

Special Constable Service

External Review Report

Submitted to Wilfrid Laurier University

Review Context and Methodology

In alignment with Laurier's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan, 2020 saw the university initiate an external review of its Special Constable Service (SCS) with a focus on several strategic questions:

- How do Black, Indigenous, and racialized members of the Laurier community perceive the SCS and their interactions with special constables?
- How are reports of racism responded to and addressed by the SCS?
- How can the SCS contribute further to creating a culture of inclusion on Laurier campuses?

To explore these questions, the university struck an external review committee made up of three racialized individuals, Teneile Warren, James Derek (JD) Marchand and Philip Semple. (See Appendix for reviewer profiles.)

Each of the reviewers has experience and expertise in one or more of the following areas:

- The operation of a Special Constable Service
- Community policing
- Equity, diversity and inclusion processes and policies in a post-secondary environment

Along with a broad mandate to explore the strategic questions, the reviewers set out to learn about and make recommendations related a range of topics, including:

- Perceptions of the SCS among students, staff and faculty
- Organizational structure and staffing of the SCS
- Training for all SCS staff (including constables, security guards, communication coordinators, and management personal)
- Accreditations
- The role students, staff and faculty play (and could potentially play) in an advisory capacity

The review process involved broad consultation within the Laurier community with individuals and representatives of groups who were invited to participate or responded to an open call for involvement. In particular, attention was paid to ensuring strong representation from BIPOC communities on Laurier's campuses.

To ensure fluid dialogue and to optimize insights and recommendations, reviewers met with group representatives and individuals whose background and perspective aligned, as much as possible, with the reviewer's background, interests and expertise.

The participants and reviewers they met with were as follows:¹

¹ Unless otherwise indicated, all of these groups and individuals are based at or associated with Wilfrid Laurier University

Teneile Warren

- Wilfrid Laurier Faculty Association
- Human Resources
- Association of Black Students (student group, Waterloo campus)
- Racialized students in the Centre for Student Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
- Staff from the Centre for Student Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
- Laurier Students Public Interest Research Group
- Black Students Collective (student group, Brantford campus)
- Graduate Students Association
- An individual from the university's senior administration

Philip Semple

- SCS leadership team
- SCS Communications team
- SCS Sergeants
- Indigenous student support staff from Indigenous Student Support and Services.
- Wilfrid Laurier University Staff Association
- Wilfrid Laurier Students' Union
- A member of the faculty

James Derek Marchand

- The Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 926
- Laurier International (staff and students)
- Dispute Resolution and Sexual and Gendered Violence and student conduct staff
- Residence Life (senior management)
- Residence Life (on-call service student coordinators)
- Indigenous students

The focus groups occurred during January and February 2021. Each focus group was conducted virtually and facilitated by an individual reviewer with the support of a consultant from a third-party provider that specializes in facilitation. The sessions began with a land acknowledgment followed by an explanation of the research and expectations of the interview process, information gathering, and clarification for participants that individual anonymity was assured.

The focus groups sessions were approached in a trauma-informed manner, and the dialogue and questions were structured and delivered in a manner intended to create a safe space for participants to share their insights and experiences with the reviewer.

While each reviewer approached the sessions in an organic manner to ensure participants had the safety, latitude and support they needed to participate fully, there were some common topics explored across the discussions:

- Perceptions of the SCS

- Communication challenges
- The support SCS receives from the university
- SCS structure and training
- Individual experiences interacting with special constables
- Perceptions of the role the SCS should play on Laurier campuses

Upon completion of the consultation phase, each reviewer was invited to write a separate review report, in their own voice, to ensure they could convey their findings and recommendations drawn from both the input they received through the focus groups, as well as their unique expertise and experience.

Teneile Warren

General Observations

Wilfrid Laurier University's (WLU) review of its Special Constable Service (SCS) takes place in the larger context of the current movements calling for the abolishment of campus policing. In undertaking this review, the history of campus police as an entity invented to criminalize student voice, activism and justice movements by equity-seeking groups has provided necessary context. Thus, the review findings exist within the colonial history of campus police as a state-deputized entity to control the movement of bodies on university campuses.

