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Media Package

Subject: Serving with Pride media package

Good day:

I am writing to introduce myself and the province-wide Serving with Pride (SWP) LGBTQ support network, for police and criminal justice professionals. I am providing you with a media package for use by your Diversity Officer and Corporate Communications team.

If you are not familiar with SWP, we are a not-for-profit LGBTQ network that is dedicated to promoting diversity, inclusion, awareness, and acceptance of LGBTQ police and criminal justice personnel.

Serving with Pride is an amazing organization with a long history of successfully assisting our LGBTQ members and improving the overall relationship between police and the LGBTQ public. Recently new executive and members have committed themselves to continue in that legacy and want to move forward with vigorous promotion to all Ontario police agencies.

While your organization may have an internal LGBTQ peer support network, you undoubtedly recognize that there may be police officers or employees who still don't feel comfortable being "out" at work. SWP provides a confidential, safe network of peers who understand the systemic barriers and stereotyping that are unique to the police environment, without being tied to any one police service.

For those officers and employees that are already "out" and comfortable at work, the network also provides an extensive network of peers along with opportunities for participation at social and learning events that will allow them to not only advance in their own personal and professional development but give them an opportunity be a catalyst for continuing change, representing their agency, sharing their experiences and best practices.

It is my hope that you use the resources and share our messages with all of your employees to promote the value and benefit of becoming a member of Serving with Pride.

For more information about SWP, questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Brian Mitchell
Serving With Pride, President

126-233 Cross Avenue
Oakville, ON

Email: info@servingwithpride.ca
Twitter: [@lgbtq911](https://twitter.com/lgbtq911)



Key Messages

- Serving with Pride is dedicated to promoting diversity, inclusion, integrity, awareness, and acceptance of LGBTQ policing and criminal justice professionals.
- As an LGBTQ social network, Serving with Pride helps to encourage, advance and promote LGBTQ policing and criminal justice professionals.
- SWP is committed to removing barriers and challenging stereotypes faced within the law enforcement community.
- Education and awareness is crucial to providing LGBTQ policing and criminal justice professionals with a safe work environment and ultimately allows agencies to better serve their diverse public, specifically LGBTQ communities.
- Serving with Pride encourages LGBTQ policing and criminal justice personnel to be “out” in the workplace. SWP provides confidential support and mentoring to those who are not and tools for continued success as visible leaders within the communities that they serve, for those that are.
- Serving with Pride challenges the myths and misconceptions surrounding sexual and gender diversity.
- SWP aims to build bridges, to promote positive relationships between LGBTQ members and their respective organizations and to break down systemic barriers and stereotyping.
- SWP provides a safe and supportive forum for members to network, inspire, and communicate more effectively with each other throughout the Province of Ontario.
- Serving with Pride supports the pursuit of education by providing learning opportunities to LGBTQ police personnel, criminal justice professionals and LGBTQ youth.



- Serving with Pride ensures a safe and welcoming environment for all members within Ontario law enforcement organizations.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Why is an LGBTQ peer support network so important?

The most significant catalyst for change in someone is to know that they are NOT alone and that there are others who are in their corner encouraging and supporting their personal growth. As part of SWP, sharing and listening, there is an opportunity to not only be a catalyst for change but to advance in your own personal and professional development.

What makes SWP different from any other LGBTQ peer support network?

The benefit of SWP is that it is a province-wide, not-for-profit, LGBTQ peer support network (PSN) for police and criminal justice professionals that is not tied to any one organization or service. This means that if you are part of an organization that does not have its own PSN or if you are not comfortable with being “out” at your particular workplace, SWP can provide a supportive network of peers who understand the systemic barriers and stereotyping that are unique to the police and criminal justice environments.

I am not “out” at my workplace, how can SWP help me?

SWP provides a confidential supportive network of peers who understand the systemic barriers and stereotyping that are faced within the police and criminal justice environments. SWP also provides resources and education and opportunities for participation at social and learning events that will allow you to not only advance in your own personal and professional development but give you an opportunity be a catalyst for change in your workplace.

I am already “out” and comfortable at my workplace, why should I join SWP?

