



THE  
**Future**  
OF WORK

Annual Report  
2022-23

# Messages 2022-23

## from the Chair

ODEN has entered its third year of its current strategic plan. Last year I spotlighted successes we had in each of our four Strategic Pillars; Growth & Awareness, Thought Leadership, Advocacy & Engagement, and Innovation & Service Excellence. While the work in these areas continues, there are two primary highlights that stand out to me for the year.

By this time, we have all heard of, and many have experienced the impact of the ongoing Employment Services Transformation and the eventual roll-out of 15 Service System Managers (SSM) across the Province. This has created significant change in how we deliver service, who we support, and who we partner with. It has also opened the door to ODEN to increase its Advocacy and Engagement. With several SSMs transitioning in 2023-2024, and the final three to follow, this work will remain critical in ensuring the needs of job seekers who have a disability are at the forefront of the transformation.

Changing gears, ODEN's **Light It Up! for NDEAM**® (National Disability Employment Awareness Month) had record participation, reaching almost 440 locations in almost 120 communities nationwide. This is nearly a 50% increase in a single year. What started as a relatively small, regional initiative has truly gone National and sparked countless conversations and calls to action, all for the betterment of those we work to support.

It has remained my honour to serve ODEN as the Board Chair, knowing the significant impacts ODEN has on jobseekers who have a disability across the province and beyond.

*Michael Dawthorne*

Chair, Board of Directors, ODEN



## from the CEO

2022/23 welcomed us back from over two years of the challenges of a global pandemic.

The agencies and service providers that make up the membership of ODEN embraced the return and the 'future of work' in the new arena of hybrid workplaces.

We navigated connecting and engaging while switching between online and in-person work. The return to in-person services and events enabled relationships to be rekindled and allowed us to meet so many who we had previously only known through our computer screens. Throughout all this, the membership continued to excel in their service excellence, supporting job seekers and businesses, while internally supporting their teams.

This was also the year that more of our network was brought into Employment Service Transformation, and the challenges of shifting service models were realized by many. ODEN's work to support this change was informed by the experiences and insights of the members, resulting in recommendations to government and sharing of strategies for advocacy. We will continue to advocate for the membership, the sector and most importantly, for job seekers who have a disability.

For ODEN, our dedicated, passionate team worked hard to develop and deliver trainings and resources for the membership, expand and enhance online services to improve the ability of businesses to hire with intention and inclusion, and continue to promote and support knowledge translation and transfer. Members supported all of this by sharing learnings, strategies, and practices freely.

Looking toward 2023/24 and the transformation of Employment Services and the Developmental Sector, the ODEN team will continue to work with, for, and because of the membership and our mission.

*Jeannette Campbell*

Chief Executive Officer, ODEN

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## Our Mission

The Ontario Disability Employment Network is a professional body of employment service providers united to increase employment opportunities for people who have a disability by:

- **Addressing issues** related to removing barriers that limit employment opportunities for people who have a disability.
- **Creating a provincial voice** that can speak to government about issues that affect service delivery and support models and the ability of employment service providers to help people who have a disability achieve their employment goals.
- **Developing marketing initiatives** and providing education for the business and corporate sector about the merits of including people who have a disability in the workforce.
- **Improving the skills** and competency of employment service providers through networking, information sharing, training and the promotion of best practice in the sector.

# Business Engagement

Businesses that are intentional and meaningful in their disability inclusion and diversity strategies are more successful in the long run. ODEN works with employers to raise awareness and increase the number of inclusive businesses in Ontario through:

- Education on the benefits of disability inclusive hiring
- Providing talent acquisition services
- Delivering Disability Awareness and Confidence Training (DACT) for all levels of staff and management
- Consulting with companies to enhance their:
  - Business vision and strategies for inclusive hiring,
  - Mentorship program development and,
  - Procurement and supply chain education
- Facilitating and fostering relationships between local employment service providers and the business community.

ODEN referred **144 job opportunities** to over 230 employment service providers, directly resulting in **over 75 people being hired** coming out of a global pandemic.



ODEN was engaged by **7 businesses** to support the development and/or improve their Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) strategies.

