



Ontario AIDS Network appoints new Executive Director

The Board of Directors of the Ontario AIDS Network (OAN) is pleased to announce the appointment of Shannon Thomas Ryan as the organization's Executive Director. He succeeds Wendy Pinder who has been Acting Executive Director since March 2018. Shannon comes to the OAN from the Black Coalition for AIDS Prevention (Black CAP), an organization that works to respond to HIV in Toronto's African, Caribbean and Black (ACB) communities, and where he has been executive director since 2006.

Over the past several months, a recruitment committee of the board conducted an extensive recruitment and interview process. "Our goal was to recruit a transformational leader and strategic influencer with a strong commitment to social justice and the passion and skills to lead the OAN at a pivotal time in Ontario's HIV response," said John McCullagh, Chair of the Recruitment Committee and Co-chair of the Board. "We are exceptionally pleased that Shannon has taken on this leadership role. He is the person whom we think most closely matches all of our requirements for the position among a short list of eight very talented and highly qualified candidates."

Janet Rowe, Co-chair of the Board, adds: "Shannon brings to the OAN a deep understanding of the needs of people living with and at risk for HIV, along with extensive senior leadership experience in, and significant familiarity with, Ontario's HIV sector, and the needs of our member agencies. We are excited that, as a former co-chair of our board, he is returning to the OAN in this leadership position."

"I come to this role with profound respect for the OAN and its membership and a deep commitment to those living with and at risk for HIV. I hope that I can meaningfully contribute to Ontario's HIV movement at this important time. I'd like to thank the OAN board for this opportunity and I look forward to working with the OAN's excellent staff team to further support our member agencies," said Shannon.

Shannon has played a leadership role in Ontario's HIV sector for almost twenty years. As Executive Director of Black CAP he worked with the agency's staff and board to significantly grow Black CAP's capacity to address the HIV epidemic in Toronto's ACB communities. Shannon has extensive research experience in the HIV sector and has co-authored many HIV-related reports and articles. He has also held appointments with the Ontario Advisory Council on HIV and AIDS (OACHA) and has been a member of a number of other boards and committees in Ontario's HIV and LGBTQ sectors.

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Prior to joining Black CAP, Shannon was an Allocations Manager for United Way Toronto (UWT), where he managed large grant programs and assessed the performance of UWT funded agencies. Shannon also holds a degree in social work from Ryerson University.

Shannon will take up his position on a part-time basis on May 1, 2019, moving to full time on July 2, 2019.

At this time, the Board of the OAN would like to extend its sincere appreciation and thanks to Wendy Pinder for capably fulfilling over the last twelve months the role of the organization's Acting Executive Director. The past year has been a challenging one, and Wendy has ably managed the organization at a time of change and transition, tackling issues, finding solutions, and providing direction. During her time with the OAN, Wendy has strengthened and improved member engagement and revitalized the OAN's Skills Development workshops, which have seen increased participation and levels of engagement at each event, with strong satisfaction reported by participants.

Wendy will continue in her role as Acting Executive Director on a part-time basis until April 30, 2019, while continuing in her other position as Program Administrator of the Ontario Organizational Development Program.