



REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY



Ovarian Cancer Canada
Cancer de l'ovaire Canada

2018-2019

Inspiring messages from our Chair and CEO

This past year has been one like no other! Thanks to the dedicated staff of this organization, our partners and our community, many exciting things have happened – one in particular that bears singling out!

Last year we promised to ensure the voice of every person living with ovarian cancer is strongly represented within the corridors of power to bring about change and to save lives. Your voices spoke loudly and Ovarian Cancer Canada and its community was heard! The outcome was that the Government of Canada announced an investment of \$10 million dollars to Ovarian Cancer Canada to fund research. This proves that when we put our voices together, and remain persistent, we can accomplish our goals.

We know that it is through research that we will impact our ultimate goal: for women with ovarian cancer, and those at risk of the disease, to live fuller, better, longer lives. Working with a team of expert researchers and scientists, we will invest in the best, most promising research to achieve the best outcomes for women affected by this disease.

As we celebrate this historic accomplishment for our community, we know that there is more to be done, more to be accomplished, and many more successes yet to come.

We will continue to work together with our partners and our community to raise funds for research and for our programs knowing that, together, we can make a difference in the lives and future outcomes for women across the country.



A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Theresa Marie Underhill".

Theresa Marie Underhill
Chair of the Board

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Elisabeth Baugh".

Elisabeth Baugh
Chief Executive Officer

We saw great success this year. It is proof that when we work together, we are stronger.

The \$10 million funding was a long time coming and we're so excited to have this commitment – but it's not the end of our work, nor does it mean we can afford to take a step back and rest. In fact, it propels us forward to focus on priorities that will impact lives:

- 1) Increase investments in research.
- 2) Improve care for women with ovarian cancer.
- 3) Save lives by preventing ovarian cancer.

On behalf of Ovarian Cancer Canada, and the thousands of women and their families who are affected by this disease every day, I want to say thank you for your life-changing support.

Dedicated to changing lives...

We speak up and speak out, individually and together.

We speak as women living with ovarian cancer, we speak for those who can no longer speak for themselves, for and with their families, and for those yet to be diagnosed.

We are catalysts for change and we won't be satisfied until women with ovarian cancer and those at risk across Canada live fuller, better, longer lives.

We are Ovarian Cancer Canada and that is our “why”.



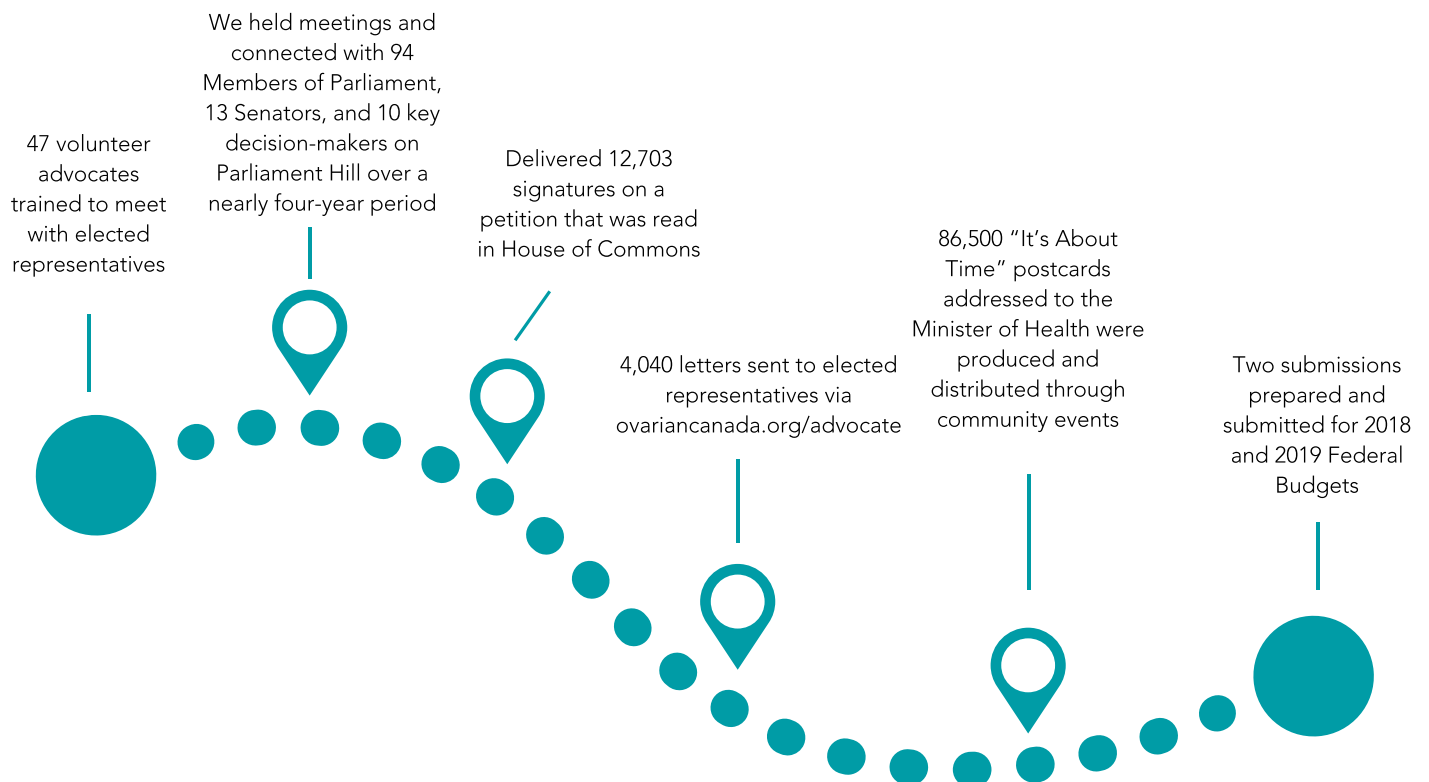
... and it's working — we're now taking a historic step forward.

