together to support our members. We hope to eventually use it when Oahas goes out to community to present workshops, specifically on IPHA support, as well as how we can create awareness on working with groups who may not specifically have an indigenous focus, but this resource can open a conversation on how we can work together.

-Rene B.



Quilt Project



Staff Rene Boucher as the Condom Guy

Toronto

April 2019 was when we started our monthly testing community BBQ's at 282 Parliament Street. Each month we would share space with anywhere from 50 – 80 community members and serve food, drum and sing, and make tobacco ties. We collaborated with 2-Spirited People of the 1st Nations for additional support for community and organizing. We were partnered with Hassle Free Clinic, who would provide Anonymous Rapid HIV Testing, Sherbourne Health Centre, who would offer Hepatitis C Testing, and Anishnawbe Health Toronto, who would offer Diabetes screening and education.

Our Community BBQ events were the highlight each month as it brought so many people together to share food, information and enjoy community.

-Ames M.



Making Tobacco Ties



POC Testing BBQ

Sudbury

One the of biggest success stories for Sudbury Site is our new office location, located at 95 Pine street in the back of Sudbury Action Centre for Youth, since moving here, we have seen large number of community members accessing our services daily, with our programs every month from Point of care testing, Tea & Bannock with Nokomis, Pancake breakfast, our newest program “The Art of Healing Circle” Beading workshop also our daily Drop ins, and Outdoor drop-in at Hnatyshyn Park. We are very fortunate to be surrounded by numerous services, including N’Swakamok Native Friendship Centre, Gezhtoojig Employment & Training, Northern youth Services Inner city home of Sudbury, Sudbury Courthouse, Sudbury Action Centre youth, Shkagamik-Kwe Health Centre, Elizabeth Fry Society of Sudbury.

-Steven L.

Ribbon Skirt-making



Sudbury Staff

London



Staff Christina Doxtator with Jagmeet Singh

The event that Oahas London is most proud of for the 2019/2020 year would have to be the International Women’s Day event that was held March 6, 2020 at My Sisters Place. Lindsay Matheson, MP and Jagmeet Singh, NDP Leader both stopped by to greet the women and gave words of encouragement. We had a Traditional Opening with the Deshkan zii Bi Drum Group singing the Women’s Honor Song. Our activities included foot soaks with cedar, meditation, Dream Catcher making, smudge bowl and medicine teachings. The women were treated with a wonderful chili/taco lunch with fried bread and all the fixings. The day ended with each woman receiving a Women’s Power Gift Bag full of self-care items. All the women thoroughly enjoyed the day and Oahas received plenty of thanks for the event. This was

definitely the highlight and most successful event in London!

-Christina D.



Jagmeet Singh

Harm Reduction Program

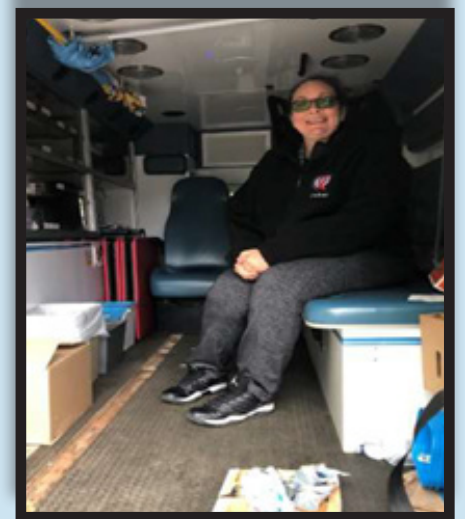
The Oahas Harm Reduction program was established in Toronto by the founder, Laverne Monette, in 2009. Ten years later, Toronto and Sudbury had robust street outreach programs, distributing a variety of kits to the community. With the increase in funding for harm reduction, the provincial community development coordinator, Alison Bray, travelled to London, Thunder Bay, Ottawa and Sault Ste. Marie to start up the community outreach program and the distribution of kits. She also travelled to Sudbury where the program was already underway, to lend her support and share wise practices. Alison herself was a peer in the Harm Reduction program in Toronto for many years and her well-earned expertise in the field was shared to all Oahas sites. Partnerships were formed with the local ASOs and public health units, as well as grassroots community agencies. The increase in the use of opioids and drug overdoses were also addressed, along with naloxone training for all staff.



