



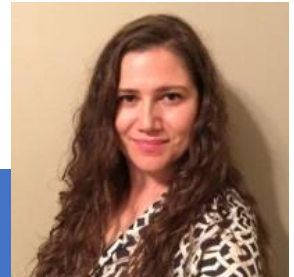
# CANADA WITHOUT POVERTY CANADA SANS PAUVRETÉ

## *Poverty Pandemic Roundtable Speakers*

*Friday May 15, 2020*

*12:00 PM – 1:30 PM ET*

*Alyssa Brierley, Executive Director & General  
Counsel, CERA*



**Ontario** - Alyssa is a lawyer and public policy professional with over a decade of experience in public policy, legal service, research and operations management. Prior to joining CERA, Alyssa served as the health, social, justice and labour policy advisor to the President of the Treasury Board of Ontario and as the Director of Policy to the Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure. Alyssa has also worked as a legal research and communications advisor to the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, as a lawyer and policy analyst at the Ontario College of Teachers and completed her articles at Torys LLP.

*Sue Brooke, VP of Community Impact &  
Partnerships, United Way Calgary*



**Alberta** - Susan Brooke joined United Way of Calgary and Area in 2012 as a community impact planner in the senior and immigrant sectors. Now as vice president of Community Impact & Partnerships, she provides vision, leadership, and management skills to convene the social sector and collaboratively address complex social issues in our city. Prior to joining United Way, Susan worked as a community development worker with The City of Calgary and a front-line social worker for several non-profit organizations. Susan holds a master's degree in social work and brings strong relationship management skills developed over 30 years of working in the non-profit sector.



*Arlene Hache, Community Advocate*

**Yellowknife** - Arlene is a grassroots woman who has experienced homelessness and traumatic impacts of childhood violence. She currently sits as a member of the National Advisory Council on Poverty and is Co-Chair of the Women's National Housing and Homelessness Network. Arlene founded, and over two decades, led an urban-based family resource centre that provided support to marginalized women and their families, the majority of which were Indigenous. She is well-known across Canada's Arctic as an advocate for social change and in recognition of her work was awarded the Order of Canada in 2009 and then the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal in 2012. Of equal importance, Arlene was honoured with a Star Blanket ceremony guided by Wisdom Keepers and hosted by Keepers of the Circle, an Indigenous Hub in Northeastern Ontario.

*Annie Hodgins, Operations Manager,  
CERA*

**Ontario** - Since joining CERA over six years ago, Annie has overseen the delivery of services to thousands of tenants in Toronto and facilitated hundreds of workshops across Ontario for diverse populations. Prior to joining CERA, Annie worked as a grant writer for Moongate Publishing and a Researcher and Office Manager for the Institute on Governance. She is currently a Ryerson and University of Toronto field instructor, Community Co-Chair for the City of Toronto's Housing Help Services Network, sits on the Rent Bank Steering Committee and the board of directors of All Saints Church and Community Centre.



*Meaghan Reid, Executive Director,  
Vibrant Communities Calgary*



**Calgary** - Meaghan is Executive Director of Vibrant Communities Calgary, stewards of Calgary's poverty reduction strategy *Enough for All 2.0*. Prior to working at VCC, Meaghan was the Executive Director of the Brenda Strafford Centre, the largest second stage domestic violence shelter in the province, where she experienced firsthand how the critical work being undertaken under the *Enough for All* Strategy has positively impacted the lives of people experiencing poverty. Before moving to Calgary, Meaghan was the Associate Vice President at the National Council for Behavioral Health in Washington, DC where she led the expansion of the Mental Health First Aid USA Program and also worked as the Director of the Mental Health First Aid program at the Mental Health Commission in Ottawa, Ontario.

*Damon Johnston, President, Aboriginal  
Council of Winnipeg*



**Manitoba** - Damon has been President of the Aboriginal Council of Winnipeg since 2008. Damon retired from the City of Winnipeg in 2005 after serving as a Community Resource Officer in the Aboriginal Community and other various roles for 15 years. Previously, he served as the Assistant Executive Director of the Indian and Metis Friendship Centre of Winnipeg, was elected the Secretary Treasurer of the Ontario Metis and Non-Status Association and was a correctional and probation officer with the Ontario Ministry of Corrections. Damon proudly served in the Royal Canadian Navy from 1966 to 1968. Damon is a strong advocate for giving back to his community and in addition to the Winnipeg Police Board, currently serves as the Chair of the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba and as a member on the boards of the Media Credit Union, the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) – Manitoba and Winnipeg, SEED Winnipeg Inc., and Ndinawemaaganag Endaawaad Inc. (Ndinawe) Damon is a Member of Fort William First Nation, Thunder Bay.

