

The Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario:

2026/2027 Board of Directors

Nomination Package

The Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario (COEO) is mandated by our constitution to appoint a Nominating Committee that prepares a slate of candidates for all positions open for election to the Board of Directors. Nominations were received after a call was extended to our membership. Additional nominees will be accepted from the floor during the Annual Meeting. Our next Annual Meeting is at Camp Muskoka on Sunday, September 27, 2026.

The following nominees were received prior to the Annual Meeting. Each candidate was asked a series of questions. Learn more about each of the prospective candidates below.

This year's nominations to date are:

President: Peggy Cheng

Vice-President: None to Date

Secretary: Kim Squires

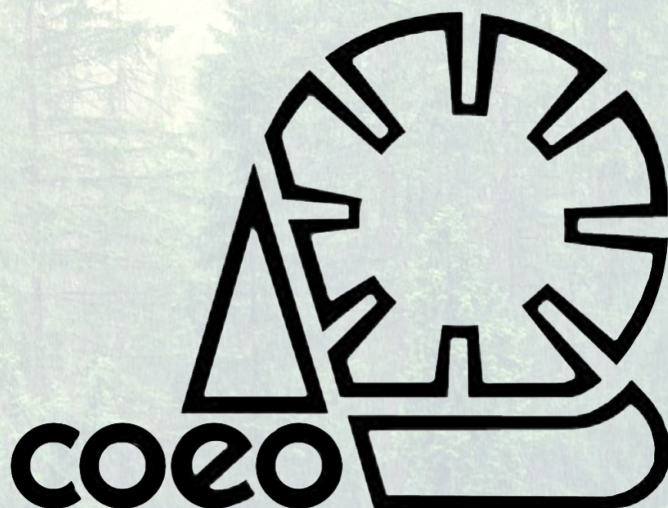
Treasurer: Valerie Freemantle

Volunteer Coordinator: Devin Mutic

Directors-at-Large

(4 positions available):

- Rochellie Lywin
- Rayanna Santiago



Nomination for President

Nominee: Peggy Cheng (she/her)

Biography:

Peggy (she/her) is privileged to be an immigrant settler living, working, and playing on Indigenous land and continues to learn how to live out truth and reconciliation within outdoor education. She has over 10 years of experience in the outdoor education sector working in various roles and locations. Currently, she is a Community Outreach and Education Coordinator at Toronto and Region Conservation Authority. Peggy started out in community stream restoration but loved connecting people to nature so she decided to pursue outdoor education. She is a proud graduate of the Queen's OEE program (2015)!

Since 2014, Peggy has been a COEO member and in 2021 decided to give back to this community by joining the board in the Director at Large role. She is currently in the President role helping to champion advocacy, oversees strategic planning for the organization, and explores partnerships with kindred organizations.

Growing up, Peggy didn't spend a lot of time out in nature but as she got older, people generously took her camping, skiing, and she learned other outdoor skills along the way. Every winter, she looks forward to snow so she can go cross-country skiing.

If elected, what do you want to do in your role on the COEO board?

One year on a board or position is not a lot of time and as I reflect back on my last year's answers, there is still more of what was being worked on to continue to grow and develop. I hope to in a leadership capacity to continue to support the work and projects of current board members.

Here are things I'm excited about or look forward to continue/implement:

- launching our new website and see how to increase our membership and membership's involvement with our new web presence
- more advocacy strategies and working with the Advocacy subcommittee
- continue finalizing more of our Terms of Reference (TOR) documents
- upcoming review of COEO's constitution
- hosting forums for community dialogue/discussion/connection (i.e. town halls, community of practice, etc.)
- partnership liaison

What skills do you bring to the COEO Board?

Previous COEO board involvement:

- 2021-2023: Director at Large
- 2023-2025: Vice-President
- 2025-2026: President

Skills I bring from my experiences:

- meeting facilitation
- project management
- partner liaison
- budgeting
- record keeping
- communications
- working within a diverse team
- conflict resolution/mediation
- open to new ideas/ways of doing

Why do you want to be on the COEO board? What do you envision for COEO in the 1-3 year term? Members are only elected for 1 year increments, but what are your big dreams for COEO during your 1 year term and beyond?

I was first introduced to COEO as a student. I remember leaving the conferences feeling invigorated and excited to add to my teaching toolkit. As I transitioned into a young professional, I noticed that within the COEO community there weren't a lot of people that looked like me. For a while I actually didn't feel quite like I belonged so I took a pause. I came back to this community when a friend invited me to consider joining the board so I took a leap and decided to get involved. I don't want anyone else to feel like I did and would love to see more representation and look at how we might work on being a more inclusive space for all educators of various backgrounds.