We shared our stories, raised our voices and spoke as one and the roar could be heard everywhere, from local communities to Parliament Hill in Ottawa. Our message was strategic and focused. It was loud, clear, bold and powerful:

- Five Canadian women are lost to the disease every day
- Ovarian cancer research must be a priority
- We asked for \$10 million
- And we were successful!

In March 2019 we secured \$10 million — from the Federal Budget — for ovarian cancer research — for the first time ever! This is a major step forward for our community – but together we need to keep the momentum going.

Journey to Success:





The \$10 million will take us further in understanding and treating ovarian cancer in the future ...

What we've learned from research is that ovarian cancer is not a "one-size-fits-all" cancer. It's complex, with many subtypes. But there can come a time when it's successfully and sustainably identified, treated and managed, when we know more. And that dream, that goal just received a \$10 million boost! The federal funding is being used to focus on three specific and critical areas:

1. Developing better experimental models that more closely emulate the disease, to aid in the design of better treatment strategies.
2. Identifying new treatment strategies overall, given that women diagnosed with ovarian cancer have few available treatment options.
3. We will also facilitate the successful translation of novel therapies into new clinical trials based on cancer subtype. For patients this will mean an important shift to more personalized medicine, where they will have access to treatments that are known to be effective for their specific type of ovarian cancer.

We have also convened a group of leading scientists and other partners — a Governing Council — to provide oversight in the most effective use of the funding.



... while women affected have much to teach us today.

Meet Anne Chase, 2018 recipient of the Peggy Truscott Award of Hope

At home and internationally, Anne Chase is a force of nature. Diagnosed with ovarian cancer in 1998, she's made helping others her top priority.

"I really enjoy meeting people," says Anne from her home in Regina, Saskatchewan. "If it helps when I sit with someone during chemo, or go to a doctor's visit with them, that's my reward."

Back in 2004, Anne's volunteering efforts brought her to a church where she presented an Ovarian Cancer Canada awareness session to an audience of about 400. Afterwards, the pastor told her about a young mother of twins who had just been diagnosed. It was then that Anne decided to start a local support group. It had just six members to start, but today the Saskatchewan Ovarian Cancer Survivors Group is about 100 people strong.

As word of these support meetings spread, Anne was contacted by a provincial group focused on gynecologic cancers. She soon became a patient advocate, pressing the province for public funding of approved drugs. When Regina's first gynecologic oncologist was brought to town on a six-month contract, Anne convinced the Minister of Health to extend her term. That same gynecologic oncologist has been providing care locally ever since.

"It made me realize that people who have experienced this disease have a lot of pull," says Anne. "When we get together, things get done. And that's a good thing, because there's a lot to do. For instance, there are no clinical trials in Saskatchewan and that's definitely an issue I want to look into."



