



Annual General Report 2021-2022

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	1
What is OPIRG Brock	5
OPIRG Brock Team	7
OPIRG Provincial	9
Finances	11
Fundraising	12
Marketing & Communications	17
Events & Projects	19
Community Partners	23
Action Groups	25
What's Next	27
Thank You's	29
Notes	30

Acknowledgements - Indigenous Lands & Peoples

It is still rare for those of us who study and work in the Niagara region to acknowledge that we meet on Indigenous lands, over which Indigenous people still hold jurisdiction. In Niagara, and more specifically, St. Catharines, we are meeting and working on the shared lands of the Haudenosaunee, Anishinaabeg, Wendat, and the Chonnonton peoples. This territory is also home to many

First Nations people from across Turtle Island, Metis, and Inuit people and all of us, both Indigenous and newcomers, are 'treaty people' responsible to uphold the treaties first made here.

Legacies of colonization, racism, and capitalism are upheld everyday of 2022 through our failure to address ongoing attacks on Trans and Two Spirit people, Black People, Indigenous People, and People of Colour, who have always been at the forefront of calling for essential societal change; calls and activism that far too often end up in their deaths. We must be prioritizing these discussions and showing up to support the creative and political work and activism of Indigenous and Black people and communities within Niagara, across this country and the world.

A key treaty governing this territory is the "Dish with One Spoon" agreement. This treaty exists between the Anishinaabe, Mississaugas, and Haudenosaunee and binds them to share the territory and protect the land. Subsequent Indigenous people, settlers, and newcomers have been invited into this treaty in the spirit of peace, friendship and respect.

In understanding our treaty responsibilities, we also call attention to the Mississaugas Treaty at Niagara (1781), Between the Lakes Treaty No. 3 (1792), the Two Row Wampum, the 1764 Treaties of Niagara, and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Reports, especially the 94 Calls to Action, and Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered

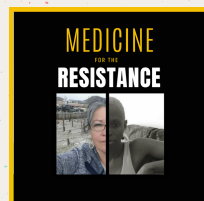
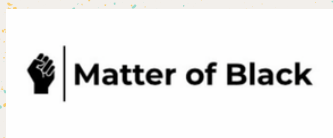
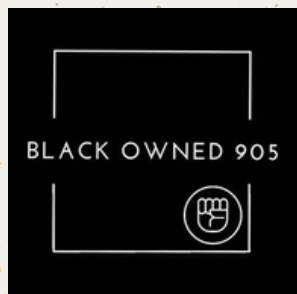
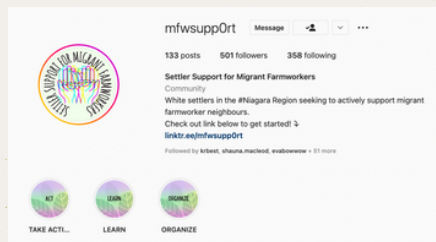
Indigenous Women and Girls.

It is essential that we root our discussions and activism in the fact that historically and currently, Indigenous people are disproportionately targeted, stereotyped, and stigmatized. We see similar targeting happen to racialized communities, perpetuating long standing ideas of Anti-Black racism and a wide range of structural discrimination. These power dynamics and acts of violence enforce further issues of ableism, sanism, transphobia, classism, and increased incarceration, to name a few.

Land acknowledgements and solidarity statements can do very little and contribute to complacency when not paired with listening, accountability, and action. Below are a list of recommendations and calls to action that have been directed to OPIRG Brock, and we call on our members to join us in doing what is necessary to both show up and take action!

Actions OPIRG Brock has been given to take over the past year for our year ahead!

- Support organization listed on the next page through donations, showing up to their events, and responding to their calls to action
- Buy, read, and share Patty Krawec's book Becoming Kin
- Annually review and discuss resources on the Orange Shirt Day site
- Mark your calendar each year and show up to these events:
 - Feb 14 - National Day of Action for Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women
 - June 16 - National Indigenous Peoples Day
 - Aug 1 & days before & after - Emancipation Day weekend
 - September 30 - Orange Shirt Day / National Day for Truth and Reconciliation
 - Sept/ Oct - Annual Nurturing Our Roots Powwow
 - Oct 4 - Sisters In Spirit Vigil
- Prioritize shopping at businesses from the Black Owned 905 directory
- Regularly check the Instagram account @mfwsupp0rt for calls for donations, fundraisers, and direction action you can take to support migrant workers on a daily basis in Niagara
- Sign the #StatusForAll Petition & get all of your communities to sign 2



Groups, accounts, & people leading anti-racism activism in Niagara to check out!