The diverse experience and knowledge you will bring to SWP is critical to achieving our goal of encouraging, advancing and promoting LGBTQ policing and criminal justice professionals. Your participation will serve as a shining example; providing support and mentoring to those who need it and there is an opportunity for your continued success as a visible leader within policing and the LGBTQ community as a whole.



I am a policing or criminal justice student. Can I join SWP?

Absolutely! You too, bring valuable perspective and experience that is beneficial to achieving the goals of SWP. Your input and participation is encouraged not only because you have a lot to offer but also once you graduate and start working in your chosen career, you will bring to your workplace an awareness and expectation of equality that others may learn from.

As a member of SWP, will I have to do public speaking or appear in public?

As a member of SWP, you will be given the opportunity to appear at public events however there is no expectation that you will have to speak or appear in public at all. You alone will determine how much or in what way you would like to contribute or participate, based on your own level of comfort.

How much is a membership?

SWP has three categories of membership. Active membership fee is \$35.00/year, Associate membership fee is \$40.00/year and Student membership fee is \$25.00/year. Visit the [Join SWP](#) web page for definitions of each category and sign up today!

I don't identify as LGBTQ but I am a strong ally and supporter. Can I join SWP?

Absolutely! Allies are welcome to join under the active membership category.

Sample Internal Message

[Name of your service] encourages your participation in Serving with Pride in Ontario

As an organization, [insert name of your police service] works to build bridges and develop partnerships so that we can effectively serve our diverse communities. In addition, we also want you, as employees, to feel valued and respected, and able to contribute to your full potential, regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, age, or any other personal attribute.



Serving with Pride (SWP) is an Ontario-wide, not-for-profit, LGBTQ network that is dedicated to promoting diversity, inclusion, awareness, and acceptance of LGBTQ police and criminal justice professionals.

While we have our own internal LGBTQ peer support network, we also recognize that there may be police officers or employees who may not feel comfortable being “out” at work. SWP provides a confidential, safe network of peers who understand the systemic barriers and stereotyping that are unique to the police environment without being tied to any one police service.

For those that are already “out” and comfortable at work, the network also provides education and information along with opportunities for participation at events that will allow you to not only advance in your own personal and professional development but give you an opportunity be a catalyst for continuing change, sharing your unique experiences and best practices of [insert name of your police service].

For more information about SWP and to become a member, please visit their website www.servingwithpride.ca

[Insert name and contact information for your agency diversity officer]

Social Media



@lgbtq911



www.facebook.com/servingwithpride



Serving with Pride is active on social media through our Twitter and Facebook accounts. We encourage you to include us in social media messages that your agency might publish about diversity and/or the LGBTQ community, PRIDE month/week/day and to promote participation by your police officers and employees as members or serving executive with SWP.

Sample social media messages:

- We value #diversity and #inclusion as much as @lgbtq911 does! Together we can make a difference.
- We are always striving to effectively serve our #diverse communities. Networks like @lgbtq911 help us do just that!
- Happy PRIDE month! Like all other communities, we are in service to the #lgbtq community today and always. @lgbtq911
- We are proud that our own Cst. Heath Miller is contributing to #diversity, #inclusion and Serving with Pride @lgbtq911

Best Practices in Policing and LGBTQ Communities in Ontario

The Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police's (OACP) Diversity Committee provides a [Best Practices in Policing and LGBTQ Communities in Ontario](#) as a resource document for police services across the Province of Ontario. This is the first document of its kind published in Canada, and the OACP Diversity Committee hopes that it will serve as a model for other jurisdictions in Canada and abroad.

Serving with Pride encourages you to post a link to the guide on your internal website and to use it to assist your police service to proactively develop inclusive workplaces for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) police personnel and to develop and maintain relationships with members of LGBTQ communities.



Contact Serving with Pride



www.servingwithpride.ca



info@servingwithpride.ca

Executive

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Constable, Hamilton Police Service

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Constable, Ontario Provincial Police (South Wellington - Rockwood)

Director:

[Rev. Dr. John Joseph Mastandrea](#)

Metropolitan United Church, Toronto ON

Director:

[Danielle Bottineau](#)

Constable, Toronto Police Service

Director:

[Patricia Reid](#)

Corporal, Royal Canadian Mounted Police



Blue Line Magazine

Blue Line magazine will be publishing the following article in the February 2016 issue.