"I am incredibly proud of my mom for winning the Peggy Truscott Award of Hope," says Deb Clark, Board Member with Ovarian Cancer Canada. "She has had an impact not only on the individual women fighting this disease in Saskatchewan, but her advocacy has led to significant changes in women's access to specialists. Supporting the survivor group she founded and being a member of the Board here are very personal causes for me. My mother-in-law was diagnosed with ovarian cancer at the age of 44 and died nine months later. Eight years later my mom was diagnosed. Mom is now a 21-year survivor."

I have met so many brave and inspiring women, including my mom. I want to see their chances of survival improve, which is why this work is so important to me."

*-Deb Clark, Board Member and daughter of Anne Chase
(pictured lower left)*

The \$10 million in federal funding is a critical accomplishment, proof that grassroots community advocacy can drive impact – and the ongoing support from across the community is also vital to our continued success.

Your generosity by the numbers...

20,000+

Individual donors

300+

corporate partners and sponsors

80+

community events organized by dedicated community volunteers and partners

A huge “thank you” to all the individual donors and families, corporate partners, foundations and community groups across Canada who helped fund our mission this year.

Meet the Valentinuzzi sisters

Vancouver, British Columbia



Twin sisters Cristina and Stephanie lost their mom, Esterina, to ovarian cancer in 2011. They miss her dearly, but have made it their mission to keep their mom’s memory and legacy alive. This means following their mother’s strong example of giving back to community and supporting Ovarian Cancer Canada. This duo has left no stone uncovered. They’ve fundraised and rallied support for ovarian cancer research and programs through our annual Walk of Hope and LOVE HER gala.

They’ve warmly hosted and supported other women affected and travelling across the country in their homes; and they continue to regularly deliver presentations about the disease to their engineering sector colleagues, and even emergency room doctors, so they can properly recognize symptoms of ovarian cancer in family members and patients. Like so many of our passionate volunteers, donors, family members, and advocates across the country, Cristina and Stephanie are finding their own ways to make a difference and save more women’s lives.

The funds we raise support our efforts to ensure our community is well-informed about ovarian cancer ...

Knowledge is power. But despite the reach the Internet provides, it can be challenging for patients and family members to keep up-to-date with everything going on, both locally and globally. Not to mention the added challenge of separating fact from fiction, knowing what's reliable and what isn't.

That's what we do. Ovarian Cancer Canada shares credible, evidence-based information from leading clinicians around the world, according to what our community finds relevant, useful and helpful.

And our community members drive this knowledge-sharing as well - lending voices and providing information, support and encouragement by sharing personal stories and lived experiences.

In every region across this country, and in both official languages, thousands of women affected have been able to find information and support through Ovarian Cancer Canada programs and resources.

This included:

- Our ***By Your Side*** and ***Still By Your Side*** guides for recently diagnosed women and women experiencing recurrence of the disease;
- Relevant and informative webinars on genetic testing, travel insurance, medical cannabis use and more
- The OVdialogue online forum continues to grow a vocal and active online community. Women anywhere in the country can connect with other women, share experiences, and ask questions on a host of topics including drugs and side effects, anxiety and depression, coping mechanisms, and fear of recurrence.



... and that includes keeping Canadian women and Canadian priorities front and centre — at home and on the world stage.

Collaborating and sharing helps all of us – and we're passionate and active participants in that effort both nationally and globally:

- To understand what improvements in clinical care are most needed throughout Canada – so all women get equal access to the best possible care – the gaps must first be identified. In collaboration with scientific leaders and cancer organizations, we are creating a cross-Canada initiative to provide us with those facts.
- Elisabeth Baugh, our Ovarian Cancer Canada CEO, is the founding Chair of the **World Ovarian Cancer Coalition**. This year, we turned up the volume by adding our voices to those representing 135 partner organizations in 37 countries with The World Ovarian Cancer Coalition **Every Women Study**.
- While we work to identify challenges and gaps where the health care system falls short, Ovarian Cancer Canada continues to work in partnership with organizations like The Society of Gynecologic Oncology of Canada and the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer to ensure that we are involved and at the table in discussing clinical care and optimal treatments that women should experience.

These initiatives arm us with the facts and enable us to speak with authority and advocate for change that improves the lives of women with ovarian cancer.





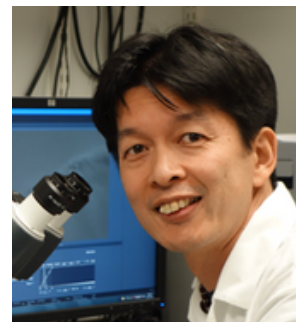
Important new learning on the horizon...

Can we catch early stage ovarian cancer?