- Abbey House
- Black Female Empowerment Society
- Black Owned 905
- BME Church, Salem Chapel
- Brock Student Justice Centre
- Celebration of Nations
- De dwa da dehs nye>s Aboriginal Health Centre
- Dr. Robyn Bourgeois
- Fallon Farrinacci
- Fort Erie Native Friendship Centre
- Future Black Female
- Justice For Workers Niagara
- Kakekalanicks Inc.
- Kerry Sutra
- @mfwsupp0rt Instagram account
- Medicine for the Resistance Podcast
- Migrant Workers Alliance for Chance
- Migrant Farmworker Support Project
- Niagara Chapter of Native Women
- Niagara Folk Arts Multicultural Centre
- Niagara Region Anti Racism Association
- Niagara Regional Native Centre
- Niagara Workers Welcome
- One Dish, One Mic
- PayYourRent.ca
- REDress Project
- Shawnee Kish
- Strong Water Singers (Zhooge Nibii Kwe)

Acknowledgements - Labour

Through our activism, discussions of labour are integral to bring into our spaces; continually thinking about the precarious and poor working conditions, at Brock and throughout Niagara.

In Niagara, we live in a region that prospers off the continued exploitation of migrant labour through our grape & wine and agriculture industries. Faced with continued violence and job precarity, we call on everyone in this meeting and your extended networks to work in solidarity with the Migrant Workers Alliance for Change and the Migrant Rights Network to demand permanent resident status for all. You can also find ways to support migrant workers on a daily basis by following the @mfwsupp0rt Instagram account.

Across Niagara we are seeing an increased need to show up for both unionized and non-unionized public and private sector workers, as well as gig workers, to call for improving labour conditions. We encourage everyone to connect with Justice for Workers Niagara on how you share your skills with these calls to action around increased and accessible paid sick days for all workers. We also call on everyone to support the call for ATU Local 846 in their calls for "Keeping Transit Public, the current labour strikes facing education workers across Ontario, and the Niagara District CUPE Council and Niagara Regional Labour Council to become increasingly engaged in labour movement across the region.



**MIGRANT
RIGHTS
NETWORK**



CUPE Niagara
Canadian Union of Public Employees
niagara.cupe.ca

What is OPIRG Brock?

Following a consensus decision making model Guided by the general mandate of “supporting **social, economic, and environmental justice activism**”, the work of OPIRG Brock, like all PIRG chapters, covers a wide range of **programming, campaigns, and supports for other Niagara-based groups’ work**. For the past year, we have taken this mandate, paired with a longstanding standard of creating and **supporting work that prioritizes safer spaces and opportunities for BIPOC, racialized, melanated, and people of the global majority communities**.

Another inter-related mandate for OPIRG Brock is the principle of “good people should know good people doing good things”. This guides us to connect people and groups across the region to better show up for one another.



Membership Update

- More information about OPIRG Brock memberships: www.opirgbrock.com/membership
- Currently 56 members registered
 - Membership comprised of CUPE 4207 registered members, Community members, Action Groups, Patreon supporters
- Added the widely demanded auto-renew to membership
 - 26 members selected auto-renew
- All CUPE 4207 members are OPIRG Brock members, but we ask them to register so we have an accurate count of members
- Goals for year ahead
 - Increasing number of registered 4207 members
 - Getting 1-2 more unions to get all of the members to be OPIRG Brock members (through a similar process to CUPE 4207)
 - 50 Patreon members