When I talk to people not many people know of COEO. I would love for our organization to be more known and for any educator that teaches outside to be reflected in this space. I want to see more organizations connected to COEO and build up our network. I would love to see more of our membership involved and bring more connection points for our membership beyond the conferences like regional and online events. I would like to see COEO to continue to be in the forefront advocating for outdoor education – that other organizations would see us as a resource and for everyone to see the value of outdoor ed.

What do you hope to pursue as a board member to support COEO as it looks for ways to meaningfully respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action?

I am honoured that COEO has cultivated a relationship with Elder Peter Schuler for many years and he often makes the time to come and opens our conferences and shares teachings. I try to make time to sit with our Elders to listen and learn at every opportunity.

There are hopes that as an organization, we develop an Indigenous Advisory Committee so that we can continue to move towards reconciliation. I hope to support these efforts by participating in the subcommittee.



I recently built a mud kitchen for my daughter. Stereotypically, my brain thinks of OE as big trips to grand places, but sometimes OE is as simple as making time to explore outdoors within our own backyards and neighbourhoods. And I love that it makes OE more approachable and accessible.

Nomination for Secretary

Nominee: Kimberly Squires (she/her)

Biography:

I was first introduced to COEO while completing my BEd at Wilfrid Laurier University in 2012 and have loved it ever since. I have had the pleasure of being part of COEO's Board of Directors for the last three years (most recently as the Secretary) and would be honoured to continue to serve the COEO community this coming year. I am an Early Childhood Educator and teacher and now work as an Assistant Professor at the University of Guelph. While teaching in the BASc Child Studies program, I have the incredible privilege of working with many pre-service ECEs and aim to help students understand the critical importance of the outdoors for children and adults. I work outdoor play and learning into my undergraduate courses and am always thrilled to see the response and engagement from students. My research focuses on early childhood education, with a particular focus on outdoor and nature play. Among many things, I am curious about how we design outdoor environments, how these spaces are accessible to a variety of learners, and how this impacts play, learning, and development. In my own outdoor play, I love canoeing, backcountry camping, and exploring waterfalls, lakes, and mountains.

If elected, what do you want to do in your role on the COEO board?

If re-elected as Secretary, I will continue to support clear, transparent communication across the organization and ensure that all legal requirements are met in accordance with COEO's constitution. My primary goal will be to maintain organized, accessible records and documentation so that board members and the broader membership can stay informed, engaged, and connected to the organization's work. This helps ensure that

COEO's mission and values remain at the forefront of our decision-making and activities.

I will also continue exploring ways to improve and streamline communication processes, including further developing the content and value of our newsletter and finding new opportunities to highlight and celebrate our members' contributions. Beyond the administrative responsibilities of the role, I am committed to listening actively and supporting the diverse voices within our community. I believe effective communication is not only about documenting decisions, but also about helping members stay engaged and connected to one another and to the important work of COEO and our Ontario outdoor education community.

What skills do you bring to the COEO Board?

My two years of experience as a Director at Large on COEO's Board of Directors, along with my service as Secretary over the past year, have provided me with a strong foundation for this role. During my time on the board, I have contributed to conference committees, website redevelopment, social media, merchandise, marketing, event planning, and the awards committee. I have also served as a co-chair for the Make Peace with Winter conference. Through these experiences, I have developed a strong understanding of COEO's operations, priorities, and membership. Serving as Secretary has strengthened my knowledge of the organization's governance, communication processes, and record-keeping responsibilities. I am organized, detail-oriented, and enjoy working collaboratively. I also bring experience serving on a variety of boards and committees through my professional roles.

Most importantly, though, I have a deep passion for outdoor education, play, and learning. I am committed to helping COEO grow its reach and impact across the province and to supporting the board and membership through connection, collaboration, and community.

Why do you want to be on the COEO board? What do you envision for COEO in the 1-3 year term? Members are only elected for 1 year increments, but what are your big dreams for COEO during your 1 year term and beyond?

COEO has been a meaningful part of my life for many years, and I am grateful for the opportunity to give back to this community. I strongly believe in COEO's mission to support and advance outdoor education, learning, and play across Ontario. Being part of this community has been incredibly rewarding, and I am excited about the opportunity to continue contributing to its growth and future direction.

Over the coming years, I would love to see COEO continue to expand its reach by strengthening connections among educators, organizations, and communities across the province. I am particularly passionate about supporting greater accessibility and inclusion and ensuring that our programs, events, and resources are welcoming, relevant, and available to diverse communities. My big dream is for COEO to be seen as an invaluable central hub for outdoor learning... a place where people come not only for professional development, but also for inspiration, community, and shared purpose. There are incredible people and organizations doing important work (in "big" and "small" ways) and I'm excited to keep building on the momentum COEO already has, while helping shape a vibrant, inclusive, and resilient future.