It is available for reprint after (February 2016) with permission from *Blue Line* publisher Morley S. Lymburner. He can be reached through email at publisher@blueline.ca or by phone at 905-640-3048.

Promoting diversity, inclusion, awareness, and acceptance of LGBTQ policing and criminal justice professionals:

Serving with Pride leads the way in Ontario.

By Jean Turner, Director/Media Officer, Serving with Pride.

Serving with Pride (SWP) is a not-for-profit LGBTQ network that aims to build bridges with the public, to promote positive relationships between LGBTQ members and their respective police organizations and to break down systemic barriers and stereotyping.

“The fact is, while many police agencies have made many positive steps towards equality, including developing their own internal LGBTQ peer support networks, there are still police officers or employees who don’t feel comfortable being “out” at work” says SWP President Cst. Brian Mitchell who is also member of Hamilton Police Service.

SWP provides a confidential, safe network of peers who understand the systemic barriers and stereotyping that are unique to the police environment, without being tied to any one police service.

Cst. Danielle Bottineau is a Director on SWP with an extensive background in diversity issues working as the LGBTQ liaison officer for Toronto Police Service. “While the perception might be that because this is 2016 there is not a problem, overwhelmingly I hear stories and meet police officers who spend their careers hiding their sexuality or gender identity from their co-workers. It is a terrible burden to keep a secret like that and one that will often lead to mental health concerns”.

The network has a long history of not only assisting their LGBTQ members but also improving the overall relationship between police and the LGBT public that they serve.



Recently, a newly formed SWP executive have committed themselves to continue in that legacy and are moving forward with vigorous promotion, targeting Ontario police and criminal justice agencies.

Currently the executive team is made up of members from Hamilton Police Service, Durham Regional Police Service, York Regional Police Service, Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Toronto Police Service, Ontario Provincial Police and a municipal bylaw enforcement officer. They bring diverse experience, sharing best practises and lessons learned from their respective agencies.

For those officers and employees that are already “out” and comfortable at work, the network offers an extensive network of peers along with opportunities for participation at social and learning events that will allow them to not only advance in their own personal and professional development but give them an opportunity be a catalyst for continuing change.



*Serving with Pride executive who work hard to serve
LGBTQ police and criminal justice professionals in Ontario.*

SWP Treasurer and York Regional Police officer, Cst Heath Miller comments, “The most significant catalyst for change in someone is for them know that they are NOT alone and that



there are others who are in their corner encouraging and supporting their personal growth. I am so proud to be able to offer that support through Serving with Pride.”

SWP encourages active membership from a range of law enforcement and criminal justice professionals including police personnel, border services, transit and rail enforcement officers, corrections and more, especially from agencies outside of the Greater Toronto Area that historically have not been well represented.

“We have taken the step of adding a “Student Membership” category as well.” says SWP Director Eastern Region, Dena Peden who is a D/Cst with Durham Regional Police. “Law enforcement and criminal justice students bring a valuable perspective that is beneficial to achieving the goals of SWP. Their input and participation is encouraged not only because they have a lot to offer but also because once they graduate and start working in their chosen career, they will bring to their workplace an awareness that others can learn from.”

Serving with Pride want to thank The Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police’s (OACP) Diversity Committee for their support and providing a *Best Practices in Policing and LGBTQ Communities in Ontario* resource document for police services across the Province. This is the first document of its kind published in Canada, and SWP believes that it will serve as a model for other jurisdictions in Canada and abroad. The guide can be viewed and downloaded at www.oacp.ca

SWP has three categories of membership. Active membership fee is \$35.00/year, Associate membership is \$40.00/year and the Student membership fee is \$25.00/year. Visit the Serving with Pride web page at www.servingwithpride.ca for definitions of each category and sign up today!



www.facebook.com/servingwithpride



@lgbtq911

Jean Turner is a Civilian Member working in the Corporate Communications & Media Relations Unit of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police “O” Division (Ontario). She can be reached by email to jturner@servingwithpride.ca



Friday, June 10, 2016

Chief Geoff Nelson
Brantford Police Service
P.O. Box 1116, Brantford, Ontario,
Canada, N3T 5T3

Subject: Invitation to walk with SWP in Brantford Pride Walk

Chief Nelson:

Serving with Pride (SWP) is a not-for-profit LGBTQ network made up of police officers and other first responders across Ontario, which aims to build bridges with the public, to promote positive relationships between LGBTQ members and their respective police organizations and to break down systemic barriers and stereotyping.