"Now that we know high-grade serous ovarian cancer starts in the fallopian tubes, it's clear that we need a model that shows how the disease develops," says Dr. Yojiro Yamanaka. "It would help scientists learn more about this subtype and potentially lead to treatments that target this specific form of the disease."

"...it's clear that we need a model that shows how the disease develops...it would potentially lead to treatments that target this specific form of the disease"

Dr. Yamanaka is a past recipient of the Pat McDonald Research Award, part of an operating grant co-funded by Ovarian Cancer Canada and the Cancer Research Society. With this support, Dr. Yamanaka and his team at McGill University's Rosalind and Morris Goodman Cancer Research Centre will explore how high-grade serous ovarian cancer first starts and eventually spreads into the ovaries.



"Right now, no one knows how this kind of ovarian cancer originates. But this funding will help us answer questions such as: how the cancer cells initially form in the fallopian tubes, and whether we can catch early stage high-grade serous ovarian cancer before it spreads," he says. "There could even be opportunities for prevention."

News from across the country

It has been said that “if you want to go fast, go alone; but if you want to go far, go together.”

From coast to coast, we saw the strength, force, and vibrancy of our community at work this year. Through a variety of community events, forums, and platforms facilitated by, or in partnership with, Ovarian Cancer Canada, women and their families found support, connection, and channels for advocacy and action on this disease.

Key highlights include:

- Support workshops and ovarian cancer education symposia attended by women living with the disease, their family members, and health professionals (Nova Scotia, Quebec, Ontario, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Alberta, and British Columbia);
- The LADY BALL, The LADY BALL SHOW & TELL and LOVE HER gala events which helped to raise greater awareness and funds to support our mission (Halifax, Saskatoon, Calgary, and Vancouver);
- Town hall events, held locally and across the country, enabled community members to tune in and learn more about Ovarian Cancer Canada’s new strategic plan to help save more lives. Between sharing local updates and insights used to structure a bold new approach to our mandate, regional directors and CEO Elisabeth Baugh outlined how Ovarian Cancer Canada aims to make the greatest impact in women’s health as quickly as possible.
- The 10th biennial Canadian Conference on Ovarian Cancer Research in Edmonton, Alberta: This conference brings the latest and best science to more than 175 scientists and clinicians as well as research trainees who attend from across the country. This year it also featured a one-day workshop for women living with ovarian cancer and their care-givers, including sessions on disease sub-types, trauma therapy, patient and family counselling, and a panel discussion on genetics the trainees attended to learn from the women as well. A strong contingent of women diagnosed from neighboring Saskatchewan travelled 11 hours by bus to attend!



Spotlight: advocating for the best possible care, regardless of where you live

In late 2018, it was announced that two of Saskatchewan's already few gynecologic oncologists would be leaving the province, creating a health care gap for women diagnosed with, or at risk of, the disease. Women were concerned, fearful, and had much anxiety about how their care would be impacted.

Ovarian Cancer Canada teamed up with local advocates and community members to push for a breakthrough on this doctor shortage issue, including several meetings with Premier Scott Moe and other provincial ministers with health portfolios.

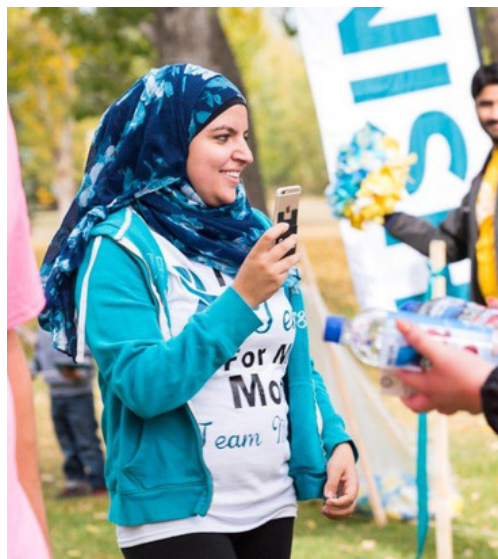
In Spring 2019 that sought-after breakthrough became reality when the province announced it was finalizing contracts for the hiring of six permanent gynecologic oncologists, including a new program lead. Three of the doctors will be based in Regina while the other three will be based in Saskatoon. We thank local advocates and community members for speaking up and speaking out on this vital issue.



Walking — like talking —

The [Ovarian Cancer Canada Walk of Hope](#) is the largest and most powerful event of its kind in the country. The only walk in Canada to focus all attention and dedicate all funds toward helping women with ovarian cancer live fuller, better and longer lives, this year it was held in over 35 communities nationwide.