This context is evident in the definition of a special constable offered by the Ontario Special Constable Association:

“In Ontario, Special Constables are considered Peace Officers and are granted all or some of the authority of a police officer depending on how their roles are defined. While the Police Services Act of Ontario permits Special Constables to obtain the same powers as police constables, specific powers, territorial jurisdictions, and responsibilities are outlined within the terms of the individual appointment.”²

In considering the SCS and the university's definition of the role alongside stakeholder feedback from the engaged focus groups, there exists no clear and direct distinction between the WLU SCS and the Waterloo Regional Police Service (WRPS). For the engaged stakeholders, the special constables are simply police and interactions with special constables are equally as discriminatory and dangerous as with firearm carrying police officers. With this in mind, I have considered the findings through the lens of SCS as a policing service, as its role on campus can be equated to a pre-police option whose primary purpose is to protect the campus property. Regardless of definition, special constable programs are initiatives born out of policing culture and therefore must address the systemic trauma and harm in policing if they seek to better serve all community members.

The police were invented to protect property, a theme that was identified in all stakeholder interviews. This theme of police protecting property was a commonality found across all interviews that I completed, regardless of participants' position in the inter-campus hierarchy (i.e., staff, faculty, students). Further, another recurring theme reflected uncertainty regarding the difference between the WRPS and SCS. This was evident in questions such as

- What are the powers and limitations of the SCS?
- Do they represent safety on campus?
- Who do they serve?

Overwhelmingly, student focus groups found that the SCS's mandate held no regard for student safety on campus. They found the SCS to be an organization that surveilled the campus and criminalized their behaviour or presence in classrooms and public spaces. Black and racialized students (representing both Waterloo and Brantford campuses) shared experiences of being

² <https://specialconstables.ca/special-constables-in-ontario>

carded, surveilled and receiving biased treatment from SCS officers. WLU's Indigenous student stakeholders recounted numerous incidents of being harassed both verbally and physically by special constables when smudging or engaging in traditional ceremonies. The majority of female stakeholders did not find that the SCS equated to safety, with two participants naming experiences of being victims of sexual harassment by special constables. Black, Indigenous, LGBTQ2S+, gender non-conforming and other equity-seeking groups all named incidents of being discriminated against by a special constable.

The accountability structure of the SCS lies within policing, further extending the harm experienced by WLU community members during interactions with WLU's SCS officers. There is no recourse for justice when an individual has been harmed by the special constable service.

This speaks to a strong disconnect between the WLU leadership's definition and marketing of the SCS and the experiences of engaged stakeholders within the WLU community. All focus group participants pointed to the SCS uniform as intimidating and fear inducing, with some unable to clarify whether special constables carried firearms or not. This is a crucial point of understanding, as a majority of focus groups identified policing and the symbols of policing as contributing factors to ongoing trauma.

The WLU faculty and staff stakeholders provided more positive accounts of the SCS than the student stakeholders. As one participant stated, "When I was a student, I feared the SCS. Now, as a member of staff, we have a relationship, so I don't feel unsafe." WLU faculty and staff expressed a greater sense of confidence in turning to the SCS for support, while WLU students felt that the SCS did not address their specific needs or safety issues and were thus more likely to turn to their community for support. This was echoed by participants who were once students but are now members of the staff or faculty population. Indigenous, Black, Muslim and LGBTQ2S+ participants relayed incidents of being carded, followed, harassed or addressed with hateful rhetoric and epithets by special constables.

Stakeholder groups also identified the high turnover rate of special constables as contributing to the environment of distrust and the disproportionate harmful impact of police power. The SCS is considered across all WLU stakeholders as a policing initiative that attracts individuals seeking short-term employment before receiving an offer of employment from a police service. It was also identified by stakeholders who worked directly with the SCS that the WRPS and other police agencies actively recruit WLU special constables.

There was strong agreement across the majority of focus groups that the SCS was not prepared or equipped to respond to the incidents they were called to attend to on campus. The examples that were provided included mental health distress and gender-based violence. It is my understanding that SCS is primarily rooted in crime prevention through environmental principles that do not meet the needs of students, particularly those experiencing mental health distress and gender-based violence. Gender-based violence is a serious concern on WLU campuses; thus, approaches to preventing, reducing, and responding to it need to be grounded in anti-racist, anti-sexist, and decolonial praxis.