**Rakuten KOBO Inc.**   **Shopify**   **University of Western Ontario**  
**AriaVent**   **CIBC**   **Public Service Commission**   **ASTRO Amusement**  
**Scotiabank**   **Relay Logistics**   **Canadian National Exhibition**  
**Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital**   **Shared Services Canada**  
**Stark**   **London Training Centre**   **Amazon Canada**   **MH3 Group**  
**Michaels Stores Canada**   **Businesses**   **Brick Canada**  
**Canada Post**   **ODEN Worked With**   **Cosmo Music**  
**Do Good Donuts**   **Compass Group**   **CORUS Group**  
**Evolve Recycling**   **Beaver Valley Ski Club**   **Globe & Mail**   **EY**  
**OTEC**   **Canadian Border Service Agency**   **Vanguard**  
**University Health Network**   **Image By Design Events and Studios**  
**Gearshift Productions**   **Wirecomm**   **Ecovadis Group**   **LCBO**  
**Rogers**   **Canada Council for the Arts**   **YETI**   **Social Capital Partners**



Members of the Hamilton Disability Employment Network (HDEN) during a Business Engagement Event, October 20, 2022.

**10 Business Engagement events** were supported by ODEN, 4 of which were Regional. These events drew businesses from all four corners of Ontario including Windsor, Hamilton, and Quinte West. **6 other events** were hosted including a virtual event where businesses from all geographies were in attendance. A total of **380 businesspeople** were engaged.



ODEN's Biz Connect Leader Series provides businesses with the opportunity to inform disability employment service providers across the country about their business, their DEI strategy and current opportunities. In 2022/23 ODEN hosted **7 businesses**. These companies include The Brick Canada, Public Service Commission of Canada, Canada Border Services, Rogers Communications, Shared Services Canada, Canadian National Exhibition and Amazon Canada.

## Disability Awareness and Confidence Training (DACT)

DACT continued to be popular among businesses who were committed to their inclusion strategies. **272 businesspeople** received in-person DACT this fiscal year.

In 2022/23 we launched ODEN Learn, our online learning centre, with its first course: Disability Awareness and Confidence Training for Business. In the first few months, **17 companies** registered staff to complete this online learning.

ODEN introduced **46 businesses** to the benefits of inclusive hiring reaching **265+ business people**.

## Business Champions League

On January 14, 2023, the world lost the former Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, David C. Onley. He was the catalyst for ODEN's Business Champions League, bringing together business leaders who were passionate about inclusive hiring, and supported them to organize, advocate and bring a voice to the inequities and inequalities faced by people who have a disability. The League remains active today, and ODEN is forever indebted to this tireless champion.



2016 Business Champions Award (L-R) Mark Wafer, Hon. David C. Onley, and Steve Sharpe.

## Moving Forward...

We know that businesses are still experiencing labour shortages across all sectors and will continue to require the services that ODEN provides.

- ODEN will continue to develop online learning courses and expand our offerings to include "DACT for Managers & Supervisors", "DACT for Co-workers" and "DACT for Executive Leadership".
- ODEN will continue to support the development of career pathways through programs such as ODEN Biz Connect Leader Series, job referrals and collaborations between businesses and employment service providers.
- ODEN will strive to enhance the "Business Only" stream at the Annual RDC Conference.

# Building Capacity and Improving the Sector

By building capacity with employment service providers, educational institutions and those organizations that serve people who have a disability, the sector will continue to strengthen.

ODEN supports **capacity building through training, coaching, mentoring, consulting and planning** with employment service providers across the province. We also share knowledge and promising practices through speaking engagements, ODEN Connection events and networking opportunities.

“ The Employment Service Training content really got me thinking, and I know that I will be bringing many of the things we covered into my day-to-day as I move forward. ”  
- YES Employment Services Participant, June 2022



Walpole Island First Nation Employment Service Training, January 2023.

In November 2022, ODEN introduced **Disability Awareness and Confidence Training** (DACT) for Agencies which gained popularity throughout the year with **5 agencies** engaging their staff in this online course.

As part of our daily work for the membership, the team at ODEN also provided **36 coaching and mentoring sessions** for agencies on a variety of topics.