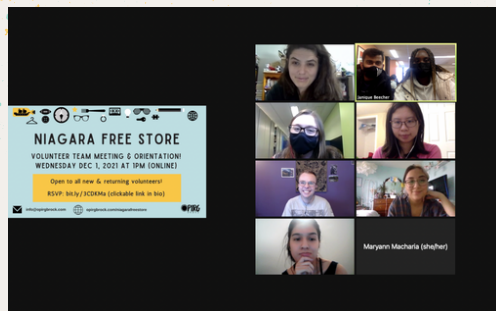


OPIRG Brock Team

- Elected in 2020: Bhonita Singh, Kate Spiegel, Claire, Fiona, Kaho Nishibu, Kostyn Petrunick, Margret Taylor
- 2 resignations in the year
- Upheld monthly public board meetings

Board of Directors

- Claire Laurie
- Fiona McKay
- Kaho Nishibu
- Kostyn Petrunick
- Margret Taylor



Staff Members

- Kerry Duncan (Volunteer, Planning, & Training Coordinator)
- Vanessa Fyfe (Bookkeeper)
- Bhonita Singh (CRO)

Professional Services

- Brokerlink (Insurance)
- Durward Jones Barkwell Company LLP (Auditor)
- Sullivan & Mahoney (Legal)



OPIRG Brock Team

Volunteers are the essential element that keeps OPIRG Brock operating, from board members to placement students, to the growing Free Store team. This year we attracted many new volunteers who have become close to the heart of our organization and have done essential work on OPIRG Brock projects and making our work in the community possible!

Volunteers

Grants & Fundraising

- Mazie M.
- Mo C.
- Ashley T.

Niagara Free Store

- Mo C.
- James P.
- Ana Maria G.
- Al L.
- Kate S.
- Steph P.
- Christian C.
- Seamus B.
- Luci M.
- Madison K.
- Rahab
- Nathan B.
- Aidan F.
- Liv R.
- Jules O.
- Michelle
- Crystal

2021-2022 Placement Students Program

Professors & Admins:

- Antony Chum
- Andrew Nielsen
- Dragos Simandan
- Janet Westbury

Niagara Free Store

- Stephanie P.
- Janique B.
- Raj K.
- Jacob Y.
- Krisha P.

Niagara Reproductive Justice

- Sonia S.
- Tatum S.
- Sarah B.
- Thalia D.

Harm Reduction

- Vanessa M.
- Disha M.
- Carrie H.
- Iris X.
- Meagan

OPIRG Provincial

The OPIRG Provincial Network is a decentralized body that provides support for, and facilitates collaboration between individual PIRGs in Ontario. We are comprised of a series Public Interest Research Groups based at university campuses across the province. These PIRGs share similar mandates and policies, but function autonomously in their everyday workings.

Each year, all 11 PIRG chapters pay into the Provincial Network, and chapters (like Brock) who small budgets receive an 'Equalization Payment' back. In the 2021-2022 year, our chapter received a \$3,296.49 Equalization Payment.

By being part of the OPIRG Provincial Network, we have access to the following resources:

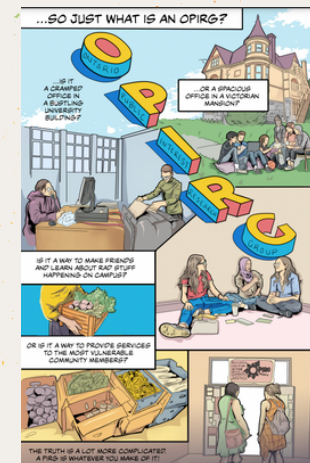
- Use of the OPIRG Provincial Charitable Status Number
- CUPE 1281 Collective Agreement and Health Benefits for our permanent staff
- Regular communication, connection, collaboration, and support from the Ontario PIRGS chapters
- Cross promotion of online events and campaigns
- OPIRG Provincial website: <https://ontariopirg.org>



Throughout the 2021-2022 year, we had Kerry Duncan (staff) and Bhonita Singh (Board) sit on the OPIRG Provincial Board, which also requires they do work with one of the Provincial Board Collectives. Bhonita sat on the Finance & Admin Collective (until she resigned in May 2022), and Kerry is the co-chair of the Chapter Support Collective. Within their Collectives, Kerry is currently working on the following initiatives to support both Brock and chapters across the network:

- CUPE ON Proposal - Securing funding & support from CUPE Ontario and CUPE 1281 for a paid OPIRG Engagement position
- Chapter Support Budget Line - Establishing a new Provincial Fund paid into by all of the chapters to support defunded chapters or chapters in crisis
- Provincial Wiki - Overhauling and updating the internal OPIRG Provincial website to better transition and support new folks getting involved in OPIRG, as well as resource sharing.