The focus group participants on the Waterloo campus reported a higher sense of personal safety than participants on the Brantford campus. The disparity in experiences between the two campuses were significant (thus, I will be making recommendations per campus).

There were some participants representing the Kitchener and Milton Campus. However, due to low representation from these two populations across all the focus groups, I will not be offering recommendations for the SCS program at those locations. Laurier should consider a per campus review of its SCS model. Each WLU campus represents its own community and needs. (The campuses' design, location and interaction with external communities were often indicated and referenced, highlighting urban structural design's influence on personal safety.)

Recommendations

Waterloo Campus

The majority of focus group participants from the Waterloo campus spoke to a need to see greater investment in upstreaming initiatives, community building programs and social services on campus. Further, engaged stakeholders identified areas for greater funding allocation that would better meet the need for campus safety. These included mental health supports, sexual assault services, food security initiatives, and campus housing. A commitment to increased investment in community wellbeing was a resounding message from the Waterloo Campus stakeholders. Citing several incidents of mental illness and gender-based violence, stakeholders noted that the support required to heal from the mental and emotional trauma of these experiences were either unavailable or severely lacking.

In speaking to physical safety, student stakeholders noted that their safety should be student-led, as students' lived experience should inform how safety is defined and ensured on campus.

Based on the findings of the focus groups, I have recommendations in two areas:

Dismantle SCS program:

- Dismantle the current SCS program and, through extensive consultations, redesign and offer a program that is anti-racist, anti-sexist, and decolonial in praxis
 - Cut ties between WLU and the WRPS
 - Publicly share the yearly budget for the SCS, including the percentage of student tuition allocated to the SCS, and reallocate that funding to upstream prevention initiatives
 - Conduct broad and thorough consultations across the student population centering the perspectives of those most marginalized and disproportionately impacted by campus policing
 - Increase investment in on-campus community services that work to address social inequities impacting the student experience
 - Invest in culturally appropriate gender-based violence and sexual assault support services

Student-led safety initiatives:

- 24hr Wellbeing and Gender Safety Response Team
 - Mental wellbeing and gender-based violence were recurring themes. The lack of supports and fear of police interactions underpin the need for a non-criminalizing and non-violent response to incidents of mental distress and gender safety
 - This approach would improve relationships between WLU and students who hold distrust for the SCS
 - Lead proactive education models to upskill the knowledge on mental illness, gender-based violence and reducing their on-campus occurrences
 - This entity's guiding principles should be rooted in de-escalation, crisis intervention, lived-experience knowledge, Indigenous and transformative justice principles
 - Utilizes non-carceral approaches to preventing and responding to gender-based violence on campus
 - Conflict resolution and mediation training to support individuals experiencing ongoing intimate-partner violence
 - Establish community partnerships with agencies that can fill service gaps to support the needs of students living with mental illness, neurodiversities, and gender-based trauma

- This program could build on the current student-led response team that operates on the Western University campus. Western's Student Emergency Response Team (SERT) is a student-led health services initiative that students can turn to. It supplements campus medical services and can respond to wellness checks.

- Invest in the student-led volunteer foot patrol
 - Student stakeholders identified the student foot patrol as a safe and welcomed initiative and named the desire for it to be expanded to greater meet their needs
 - Foot patrol volunteers should receive training in de-escalation protocols and trauma awareness

Brantford Campus

The focus group participants representing the WLU Brantford campus all spoke to a greater need for a robust and collaborative approach to campus safety. The WLU Brantford campus is centrally located in downtown Brantford. The focus groups also spoke to community challenges and issues playing out on the WLU campus. It is clear that the WLU Brantford campus requires an extensive evaluation process that is focused solely on the needs of that campus and those who attend and work there. Additionally, participants from Brantford offered no strong consensus on a path forward for the SCS program.

Based on the limited number of focus groups and participants dedicated to the Brantford campus, I recommend a targeted and focused review of the SCS program hosted there.