“ The DACT for agency workshop has inspired our office to seek out and educate employers – as well as bring new perspectives and resources to the table when faced with helping our clients find meaningful, sustainable, employment. ”  
- Military Family Resource Centre Participant, November 2022



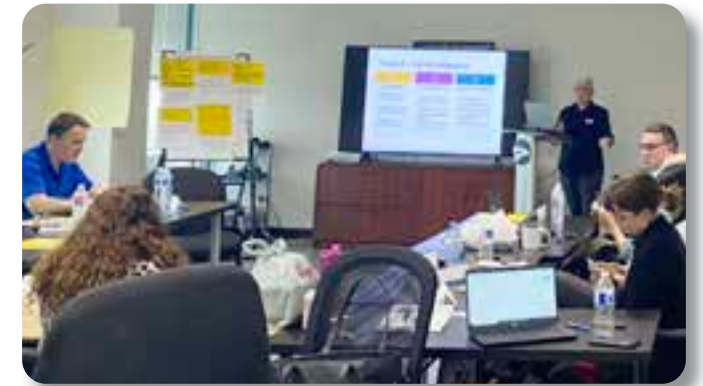
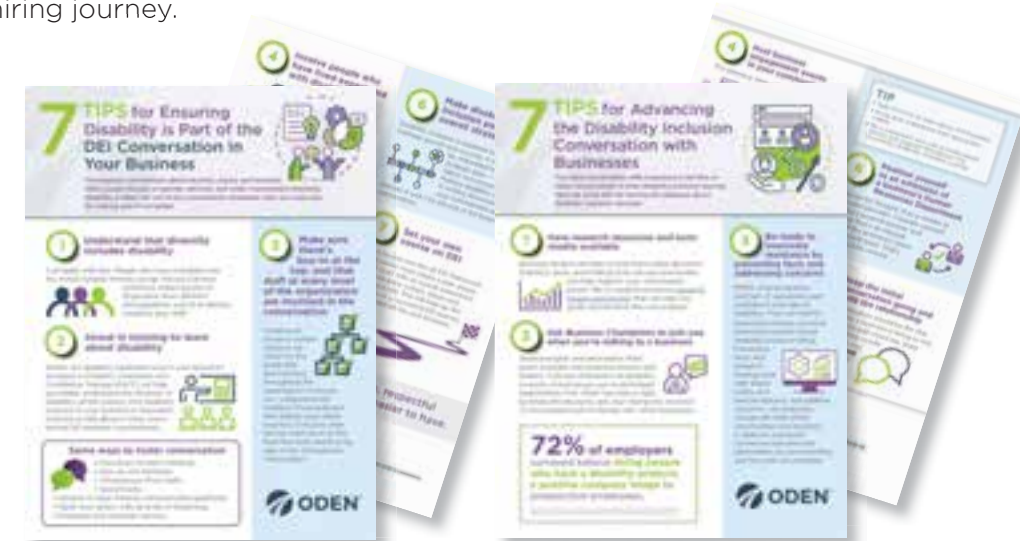
ODEN hosted **39 engagement events** where knowledge was shared with over **1600 participants**. ODEN staff spoke at 14 events throughout the year to a variety of audiences. This demonstrates the level of interaction and interest from the service delivery sector.

ODEN hosted **14 Connection events** that connected our networks to innovative projects, tools, resources and information so they can stay up-to-date and apply the latest knowledge and techniques to improve service delivery.

There were also numerous events held with educators throughout the year, and in 2023/24 we look forward to connecting with even more people who share our mission and values, or who are ready to begin their inclusive hiring journey.

## Other Highlights

ODEN continued to develop our library of resources including our **7 Tips sheets** series as part of our NDEAM Campaign. New in 2022/23 were **7 Tips for Ensuring Disability is Part of the DEI Conversation in Your Business** and **7 Tips for Advancing the Disability Inclusion Conversation with Businesses**.



ESP Training Abilities To Work, October 2022.

“ I believe this Employment Services Training should be mandatory for new Employment consultants and job developers. ”  
- Lutherwood Participant, January 2023

“ Advanced Job Development was a fantastic training and I recommend all of my colleagues take it if given the opportunity. ”  
- Participant, January 2023

## Moving Forward...

ODEN will continue to support the sector with:

- Updated training materials and resources that are relevant to the changes in the sector
- Tools and resources to meet increased demand including online training modules
- Projects to enhance service delivery and job outcomes in Ontario

# Innovation and Promising Practice

Partnerships and collaborations have the power to drive innovation. ODEN is dedicated to identifying and disseminating innovative models, services, and promising practices.