Alison in Thunder Bay, with staff Rene and Melissa, June 2019



Harm Reduction Tabling in Oahas events

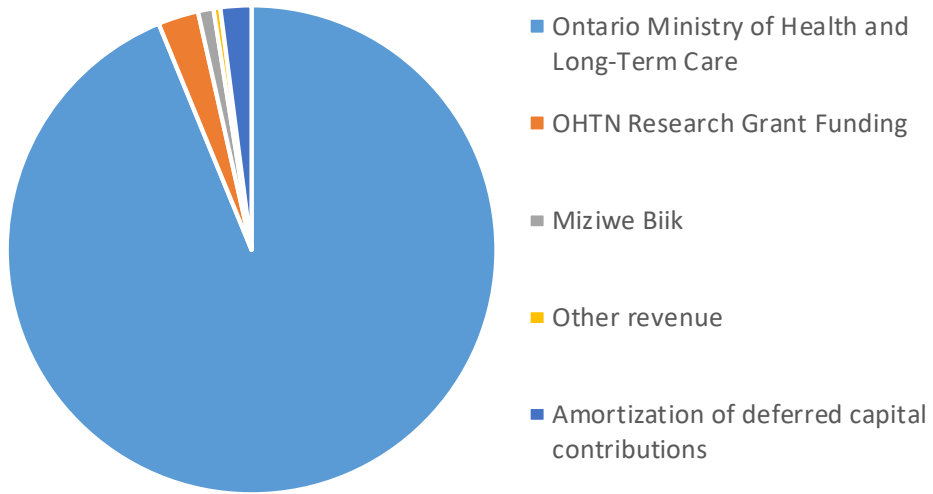


Alison inside "Elle" the outreach van of Elevate NWO, Thunder Bay

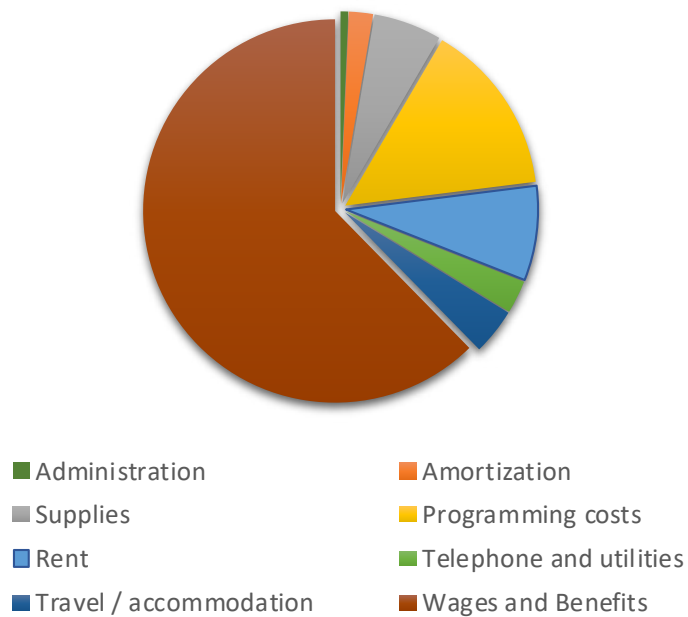
Financials

Revenue	Core	IDU	Other	Total
Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care	1,421,255	384,355		1,805,610
OHTN Research Grant Funding			51,520	51,520
Miziwe Biik			19,703	19,703
Other revenue			8,636	8,636
Amortization of deferred capital contributions	39,367			39,367
	<u>1,460,622</u>	<u>384,355</u>	<u>79,859</u>	<u>1,924,836</u>
Expenses	Core	IDU	Other	Total
Administration	9,828	2,614		12,442
Amortization	39,367			39,367
Supplies	74,748	36,002		110,750
Programming costs	236,461	22,842	22,448	281,751
Rent	124,129	30,000		154,129
Telephone and utilities	47,862	5,759		53,621
Travel / accommodation	66,772	8,515		75,287
Wages and Benefits	861,514	278,636	63,365	1,203,515
	<u>1,460,681</u>	<u>384,368</u>	<u>85,813</u>	<u>1,930,862</u>
Excess of revenue over expenses (expenses over revenue)	- 59	- 13	- 5,954	- 6,026