Participant concerns of being ignored or dismissed by the larger university and demands to see increased collaboration with community agencies cannot be overstated. A review of the program must consider all factors that influence individuals' experiences and sense of community and personal safety.

Conclusion

While I have made recommendations for a path forward on the Waterloo Campus, it is the opinion of this reviewer that a more robust review should be conducted on all campuses with greater efforts made to engage a wider cross-section of the student population. For example, the voices of social justice organizations on campus such as WLU Palestine were notably absent. The exclusion of voices that advocate for and align with an abolitionist framework from the review calls into the question WLU's commitment to creating an antiracist, anti-oppressive learning environment. If the university is truly to move towards an equitable future, it must challenge the ways in which a tether to colonialist ideology perpetuates harm and upholds the status quo in equity evaluation.

James Derek Marchand

Findings and Observations

During the interviews, there were a number of commonalities and themes that emerged, particularly from participants who work directly with student populations. There were also consistent distinctions noted regarding overall perceptions of safety between the Waterloo and Brantford campuses.

- All participants shared that they perceive the SCS as having a key role and being a major element in the operational safety and protection of the campus, students, staff and faculty.
- There is some confusion as to the specific roles of special constables when it comes to authorities, duties and responsibilities, as well as their identity as police and/or security, which can, at times, be blurred or not clearly understood.
- The Brantford campus is identified as having its own unique challenges. It is seen to be more integrated into the downtown core of the city and thus can be perceived as less safe due to intermingling of WLU faculty/students/staff with the general public.
- There is also a perception that the SCS is not actively present at the Brantford location.
- The interactions and relationships with the senior ranks of the SCS are seen as being very positive. However, it was noted that the officer cadre of the SCS is not viewed in the same manner. Indications are that the SCS officer cadre seems to be constantly in a turnover state and, as a result, there are challenges for Laurier community members in building relationships and rapport with the front-line officers of the SCS.
- There is a perceived lack of diversity and gender balance within the ranks of the SCS, which is viewed as being predominately “white males.”
- There is a perceived need for overall consistency in the application, awareness and educational element and/or component of the SCS duties, mandate, roles and responsibilities vs. the local police services.
- The question “How are reports of racism responded to and addressed by the SCS?” was raised with all stakeholder groups I met with. None of the participants had had any direct or lived experiences with racism on the part of special constables and were only aware of hearsay stories. (Based on the feedback, it seems participants assumed that these cases were handed by the SCS leadership.)

Recommendations

It is recommended that the university pursue the following priorities for the SCS:

- Hiring principles and practices more reflective of the diverse communities the SCS serves and elements of diversity training incorporated into the ranks. (e.g., Cultural Competence, White Privilege and White Fragility awareness and training)
- Retention and staffing turnover issues need to be clearly identified and remedied through a comprehensive HR and staffing review
- Explore and expand use of social media platforms and presence as this seems to be the student population's preferred method of communication
- Increase presence and proactive patrols during specific high-traffic and volume events
- Training in mental health interventions and clarification of roles and responsibilities
- Evolution of SCS uniform policy to support diverse candidates from BIPOC and LGBTQ2S+ populations
- Higher visibility and presence at Brantford campus, including the use of video surveillance in more locations
- Pursuing opportunities for members of the SCS to engage and actively participate in relationship building with students, staff and stakeholders beyond the current scope of activities
- Develop a comprehensive community engagement plan to support SCS team members in building rapport within the communities they serve
- Actively conduct proactive patrols in areas of expressed concern and review safety blind spots

Philip Semple

Summary of findings

There is recognition that while there is much yet to be done, there has been a significant improvement in the Special Constable Services (SCS) recently. Some persistent themes revolve around a lack of sufficient personnel and resources to allow special constables to do their job effectively and a lack of diversity within their ranks. Most students and faculty are not aware of the true scope and mandate of the SCS. The SCS continues to suffer as their personnel are being 'poached' by the regional police services. The special constables are considered well-meaning but could have their functionality enhanced through greater training.

Themes and recommendations

All of the groups I interviewed agreed that the SCS has improved greatly under its new leadership. It would appear that the previous administration left much to be desired. As individuals with strong policing backgrounds, the new leadership has been reported to have provided guidance, mentorship and leadership to the SCS. While there is still room for improvement, people are pleased with the improvements that have already occurred and hope for more.