In 2022/23 this dedication to innovation resulted in:

- The creation of **2 new case studies** – PATH Employment as a high-performing agency and Amazon Canada as an inclusive business
- The compilation of case studies with over **130 pages of knowledge** gathered for members, by members
- An **updated Partnership Guidebook** to include two new case studies – Impact of School-Employment Service Provider Partnership on Employment Outcomes for Youth Who Have a Disability contributed by Community Living Essex County and Canadian Network Supporting Inclusive Public Service Employment (CNSIPSE) contributed by LiveWorkPlay
- 3 Partnership & Collaboration education sessions delivered to **150+ attendees**
- ODEN hosted over **120 participants** who learned about promising practices including VjobReady by Career Services of Brockville and Job Demands & Accommodation Planning Tool (JDAPT) by the Institute of Work and Health.



This School to Work transition program was introduced to more high schools across Ontario this year in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, ODEN, Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital, community agencies, businesses and school boards. During the 2022/23 school year, **7 new sites were established**. Project SEARCH in Ontario now includes 11 sites, 10 school boards and 8 community partners.

## The Project SEARCH model results in a **75% employment rate**

 for graduates.



In 2022/23, ODEN played a very active role on the Knowledge Translation and Transfer network hub (KTT) steering committee with Community Living Essex County, Partners for Planning, and MCCSS. ODEN researched and presented topics, which were selected for the creation of **three learning modules**:

- An Introduction to the Online Disability Awareness & Confidence Training for the Developmental Services Sector
- Youth Success Strategy for the Developmental Sector
- An Introduction to Employment Discovery Toolkit Training for Support Networks

ODEN continued to work to meet the KTT goal of **Peer-to-Peer mentoring**, supporting education events for agencies to adopt practices in the hub. ODEN supported the transition of the jobPath Community of Practice, first hosted by ODEN, to the KTT and the facilitation of the first Innovation Forum hosted in October 2022.

ODEN updated the **Change Management Workbook** with new case studies and promoted it at several conferences and events across the country including the CASE Conference, CANNEXUS 2023, the Developmental Services Human Resources Forum and as co-hosts of the Innovation Alley at ODEN's Annual RDC Conference. Finally, the Change Management Workbook was introduced to **over 200 MCCSS program supervisors** during the MCCSS Directors Dialogue in March 2023.



ODEN continued to work on the Youth Success Strategy (YSS) through a grant from the CASE Innovation Lab. Work in 2022/23 included building relationships across the country and training organizations to deliver the Family Workshop "Employment: The Gold Standard for Inclusion". Information sessions were delivered in Ontario, Nova Scotia, Manitoba, and British Columbia and 6 organizations were identified to deliver this training in the future.

As a result, **5 employers, 14 families, and 44 service providers were engaged**.

**Over 50,000 social media impressions** and over **700 people** were engaged via emails & targeted newsletters.



Since early 2022, ODEN has been a partner in the Hidden Mobility Disabilities project, sponsored by the **Hidden Mobility Disabilities Alliance**, and funded by Accessibility Standards Canada. This project explores possible changes to federal accessibility standards to address lack of awareness of barriers created by distance to be walked and time standing. Through the surveying of more than 2500 Canadians, the project has identified that **limited mobility impacts 13% of Canadians** or over 4 million people. ODEN will continue to support the HMD project into 2023/24 until completion.



ODEN continued to see growth of the Jobs Ability Canada online recruitment platform built by and for people

who have a disability. Upgrades included job coach access for employment service providers, enhanced artificial intelligence and more accessibility features. In 2022/23, over **1000 job seekers** built profiles and more than **17 businesses** subscribed, posting their job opportunities across the country.



In February 2023, Jobs Ability received a global award for Outstanding Innovations in Assistive Technology at the Zero Conference 2023 for its creation of the platform.

John Robinson, Founder, Our Ability Inc. and Jobs Ability at the Zero Conference 2023 in Vienna, Austria.