And it has raised more than \$27 million to date – including more than 1.8 million this year – thanks to more than 7,000 participants!



— also gets powerful results.

The Walk is also a chance to meet other women who understand the journey, because they're going through it too. Their stories touch us, inspire us and remind us why we're here.

"Participating in the Ovarian Cancer Canada Walk of Hope is important to me and my community. People are shocked when I tell them there hasn't been significant progress to improve outcomes for this disease in five decades...Being a part of the movement to bring hope and funding to this disease gives me strength. This is our way of taking control and taking action against a disease that tries to take control away from us."

— **Shauna Luciano, Port Hawkesbury, Nova Scotia**

"The first time I participated I was greeted by a volunteer who told me it had been twenty years since her diagnosis. It was encouraging – she gave me my survivor's pin and teal ribbon, which I wear proudly...Each year my son Andrew and I sign up for the Walk, which enables me to reconnect with my mentor, my wonderful nurses and everyone who supports us. Ovarian cancer changed my life, but the community gives me the strength to stand with my teal sisters."

— **Valerie Josset Aitken, Montreal, Quebec**

\$27M

Raised to date

\$1.8M

Raised in 2018

7,000+

Participants in 2018

Staying on track and focused

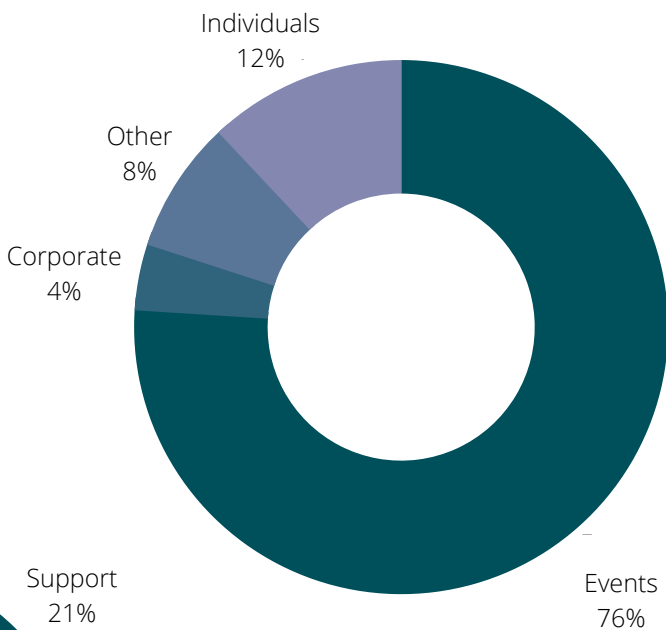
We are now in the second year of our current strategic plan. We celebrate the progress we continue to make in each of the core areas below as we create a new future of outcomes on ovarian cancer.



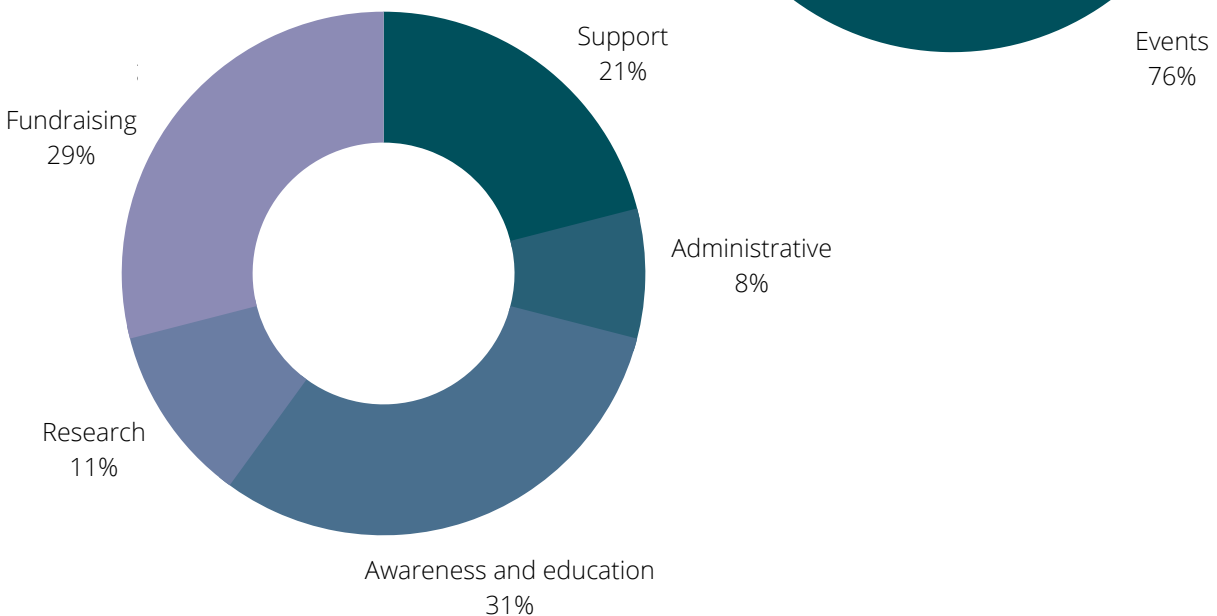
Thank you to so many in this community who are driving real change and who won't stop until women have the utmost opportunities to live fuller, better, and longer lives.