It is acknowledged that while there have been significant increases in the number of women hired into the SCS ranks, there is still a noticeable lack of diversity in areas such as ethnicity and the 2SLGBTQ+ community.

- **Recommendation:** Along with targeted hiring, this could be addressed through the implementation of a Student Safety Patrol (SSP) program (described in full in the Three Possible Action Plans section below).

A common theme emerged regarding the belief that the SCS are under-resourced and have insufficient personnel to do the job effectively. This is evidenced by the length of time it can take special constables to respond to minor incidents (such as professors being locked out of a room) as the result of call prioritization.

- **Recommendation:** This could also be addressed through the implementation of a SSP program.

People would like to see more resources expended on the SCS in the form of enhanced training, especially in the areas of mental health intervention and interactions with Indigenous populations.

Many students and faculty are not aware of the true scope and mandate of the SCS. Special constables are often viewed as "glorified security guards."

- **Recommendation:** A marketing or advertising campaign might better inform the populous as to the numerous roles and responsibilities held by the SCS. This would also serve to increase public respect and appreciation for the special constables. This could be addressed through the implementation of the SSP program with students working in

the program becoming more knowledgeable about SCS functions and informally passing that information on to their peers.

Special constables often feel underappreciated and misunderstood.

- **Recommendation:** This relates to the previous theme and could be addressed through a marketing campaign and the introduction of the SSP program. Consideration could be given to the formation of a newsletter advising and/or promoting the good works done by the SCS. The introduction of a means for recognizing work that goes “above and beyond the call” was suggested so that special constables could be “called in” for reasons other than being reprimanded.

Installation of a centralized centre of operations was identified as being important by both the special constables and some key stakeholders. This is something that has been requested by the SCS on numerous occasions before but has never come to fruition.

- **Recommendation:** Consider establishing a centralized base of operations (see details in Three Possible Action Plans section below).

A theme emerged that the different campuses have different needs and issues.

- **Recommendation:** SCS management may wish to employ a problem-solving model like SARA (Scanning, Analysis, Response, Assessment) to identify these needs. This is not to say that it is not already being done, but the feedback speaks to the perception that the SCS team doesn’t have time to address specific issues due to being stretched too thin. A specific example is SCS dealing with problems inherent to the hotel beside the Brantford campus that is now being used to house formerly homeless persons during the pandemic. (That development brought with it health and safety issues that impact quality of life and safety such that the student population needed to be made aware of and educated about it.)

The Indigenous Student Centre would like to improve their relationship with more of the SCS officers. They report enjoying the attitude and behaviour of some of the officers but would like to see this expand to the others. This, however, would require the officers to have the time, support and desire to partake.

- **Recommendation:** Introduction of the SSP program could have a positive effect here as well.

The problem of special constable retention was identified by key stakeholders and the special constables themselves. Some people view the SCS as a stepping stone toward employment with regional police services, who are only too happy to take candidates with the experience and training found in the special constables. Having said this, some of the SCS constables identify that they are very happy to stay with the SCS as a lifelong career. One officer said that he feels

he is “now home” in the SCS and has never felt as supported and respected by his management and peers as he now feels.

- **Recommendation:** SCS promote and enhance their product differentiation from the regional services. This could be achieved in several ways:
 - One area where the regionals cannot compete is the university offering free or greatly reduced costs for post-secondary education to SCS officers and their families. This is a major benefit that can translate into thousands of dollars.
 - Building rapport or self-esteem may also be beneficial. The special constables perform a vital role that is not always acknowledged or known within the community.
 - For example, interaction with the special constables during incidents of misbehaviour or minor (summary conviction type) offences, when dealt with by the special constables instead of the regional police, may result in warnings or minor sanctions as opposed to criminal or other charges.
 - The special constables have in mind the reputation of the university as well as the welfare, education and growth of the students when they perform their duties, not just the enforcement of laws, rules and regulations. The special constables also provide public protection without the use of deadly force options.
 - Perhaps this sort of quality needs to be acknowledged and publicized.
 - It is unlikely that the university can compete with regional services on the basis of salary, but it may be able to address some wage-equity issues, possibly through some sort of bonus or incentive plan for senior officers.
 - It was also suggested that the SCS may wish to consider creating some form of career advancement opportunities to help maintain interest.