In 2022, the OPIRG Provincial network finished a long-standing project with Ad Astra Comics of publishing an OPIRG comic. This multi-year project highlights the work of the different chapters, as well as the importance of PIRGs in our community. You can download a free copy at www.opirgbrock.com/opirg-publications.



Finances

- Bookkeeper: Vanessa Fyfe
- Annual funding is from:
 - CUPE 4207 Special Assessment Bylaw - \$37,606.95
 - OPIRG Provincial Equalization Payment - \$3,296.49
- No audit this year - but there will be next year! (Get excited!)
- Finances are handled by the Finance Committee
- Surplus at the end of 2021-2022 - Fiscal Year
 - Started with \$123
 - Ended with approximately \$18,000
- What are the adds to the 2022-2023 budget
 - Anti-Racism Sponsorship Line
 - Increasing insurance this year
 - Costs related to COLA & bargaining increases
 - NSN programming budget (incorporating the \$10,000 donation from last year) - **huge thank you to CUPE 4207!**

Next steps

- Financial Security & Longevity Planning
- Updating Financial Policies
- Board Transition and Financial Literacy for Board + Staf

Grants & Funding

Applications (unsuccessful so far)

- Freedonia
- Groundswell

Awards

- We were nominated for and **won a \$500 grant with the St. Catharines' Arts Award** in the "Making a Difference" category!
- Thank you to Niagara Reproductive Justice and the First Ontario Performing Arts Centre for nominating OPIRG Brock!

St. Catharines Arts Award



Fundraising Goals

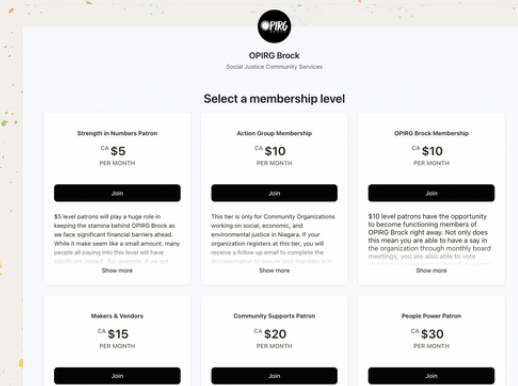
Short Term Goals (before Oct 2023)

- Increase administration and supplies lines
- 2 new permanent sources of funding

Long Term Goals (next 1-3 years)

- Increasing staff hours
- Get a permanent space

Honourable mention: Get 50 patreon supporter this year!



Fundraisers & Sustainers

2021-2022 Summary

- 2/4 goals reached:
 - \$1,000 Operation Expense ✓
 - \$1,000 Anti-Racism Action Plan ✓
 - Increased Staff Hours
 - Permanent Place
- A total of \$18,000 earned from:
 - Workshops/contracts
 - Donations
 - Sponsorship
 - Fundraising events

FlipGive

Patreon (www.patreon.com/opirgbrock)

- 15 active members
- Options for individuals, organizations, & businesses at multiple levels (e.g. \$5, \$10, \$20, & \$30 options)
- Current options include:
 - \$5 per month (Individual)
 - \$10 per month (Individual, organization)
 - \$15 per month (creator/ vendor)
 - \$20 per month (individual. local businesses)
 - \$30 per month (individual)
- Recieved \$3399.05
- Perk component being evaluated for 2022-2023



FlipGive (www.flipgive.com/teams/258243-opirg-brock)

- OPIRG Brock Team Code: 2ZH2PQ
- FlipGive is a free fundraising website that gives cash rebates to teams when they buy from brands online or buy gift cards to make their purchases in person
- We host it internally, so if you would like to join the FlipGive team, please email info@opirgbrock.com
- Earned \$629 to date

