Our Team
Dr. Jane Ngobia

Assistant Vice-President

Dr. Jane Ngobia was named director of the University of Guelph’s Human Rights and Equity Office (HREO) in April 2013. In the spring of this year, the HREO was renamed as the Office of Diversity and Human Rights (DHR) to reflect more appropriately its mandate and services.

Prior to joining the university, Ngobia was director of diversity and equity initiatives at the Ontario College of Art and Design University. She developed, implemented and assessed diversity efforts, and led equity and inclusion training.

She served as diversity and leadership officer at the University of Toronto and was a lecturer at Centennial College. Previously, she was dean of students, lecturer and deputy department head at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA).

Sonja Christopherson

Advisor
Sonja brings a wealth of experience from both the private and public sectors, having been a Diversity Learning and Development Specialist for a global organization and a Part-time Faculty Member for Continuing Education at Mohawk College, where she received recognition for excellence in teaching. She has also been a keynote speaker for Deans and Department Heads as well as several nonprofit organizations.

Prior to joining DHR, Sonja was responsible for leading a team in the delivery of diversity goals and initiatives, employing both rights-based and interest-based conflict strategies and influencing a corporate culture around diversity and inclusion. She was also the Lead Curriculum Designer for an International restaurant chain that transitioned to a higher education model of learning and development.

Sonja earned her BA from McMaster University and is currently a Masters Candidate at the University of Guelph. She was mentored by community elders on native teachings and received her professional and life coaching accreditation in the horse/human relationship model. She also partnered with the Disney Institute and completed a cross country tour in Canada and the U.S. to deliver leadership strategies to over 1,700 participants.

Sonja’s goal is to see the University of Guelph be recognized as a leader in the areas of inclusion, equity and human rights by facilitating partnerships through sustained professional development opportunities and outreach strategies.

Kian Merrikh
Accessibility Officer

Kian utilizes his superior communications, marketing, customer service, and management skills to coordinate the University’s efforts towards compliance in the accessibility standards and beyond.

Prior to joining DHR, Kian was responsible for leading OpenEd’s new brand development project. More recently, working with various stakeholders, he successfully led and coordinated OpenEd’s efforts towards making its numerous program websites WCAG 2.0, Level AA, compliant, meeting the required AODA standards.
Having lived and worked in seven different countries, Kian possesses a strong cross-cultural awareness and is a strong advocate for diversity, fairness, justice, and equity. He earned his MBA from the University of Guelph, and volunteered as a Marketing Advisor at a College in Hanoi, Vietnam, through the Leave for Change program.

David Gibson
Administrative Officer

David has a rich background in complaint resolution, administration and communications, including the role of Information Officer with Ombudsman Ontario.

Prior to joining DHR, David designed many dynamic training and outreach tools for administrative oversight and human rights professionals, including the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the Asian Ombudsman Association and the International Ombudsman Association.

David also provided effective administrative coordination for the Ontario Government, the University Health
Network and many non-profit organizations. David earned his Honours B.A. from Guelph and holds a media arts certificate from Humber College. He was a Residence Assistant and Program Director for Arts House in its inaugural year at Maids Hall at the University of Guelph.

David’s goal is to streamline the case intake process and help the University of Guelph achieve organizational success through outreach and communication strategies that employ a wide variety of media.

Anny Strojin

Advisor

Anny has extensive experience in human rights and equity. Most recently, she attended the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario to assist in negotiating a settlement to increase accessibility for riders with vision disabilities who use municipal transportation services.

Prior to joining DHR, Anny was a Human Rights Officer at the Ontario Human Rights Commission. She was the
lead investigator in a systemic case that dealt with gender based streaming in employment and the subsequent effect on promotional opportunities for women. This improved outcomes for women seeking promotional opportunities in management in the grocery sector across Canada. She also led a systemic investigation into more than 70 claims filed by parents of children with autism that highlighted the challenge for governments when designing policies to accommodate persons with disabilities.

Anny earned a Bachelor of Law (LLB) from the University of Windsor and was a member of the City of Hamilton’s Access and Equity Committee. Anny’s goal is to make a contribution in the areas of social justice and provide an environment at the University of Guelph that is accessible and equitable to all.