The theme also emerged that there is a desire to enhance SCS/campus community relations. The SCS uniform and car, in particular, are seen as a barrier between the SCS officers and students. The uniform is an integral part of the public safety function and necessary for instant public recognition. The uniform is also necessary for the health and safety of the officers.

- **Recommendation:** Perhaps there could be room for a plainclothes function within the SCS. The SSP program would also fit well into this proposition. The SCS may wish to consider introducing or expanding the role of foot patrols to allow for greater engagement of the special constables and the public in a non-enforcement role. Again, the SSP program could assist in this regard.

Regarding the question “How are reports of racism responded to and addressed by the SCS?”, only one group reported having knowledge of any incidents of racist behaviours occurring on the part of special constables. The representatives from Indigenous Student Support and Services reported on an event that occurred in 2017 in which a special constable was heard to make racist comments while attending a break-and-enter incident. (The event appears to have been dealt with appropriately, as the officer was subsequently fired. None of the other groups

reported knowledge of any incidents of racist behaviour on the part of special constables and could therefore not comment on how such incidents are responded to or addressed.)

Recommended broad program changes

A physical and centrally located base of operations

Pros:

- Increase SCS morale through feeling of being appreciated and listened to
- Increased efficiency of SCS management as they would be leading and observing operations from a central location
- Increased managerial communications from leaders being located in the same place as front-line personnel
- Increased sharing of inter-SCS communication as they all start, return to and operate from a centralized base of operations
- Increased inter-SCS communication as the communications centre would be located in the same place as SCS operations and management
- Improved community relations as the community (public, faculty and students) have a known place where they can go to speak to SCS with problems or just for information needs
- Increased marketing and communication as projects or functions could be advertised in their own physical space
- Improved community safety as people would know where to go to find SCS personnel
- Enhanced efficiency of emergency response as regional police or other EMS would have a designated place to go to consistently when the need to interact or be directed by SCS incidents occur

Cons:

- Cost to the university in identifying, creating, locating or repurposing a facility

A targeted, comprehensive marketing and communications initiative

Pros:

- Improved SCS personnel retention through communicating the advantages of working with SCS over joining the regional police
 - The biggest being free (or greatly reduced) education for officers and their families
 - Also, quality of the work experience and intercommunity relations
 - No need to carry deadly force options
 - Primarily positive interactions with the community
- Stories publicized about their successes
- Enhanced morale as the true roles and functions of the SCS are articulated to the community, faculty and students

- Subsequently, SCS officers see their true worth being identified, articulated and communicated to the population at large
- Improved relations with the school community through the realization that interactions with the SCS reduce the need for regional police interventions, which equals reduced charges or sanctions as problems or issues are dealt with in-house
- Improved communications and flow of intelligence as the community appreciates the SCS for what they truly do and move to assist them in accomplishing their mutually beneficial goals
- Reduce superfluous calls for service
- Increase respect from the population to the SCS

Cons:

- Cost of creating and disseminating the marketing initiatives
 - Includes identifying appropriate means, venues, artists, locations, initiatives, formats, audiences, and content
- Implementation will require significant thought, work and consultation

Introduction of a Student Safety Patrol (SSP) program

Evidence for the efficacy and benefit of this sort of program (while not perfect) is demonstrated by its existence and the effectiveness of its operations at Carleton University. This initiative can address different issues as identified above. (It is important to note that students must be recruited from the student population at large – not just from Police Foundations or Justice programs.)