Fundraisers & Sustainers

OPIRG BROCK'S

ANTI-CAPITALIST GIFT LIST

Cash Donations

- Cash donations for 2021-2022: \$622.85

Anti-Capitalist Gift List

- A list of ideas and items to give back to the community during the holiday season, instead of buying into capitalist and consumerist practices



The Coming Out Monologues V. 2

- Had multiple orders from across Province
- Earned: \$1480
- Goal for next year - sell at *Someday Books*



2022 ANIMAL ACTIVIST CALENDAR



2022 Animal Activist Calendar

- Calendar featuring animal friends of our community members, movement-themed months, and special dates
- Earned: \$205

Fundraisers & Sustainers

We had 2 OPIRG Brock Community Markets this year!

A huge thank you to Mazie MacFarlane (@cozy.bones) for being the best market coordinator!

• October 23 & 24 2021 Community Market

- Online & in-person
- 30+ vendors
- Raffle prizes!
- Earned: \$551.80

• July 30 2022 Community Market

- In-person & promotional online directory leading up!
- 25 vendors
- Raffle Prizes
- Performers - Chance Mutuku & Willow Arts Community
- Earned: \$1530

cozy
bones

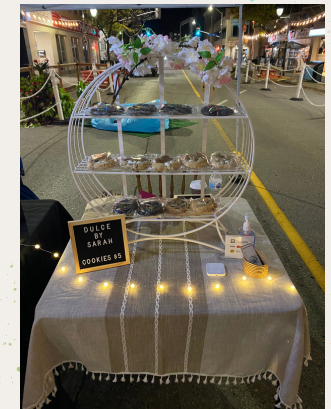
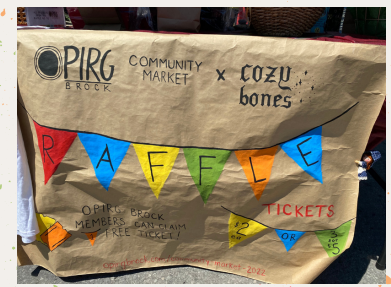


{pocket} CHANGE



DO MORE IN THE CORE
DOWN TOWN
ST. CATHARINES

RISE
ABOVE



Marketing & Communications



Why care about Harm Reduction at Brock ?



Across the Niagara region, there is an increasing rate of opioid overdoses every year, which means our communities need harm reduction approaches to support them every day.

All Brock students, staff, faculty, and community members can be more active in harm reduction practices by getting trained in reversing an opioid overdose.



For more information, go to www.opirgbrock.com/harm-reduction



Marketing & Communications

This year the Communications team worked on streamlining our communications processes to broaden the reach and understanding of OPIRG and our work in the community! This included multiple print and social media campaigns and updating and upgrading our print and online materials that improved our tabling, volunteer recruitment and fundraising efforts! We also created an annual schedule to help with our monthly goals as well as supported action groups with their communications.

Thank yous

- Brock Printing, Ruasma Advertising and Printing, and Clint for making all of our printing and photography dreams come true!
- Board, staff & volunteers for all their contributions!

Social Media & Print Campaigns

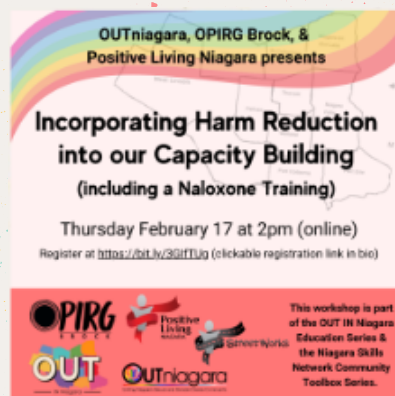
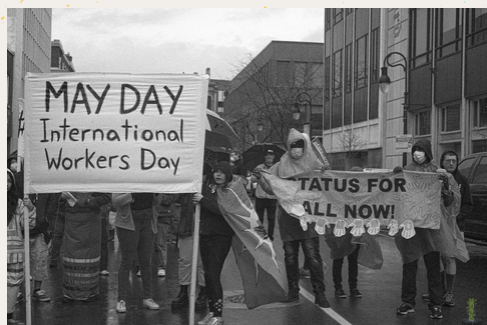
- *What is OPIRG?* Campaign
- Niagara Free Store FAQ & website pages
- Harm Reduction & Naloxone posters and social media campaign
- Updated OPIRG Brock tabling materials & business cards