ODEN, in partnership with March of Dimes Canada, fulfilled the contract for MentorAbility Ontario Hub until March 31, 2023. The MentorAbility Canada Project was successful in securing ongoing funding and will launch MentorAbility 2.0 in 2023/24. ODEN has been asked to continue engagement in the next phase of the project.

MentorAbility Ontario successfully facilitated **62 mentorship matches**, engaged **71 Mentors** (Businesses), **83 Proteges** (job seekers) and **4 new site partners** who registered to facilitate the project in their region.

## Moving Forward...

- ODEN will support the growth of Project SEARCH Canada
- ODEN will actively promote the goals of the YSS locally and nationally
- ODEN will continue to collaborate on the KTT hub, promoting and developing resources for the sector



# NDEAM 2022

Did you participate in NDEAM 2022 with us? Our **Inclusive Future of Work** campaign was hugely successful and there was a lot of involvement and engagement! There were **184 “media hits”** of coverage reaching an audience of over **24 million people**.

There was also incredible excitement and enthusiastic involvement in *Light it Up! For NDEAM®* nationwide on October 20. With the event in its third year, participation has grown to heights that ODEN never imagined when we started *Light It Up! For NDEAM®* three years ago.

## Light It Up! For NDEAM®

**400+** locations in **117** communities participated

Web presence:

### IMPRESSIONS

**in** 5,797    **f** 10,843    **X** 7,320



**6,813** page views

# Membership Highlights

## RDC 2022

ODEN welcomed back its **Annual Rethinking Disabilities Conference** after a two-year hiatus due to the global pandemic. It was exciting to see new and familiar faces and engage in professional development opportunities for the sector. We had representation from approximately 85 organizations that support job seekers who have a variety of disabilities from across the province.

**254 people** attended the **Rethinking Disabilities conference** **OVER 30 sessions** **8 sponsors & 10 Exhibitors** participated sharing their products & services



## Agency Membership

**Agency membership is the core of who ODEN is.** Members contribute to the direction and work that ODEN delivers in the sector. In 2022/23 ODEN had 120 members. ODEN will continue to grow its membership and advocate, ensuring all employment service providers have a voice as Ontario continues the Employment Services Transformation of ODSP-ES and the Developmental Sector’s Journey to Belonging.

## ODEN’s Web Presence

**in** 80,047    **f** 45,282    **X** 18,335

### IMPRESSIONS

## Corporate Membership

ODEN works with Corporate Members in a variety of ways:

- ✓ We increase their access to the disability talent pool by creating relationships with Employment Service Providers.
- ✓ We support the development of strategies that will elevate their disability awareness and confidence.
- ✓ We build business members’ capacity required to hire, onboard and retain employees who have a disability.

**5 Corporate Members** joined in 2022/23 including:



## 2022-2023 Board of Directors

**Michael Dawthorne**, London  
Chair

**Chris Guillemette**, North Bay  
Vice-Chair

**Linda Simpson**, Ottawa  
Secretary

**Rosa Amicarelli**, Essex County  
Past Chair

**Danette Anthony**, Oshawa  
Director

**Yunchuan (Frankie) He**, Markham  
Director

**Amani Hitimana**, Toronto  
Director

**Sandra Leslie**, Belleville  
Director

**Ashley Sweeney**, Angus  
Director

**Johanne Strome**, Picton  
Director

**Ann Szabo**, Toronto  
Director

## 2022-2023 ODEN Staff

**Jeannette Campbell**  
Chief Executive Officer

**Ingrid Muschta**  
Director, Special Projects & Innovation

**Amy Widdows**  
Director, Development & Capacity Building

**Sue Dafoe**  
Director, Business & Financial Services

**Lesley Ellis**  
Administrative & Membership Coordinator

**Dean Askin**  
Communications Strategist

**Raisa Fariha**  
Accounting & HR Assistant

**Dr. Jennifer Crowson**  
Diversity & Inclusion Specialist

**J.C. Doyle**  
Diversity & Inclusion Specialist

**Jennifer Hope**  
Diversity & Inclusion Specialist

**Stephanie Wells**  
Diversity & Inclusion Specialist

**Dr. Haley Gienow-McConnell**  
Diversity & Inclusion Specialist (to July 2022)

**Gord Fansher**  
Business Engagement Specialist (to March 2023)



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