On June 18th members of SWP will be participating in the annual Brantford Pride Walk. We will have representation from RCMP and Hamilton Police Service.

I know that the Brantford Police Service is committed to continually evaluating the needs of your City and that you continually seek partnerships with those who support your efforts toward community safety.

I would like to invite you and the Brantford Police Service to join us in the Pride Walk. This is an opportunity for police services, in one small gesture of support, to lead by example and to demonstrate our healthy policies and practices with respect to our LGBTQ employees and of those in our communities of whom we serve.

I look forward to the walk and hope that Brantford Police Service will join us.

Feel free to contact me directly at 519-670-4215 with any questions or concerns.

Regards and Happy Pride,

Jean Turner, SWP Director, Media Officer

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MEDIA RELEASE

Official Statement from the President and Executive of Serving with Pride regarding the Orlando Night Club Mass Murder.

It was June 28th, 1969.

In the early morning, Police stormed into the Stonewall Inn in Greenwich Village, New York. That evening, and for many nights after, LGBT community members fought for their right to be treated with respect, dignity, and to be recognized as equal members of society. In 1970, the first LGBT Pride Parades were held in New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco and Chicago to commemorate the first anniversary of what is now known as the Stonewall riots. These events arguably started the LGBT rights movement that we know today.

I have written this letter in my head a hundred times and put it on paper another 100 times. Writing a letter like this is hard following on the heels of the worst active shooting incident in the history of the United States, in a targeted campaign of terror against our LGBT brothers and sisters by a coward.

Pulse nightclub along with every other LGBT targeted establishment around the world was built and designed for one reason and one reason only – a safe space for LGBT folks to gather, enjoy themselves and most importantly, be who they are. That sense of safety and security is no longer.

On June 12th, 2016 at approximately 2 o'clock in the morning, that sense of safety was shattered and the screams from the victims and the gunshots from the offending weapon echoed across the world.

It is important as leaders in our community to continue to be strong, sensitive, and understand the needs of our members regardless of what background they come from. It is also important that we recognize that as an organization, you may have many members who do not identify openly as LGBT but are deeply affected by the tragedy that unfolded in Orlando. It is your responsibility as leaders of your organizations to provide the proper messaging that you stand with all communities in which you have sworn to serve.

We are asking that if you have any LGBT establishments or businesses that are LGBT friendly in your area to please spend some time doing community outreach. We invite you to meet with your community leaders, with your night clubs, coffee shops and businesses and tell them that you are there to help, that you have the appropriate tools to assist them in a time of need. Offer a hand, an ear, and provide them with the comfort that their establishment will still be a safe space for their patrons.

On July 1st, 2016 Toronto will be holding their annual Pride parade. Over one million people will come from around the world to join the citizens of the GTA and guests from all over to watch the parade precession which begins on Bloor Street and runs to Yonge and Dundas Square.

The Toronto Police Service, York Regional Police Service, Hamilton Police Service, the Ontario Provincial Police, RCMP (just to name a few) will be participating in this year's parade. As the registration deadlines



have already passed, we are inviting you to join our contingency and march in solidarity with your colleagues and show support for your LGBT community. Please send us an email if you are interested and we will do our best to place you with one of our supporting services.

Serving with Pride was formed in 2006 by a group of LGBT officers and allies to address the needs and concerns of our LGBT members in the Province of Ontario. We continue to work diligently to provide support and networking opportunities for all of our LGBT members from across the Province.

If you need assistance with internal messaging, or have any questions please do not hesitate to contact a member of the Serving with Pride team.

May all of those who lost their lives in Orlando rest in peace, and may all of the communities in which we have sworn to serve feel safe and secure.

www.servingwithpride.ca