2019-2020 Oahas Revenue



2019-2020 Oahas Expenses



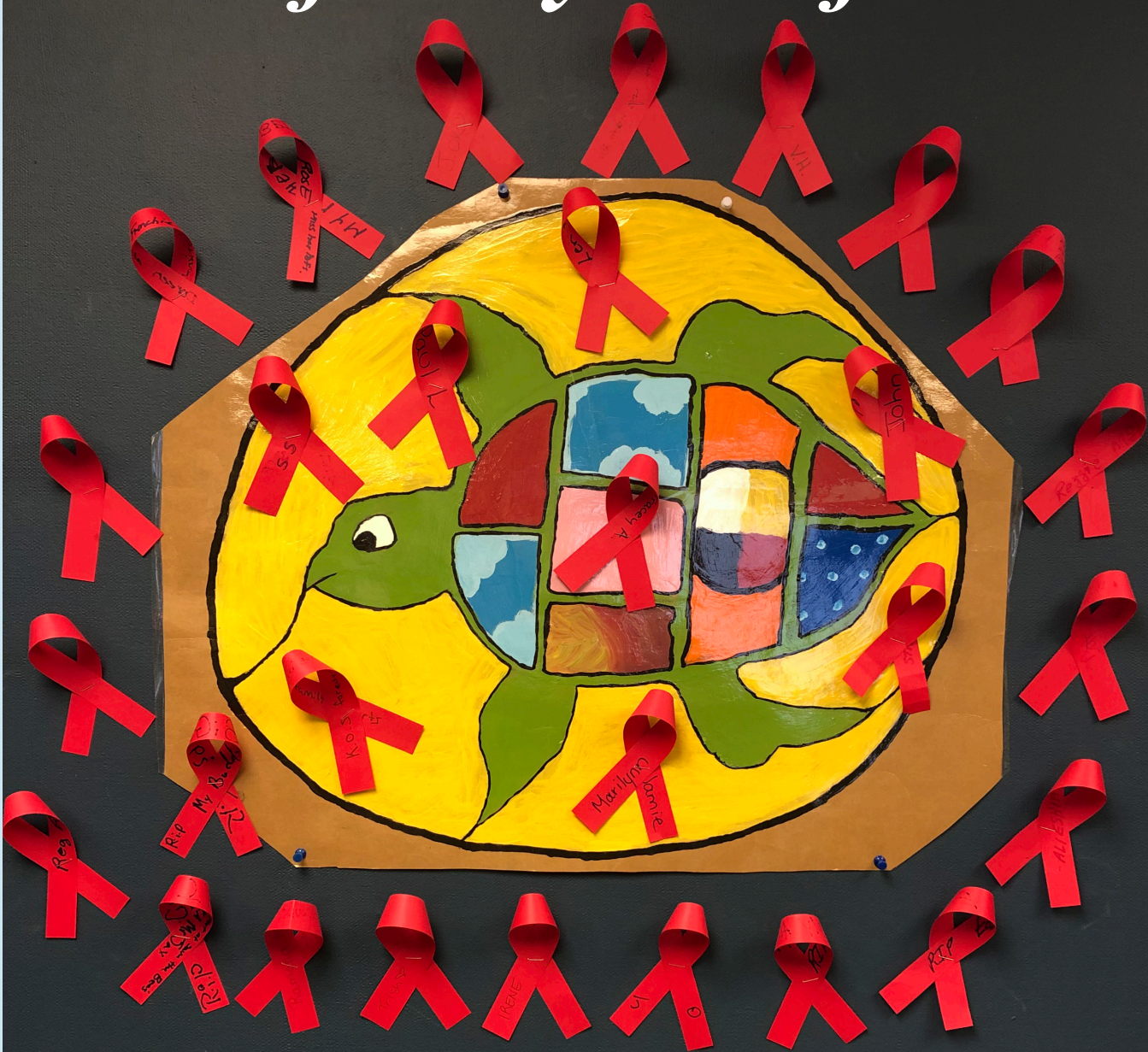
Miigwetch Qujanamiik Nia:wen MERCI

Oahas thanks all funders, donors, volunteers and partners for their continued support since our establishment in 1995, our incorporation in 2005 up to today, to help fulfil our mandate of reducing the incidence of HIV/AIDS in the Indigenous community throughout Ontario. We also acknowledge our anonymous donors and many volunteers who have worked tirelessly and whose efforts and interest have not waned over the years.

Thank you!

*AIDS and Hepatitis C Programs, Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
Ontario HIV Treatment Network
Miziwe Biik Aboriginal Employment and Training
Canadian Institute of Health Research
Gilbert Centre
Sudbury Community Foundation
Kenda Hoffer
Rotary International
Yelibert Cruz Roo
Stephanie Fung
United Way*

Remembering our family and friends



Memorial Tribute, Art Therapy Program, Thunder Bay

Our deepest gratitude to our Elders and Knowledge Keepers who have helped us in immeasurable ways during the year. They hold the light for each of us in our journey with Oahas. Sharing their wisdom, keeping tradition alive in our communities and supporting our respective paths keep our circle strong.

Pat Green

Linda Plain

Linda Barkman

Wanda Whitebird

Martina Osawamick

Joan Elliott

Mary Elliott

Cliff Summers

William Morin

Ma-nee Chacaby

Carol Hermiston

Dave Jones

Malcom Sauls



Ontario Aboriginal HIV/AIDS Strategy

**Administration Office
164 Eglinton Ave. East, Suite 301
Toronto, Ontario M4P 1G4**

**1.800.743.8851 | 416.944.9481
www.oahas.org**