Pros:

- Addresses lack of personnel and resources issues
- Increases community relations as the students come from the population at large
- Frees up SCS time to deal with more serious issues
- Improved SCS student relations because the SSPs are peer enforcers
- Increased intelligence as the SSPs are students who are naturally on social media and could advise of serious incidents before they occur
- Opportunity for students to obtain work experience
- Opportunity for students to obtain money to help support themselves
- Opportunity for students to access program education
- Opportunity for students to obtain credentials and certifications like a Security License, First Aid, Mental Health Assist, and Defensive Tactics (all in their two weeks of inaugural training)
- Students come from across disciplines, increasing the appreciation for SCS across the board internally and externally
- SSPs are employees of the university and as such fall under existing protocols through WHIMIS, unions, insurances and the Ontario Employment Standards Act

- They are appreciated by the university population who recognize that they are not representative of more policing but rather to help limit police contact through peer intervention

Cons:

- Salary costs (slightly above minimum wage)
- SCS personnel to run and coordinate the program (should have a dedicated SCS person)
- Investment in scheduling software (unless the university already has this)
- Educating the SCS to understand that this enhances their role, function and quality of life and is not a threat to their job security

Appendix: Reviewer Profiles

Teneile Warren

Teneile Warren is an antiracism educator and equity consultant based in Kitchener, Ontario. Her work centres on the advancement of racialized communities, with a particular focus on African, Caribbean and Black immigrant communities. Through her professional practice, she consults with public and private institutions on addressing anti-Black racism and fostering racial literacy. She is currently the Equity and Inclusion Officer at the Waterloo Region District School Board. She has developed training workshops in Conflict Mediation for African Diaspora communities, Language Privilege, Identity and Oppression in White Education Systems, and Conflict Coaching for Black Parents.

Beyond her professional work, Teneile is a produced playwright, published poet and award-winning chef. As an artist, she has observed that food and art are often misappropriated and improperly used as tools of community inclusion. Her writing and food are social commentary pieces that intersect with her own identities. Her creative writing and theatre practices are applied to her work. Teneile is a Black, lesbian, Jamaican immigrant to Turtle Island. She is a cofounder of the independent media publication, insideWaterloo, contributing writer for ByBlacks.com, a steering committee member of the African, Caribbean and Black Network of Waterloo Region, and on the editorial team for Textile Magazine. She holds a BA (Honours) in Media and Communications from the University of the West Indies and an MFA in Creative Writing from the University of Guelph.

James Derek Marchand

James Derek (JD) Marchand is a proud member of the Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg Algonquin First Nation. JD has extensive experience collaborating, interacting, and engaging with Indigenous communities, various levels of leadership in the federal and provincial governments, and with key stakeholders.

JD's career has spanned many facets of law enforcement and restorative justice and has afforded him tremendous insight and political acumen. He has successfully navigated the challenging and evolving political and social relationship dynamics that exist in various community settings and is a passionate advocate for equity, inclusion, and social justice.

Philip Semple

Professor Philip Semple was born in England to Guyanese parents. Philip completed his BA at Wilfrid Laurier University (1982) and his MA in Higher Education from Central Michigan University (2011). He also holds a Business Administration Diploma from Wilfrid Laurier University (1985) and a Certificate in Advanced Police Studies from the University of Western Ontario and the Ontario Police College (1991). Philip is now a PhD candidate at OISE (University of Toronto). Philip retired from the Toronto Police Service in 2008 after a serving for 31 years.

Since 2008, Philip has been a College Professor and served as an interim Chair of the Emergency and Public Safety Institute at Centennial College in Toronto, where he is currently the

Coordinator of the Police Foundations Program. Philip has received numerous awards for his work at Centennial College, teaching and contributions to his community. He published a paper on racial profiling in the *College Quarterly* (Fall 2013 – Volume 16 Number 4). He was also published in the *Global Citizen Digest* (Volume 2, Issue 3) for an exercise he developed to help his students understand and address the issue of racial profiling. Philip presented on IPE (Inter-professional Education) as a means to address implicit bias and the effects of stereotyping at the *Collaboration Across Borders Conference* in Banff, Alberta (2017) and then again at the *Altogether Better Health Conference* at the University of Auckland in New Zealand (2018).

Most recently, Philip was twice awarded the William G. Davis Graduate Student Fellowship in Community College Leadership and the Michael Skolnik Award in Community College Studies in 2019-2020 and 2020-2021. Philip was chosen to be a member of the inaugural cohort of the CERC in Migration and Integration project. A full career as a Toronto police officer, being a black male and now an academic have inexorably led Philip to become part of the diversity and bias conversation.