Your generous donations make so much possible.

Revenue: \$3,447,277



Expenses: \$3,479,423



The Standards Programs Trustmark is a mark of Imagine Canada used under licence by Ovarian Cancer Canada. Our accreditation demonstrates to our valued donors our commitment to operate at the highest level of transparency and accountability, and that they can be assured that their gifts are well-stewarded for the greatest impact.

Board of Directors

Comprised of people who have been impacted by the disease, community champions and leaders in research, healthcare and business, the Board of Directors provides governance that supports Ovarian Cancer Canada in achieving its mission.

Executive Committee:

Theresa Marie Underhill
Chair, Board of Directors
Halifax, NS

Mark Galloway
Vice-Chair, Board of Directors
Toronto, ON

Kelly Ryan
Treasurer,
Toronto, ON

Dr. Barbara Vanderhyden
Chair, Research Committee
Ottawa, ON

Kelly-Jo Wellings
Chair, Fundraising Committee
Toronto, ON

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Emeritus

Eileen Beadle (Deep Bay, BC)
Tammy Brown (Toronto, ON)
Anne Chase (Regina, SK)
Bruce Galloway (Oakville, ON)
Dr. Valérie Garneau (Trois-Rivières, QC)



"This cause is important and personal for me, having lost my mom to ovarian cancer in 2011. While the passing of my mother has been sad for me and for my family, it has also lit a fire in me to do everything I can possibly do to change, or influence in a positive way, the outcomes and futures of the thousands of women across Canada, who are or will be affected by this disease. I hold on to that fire for my daughters, and other women in my life, whose lives and potential I don't want to see cut short from this disease. Serving on the Board of Directors for Ovarian Cancer Canada has been a major encouragement to me. I know that together, we as a community, can change the course of this disease for good."

-Michel Brunet, Board Director, Montreal, Quebec

Dedicated staff

A professional team working with you to change lives.

Elisabeth Baugh, Chief Executive Officer

Programs and Regions

Emilie Chiasson, Regional Director, Atlantic Canada

Cailey Crawford, Regional Director, Ontario

Stephanie Gosselin, Regional Director, Manitoba and Saskatchewan

Tracy Kolwich, Regional Director British Columbia, Alberta, Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut

Jennifer Laliberté, Regional Director, Quebec

Marilyn Sapsford, Manager of National Programs

Marketing, Communications and Development

Mapy Villaudy, Vice President of Marketing, Communications and Development

Abigail Brown, Director of Marketing and Communications

Tessa Barclay, Production Associate, Marketing and Communications Projects

Irma Deacon, Senior Development Associate

Julie De Liberato, Media Communications Specialist

Tara Frotten, Community Engagement and Events Manager

Carrie Mahuran, National Walk Associate

Laure Sabatier, Digital Communications Specialist

Finance and Administration

Bo Wang-Frape, Vice President of Finance and Administration

Roxana Predoi, HR and Operations Director

Delphin Shamamba, Accounting Manager

Raj Aiyer, Database Administrator

Lily Ayelazuno, Administrative and Donor Service Coordinator

We also acknowledge the outstanding commitment, dedication, and contributions over the past year by staff members who are currently on parental leave or who have since transitioned to new career opportunities, namely: [Janice Chan](#), Director of Marketing and Communications (Parental Leave), [Kelly Grover](#), former Vice President, Programs and Partnerships; and [Ashley Law](#), Community Engagement Associate (Parental Leave).

Here for you

Ovarian Cancer Canada provides programs and resources from coast to coast. To speak with a representative or to donate, please contact us.

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