**Ontario** – Along with being Clinic Director, Avvy is a founding steering committee member of Colour of Poverty – Colour of Change. Since her call to the Bar in 1991, she has worked exclusively in the legal clinic system, serving the legal needs of low-income individuals and families. Between 2001 and 2019, Avvy served as a bencher of the Law Society of Ontario. She also served on the LSO's Access to Justice Committee, the Equity and Aboriginal Issues Committee and the Human Rights Monitoring Group. Apart from her legal practice, Avvy spends much time doing community organizing and advocacy work. Avvy has received numerous awards, including OCASI Life Time Achievement Award, Senate of Canada 150 medal, SOAR Medal, Order of Ontario, the Federation of Asian Canadian Lawyers' Lawyer of Distinction Award, City of Toronto's William P. Hubbard Award for Race Relations and President's Award of the Women's Law Association of Ontario.



*Avvy Go, Clinic Director, Chinese and Southeast Asian Legal Clinic*



*Laura Cattari, Board Member, Canada Without Poverty*

**Ontario** - Currently, Laura is employed as Campaign Coordinator for Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction, where she was formerly Chair of its Social Assistance Reform Work Group and a member of its Operational Steering Committee. She also sits on the board of the Hamilton Community Foundation. Cattari also writes on government policy decisions in the areas of income security, social benefits and affordable housing. She was a member of the province's former income security working group co-authoring a progressive vision for Ontario, *Income Security: A Roadmap for Change*. In 2019, Laura was the recipient of a Maggie award for Political Writing and honoured as a (Hamilton) Woman Who Rocks. Her policy perspective is informed through significant lived experience of poverty, disability and social systems. She works diligently to effect change that empowers individuals and their respective communities.

*Shoshana Pellman, Member,  
Senior Pride Network*



**Ontario** - In 2005, Shoshana Pellman, a mature Orthodox Jew became a Trans Lesbian activist. Over the years she has spoken and presented or co-presented at various workshops and conferences throughout Ontario. She was featured in a 2011 CBC special on *The Current* entitled *Back in The Closet*. In 2017, Shoshana was interviewed for CBC's *Out in the Open*, during which she talked about her fears of being stricken with Dementia as a Transgender person. Since 2015, she has been a co-facilitator at Bellwood Health Services. At present, Shoshana is a volunteer at Baycrest and a member of the Family Advisory Council. She is a Senior Pride Network member and sings in Singing OUT, a LGBTQ choir in Toronto

**Ontario** - Michèle Biss is the Project Manager of the National Right to Housing Network, an Allied Network housed at the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness (CAEH). As an expert in economic and social rights, she has presented at several United Nations treaty body reviews and at Canadian parliamentary committees on issues related to poverty. Prior to her work at the CAEH, Michèle was the Policy Director and Human Rights Lawyer at Canada Without Poverty. She has extensive professional experience working for marginalized groups, particularly women, persons with disabilities, newcomers, and Indigenous persons through casework, research, and community legal education. She is a human rights lawyer and was called to the Ontario bar in 2014.

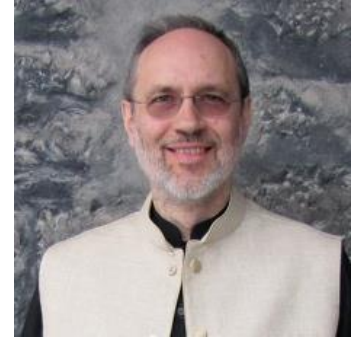
*Michèle Biss, Project Manager, National  
Right to Housing Network*



*Youssef Benzouine, Community Organizer,  
FRAPRU*

**Québec** – Youssef has been in the housing community sector in Quebec for the past three years. Member of the FRAPRU team as a community organizer, he is in charge of the federal housing files.

*Stéphan Corriveau, Executive Director,  
Community Housing Transformation  
Centre*



**Québec** - Over the course of his thirty-year career, Stéphan Corriveau has explored the world of social and community housing in many forms across Canada, Africa, Latin America and the Middle East. He has been involved in housing policy processes at municipal, provincial and federal levels, and actively contributed to the development of thousands of new housing units. Stéphan is the first Executive Director of the new Community Housing Transformation Centre, an independent organization created under the National Housing Strategy, which brings together the main players in community housing from coast to coast to coast. Previously, he was President of the Canadian Housing and Renewal Association (CHRA) and Executive Director of the Quebec Non-Profit Housing Network (Réseau québécois des OSBL habitation - RQOH).



*Bonnie Morton, Board President,  
Canada Without Poverty*

**Saskatchewan** - Bonnie grew up on a dairy farm in Ontario and lived in poverty while raising her son. Bonnie has worked as an Anti-Poverty Minister/Advocate for the past 25 years with the Regina Anti-Poverty Ministry. Bonnie is currently the Chairperson of the Charter Committee on Poverty Issues, the Chair of the Equality Advisory Committee of the Court Challenges Program, and sits on the Board of the Court Challenges Program. She has received the Keith Couse award for social justice work, the YWCA Women of Distinction Award, the International Helen Prize Certificate for social justice work of “Bolder Women”, the Saskatchewan Centennial Medal, the Elizabeth Fry “Rebel With A Cause” award, an award from Canadian Dimension, and the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee medal. Bonnie has been active since 1989 in international work around poverty issues, including acting as a presenter to the Economic Social and Cultural Rights Committee of the United Nations in 2006. Most recently she was a member of the “People’s International Observers Mission” in the Philippines.