Resource Development & Public Statements

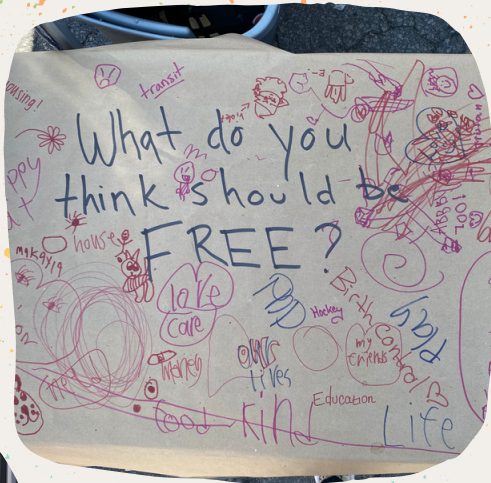
- Hosted a range of resources on our website including regularly updated events, ways to support community groups, Black activism in Niagara, Harm Reduction more!
- This year we published and supported community groups with a range of public statements on community issues.

Events & Projects

- NSN Community Toolbox Series with OUTniagara WAGE project & the Titillating Talks Series (13 sessions thus far!)
- May Day March & Rally
 - 100-200 people in attendance
- Hosted 20 Niagara Free Stores
- International Overdose Awareness Day March & Rally
- 2 OPIRG Brock x Cozy Bones Community Markets
- Harm Reduction & Naloxone Trainings
- Tabling at community events!



Event Highlights!



Event Highlights!



Community Partners

- Fine Grind Cafe
- CUPE 4207
- ATU Local 846
- Niagara Tenants Union
- Brock University Public Health
- Brock University Geography
- ETFO Niagara
- Suitcase in Point
- In the Soil
- Silver Spire
- Mahtay Cafe
- Cozy Bones
- James Street Market
- OUTniagara
- Streetworks Niagara



Faculty of Social Sciences
Geography and Technology Studies



cozy X bones



Faculty of Applied
Health Sciences



Community Partners

- Downtown St. Catharines
- Willow Arts Community
- Justice for Workers Niagara
- Positive Living Niagara
- Niagara District CUPE Council
- Ontario Federation of Labour
- Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library
- Kerry Sutra
- Brock GSA
- Niagara Reproductive Justice
- CUPE 2977
- Niagara Regional Labour Council



WILLOW
ARTS
COMMUNITY



CUPE Niagara
Canadian Union of Public Employees
niagara.cupe.ca







**ONTARIO
FEDERATION OF
LABOUR**



CUPE 2977
Canadian Union of Public Employees
WWW.CUPE2977.COM

Action Groups

Niagara Reproductive Justice

 niagarareproductivejustice.com
 [Niagara Reproductive Justice](https://www.facebook.com/NiagaraReproductiveJustice)
 [@niagarareproductivejustice](https://www.instagram.com/niagarareproductivejustice)
 niagarareproductivejustice@gmail.com







NRJ is a group of community members working to spread awareness of and increase access to sexual and reproductive health resources in Niagara. This past year they have been doing incredible work to build



practical abortion support with their Abortion & Reproductive Support Network, and are currently onboarding and training volunteers by the end of the year! NRJ's Rapid Response Network, which works to respond in real-time to anti-abortion activity in Niagara, has also grown significantly this year and has been

working to highlight and challenge Crisis Pregnancy Centres in the region. Their new website with information about local anti-abortion organizations and pro-choice health resources will be launching soon!

Niagara Tenants Union

 niagaratenantsunion.noblogs.org
 [Niagara Tenants Union](https://www.facebook.com/NiagaraTenantsUnion)
 [@niagaratenantsunion1312](https://www.instagram.com/niagaratenantsunion1312)
 niagaratenantsunion@gmail.com



Niagara Tenants Union is a grassroots network of volunteer tenants and activists who work together to build tenant power and resistance against skyrocketing rents, gentrification and displacement, and harmful landlords. They are direct action focused and aim to respond to the housing crisis by getting organized and building autonomous tenant power against issues of structural housing inequality.



Action Groups

Willow Arts Community





 thewillowcommunity.com  [@willowartscommunity](https://www.instagram.com/willowartscommunity)
 [Willow Arts Community](https://www.facebook.com/WillowArtsCommunity)  thewillowcommunity@gmail.com

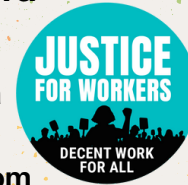
This past year, Willow has grown their operating budget and increased their ability to provide free, seasonal multidisciplinary arts education, studio space for peer-to-peer projects and connections, and performance and exhibition opportunities for artists and creatives with lived and living experience of mental illness/substance use in Niagara.

In 2022, Willow performed at In the Soil Arts Festival, the OPIRG Community Market, and Mahtay Cafe; facilitated a large, collaborative outdoor mural on Silver Spire, and a community art project at the Niagara Falls Family Pride Event. Their latest collaborative zine, Your Personal Protest edited by Kerry Duncan, will launch in December! They look forward to premiering a radio show with CFBU Brock Radio, an exhibition at the Marilyn I. Walker VISA Gallery, and arts programming with the Niagara Regional Native Centre in 2022!



Justice for Workers Niagara

 justice4workers.org
 [Justice for Workers Niagara](https://www.facebook.com/JusticeforWorkersNiagara)
 [@fairwagesniagara](https://www.instagram.com/fairwagesniagara)
 fairwagesniagara@gmail.com



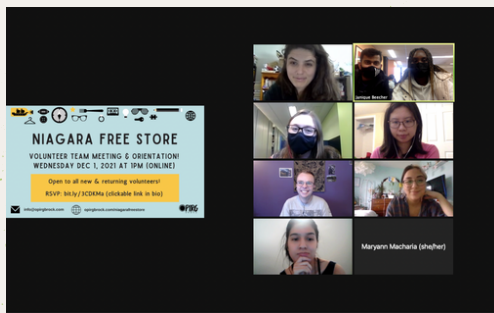
Justice for Workers is an Ontario-based labour organizing group advocating for workers' rights, including a \$20 minimum wage and 14 paid sick days. Over the past year, they helped organize a May Day march and rally, released a joint statement regarding Labour Day events to call for solidarity against the political violence and fascism increasing in Niagara, and continued building their campaign to win accessible paid sick days for all non-unionized staff at Brock University.



What's Next

Areas for Improvement

- Taking action on more components of the Anti-Racism Action Plan
- Stronger relationships with Indigenous activists, spaces, & services
- Statement on NRPS
- Incorporating the OUTniagara CSNA recommendations
- Free Store inventory online
- Refocusing on the placement student program & Harm Reduction program at Brock
- Working more with labour unions & labour movement in Niagara
- Finalizing the updated Conflict of Interest Policy
- Archiving OPIRG Brock historical documents
- More jokes and more crafts!



Niagara
SKILLS
Network



What's Next

Goals for the year ahead

- Board transition, onboarding, and strategic planning
- Monthly commitments for further work on the Anti Racism Action Plan
- Continue pursuing contracts as a means of revenue
- Launch Patreon campaign - we need help!
- Programming will focus on the Niagara Skills Network, Niagara Free Store, and supporting other groups events

Upcoming Events

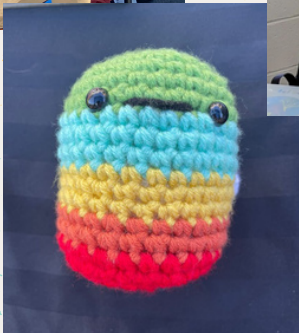
- **October 26** - Titillating Talks: Decolonization & Two-Spirit Identity
- **November 5** - Harm Reduction Community Forum
- **December 12** - Willow Arts Showcase



See **opirgbrock.com** for an updated list of community events, rallies, petitions, workshops, fundraisers and more!

Thank You's

We'd also like to acknowledge all of you. OPIRG Brock would be nothing without the community around it. While OPIRG Brock is a work in progress, we always strive to support more perspectives and more space for social and environmental justice.



Notes