What do you hope to pursue as a board member to support COEO as it looks for ways to meaningfully respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action?

In my opinion, meaningfully responding to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action requires ongoing learning, relationship-building, reflection, and action. As a board member, I would support COEO in continuing to listen to and learn from First Nations, Inuit, and Métis educators, Knowledge Keepers, Elders, communities, and organizations. I hope to support opportunities for members to deepen their understanding of Indigenous

perspectives and knowledges, and encourage thoughtful reflection on how these perspectives can inform outdoor education practices. I also believe it is important that COEO continue to examine its programs, events, and resources to ensure they are respectful and responsive. While there is always more to learn, I am committed to approaching this work with humility, openness, and a willingness to listen. I believe COEO can play an important role in fostering meaningful learning, dialogue, and relationships that support reconciliation within the outdoor education community.



Lately, I've been focusing on developing stronger relationships with Lands local to me. Though I also love exploring further away, I'm reminded that there are many opportunities for connection, appreciation, and wonder close to home.

Nomination for Treasurer

Nominee: Valerie Freemantle (she/her)

Biography:

Val has called Kingston on the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee territories home since 2016. After completing her M.Sc. at Queen's researching changes in plant cover in Canada's arctic, she enrolled in the OEE program at Queen's. Since graduating in 2020, she has been working as an outdoor educator at Foley Mountain Conservation Area (Rideau Valley Conservation Authority) and teaching in both traditional schools and outdoor education spaces across eastern and southern Ontario. Val joined the board in fall 2023 after co-chairing the 2023 fall COEO conference "Opening Doors to the Outdoors". As a board member, she co-chaired the 2024 Make Peace With Winter "Weaving Warmth" conference and is happy to be back in the co-chair role for this fall's conference "The Strength of Play: Living, Learning and Leading with Nature. She has (too?) many house plants in her apartment and is looking forward to the day she can plant fruit trees by her back doorstep.

If elected, what do you want to do in your role on the COEO board?

If re-elected as treasurer, I would like to improve our back-end financial organizational system that makes it easier for us to grow as an organization. COEO is hoping to offer more events, perks, and opportunities for building community to its members. As we do this work, the number of transactions we make as an organization also grows. As the treasurer is still just one person, I want to try to build a framework that will continue to track transactions accurately but that streamlines certain processes. Some things I hope to do as part of this framework are:

- Obtain a credit card for COEO as an organization

- Make it faster for members to receive a receipt, reimbursement or refund through standardizing the processes and sharing these with members
- Add more context and notes in the back end of the financial statements so that we can more easily write impact reports and statements to improve our grant applications

What skills do you bring to the COEO Board?

Through being treasurer for the 2025/2026 fiscal year, I have learned a great deal about how to track COEO's finances and the broader context of non-profit financial compliance. In other roles I have had in my life, I have used accounting software like GnuCash and QuickBooks. As treasurer this year I have also sought out more specific training on how to manage the finances of a non-profit. I love working with spreadsheets and work to make them accessible to others. I strive to be a good communicator and enjoy learning new things. In my role as treasurer this year, I have sought out ways to improve the processes COEO uses to keep our financial and regulatory obligations up to date.

Why do you want to be on the COEO board? What do you envision for COEO in the 1-3 year term? Members are only elected for 1 year increments, but what are your big dreams for COEO during your 1 year term and beyond?

I want COEO to reach more people. Outdoor education can be so impactful, but it is often undervalued or seen as inaccessible to folks who do see its value. In my role as treasurer, I want to help give the membership and the board a clear picture of our finances so we can make the best decisions on how to achieve the biggest impact. I would also like to make a stronger connection between the funds from memberships and the work that COEO does. One way I would like to do this is by working with other board members to publish an annual impact statement would help us show how we help educators and where that impact is felt in communities. I hope that this will

help us be more successful with grant applications and also encouraging more members to join our organization.

What do you hope to pursue as a board member to support COEO as it looks for ways to meaningfully respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action?

As a board member, I would like to explore what COEO can do to support language revitalisation efforts. As a predominantly settler organization, many of COEO's members are likely to only know the land and its beings through settler languages. Language shapes so much about how we interact with the world. The little bits of Anishinaabemowin that I have been exposed to have changed how I interact with nature. I hope that by playing a role in revitalising language, COEO can help lift the Indigenous voices up and bring change to how settlers interact with the world as a consequence. What this effort could look like would be built through consultations with the indigenous elders and knowledge holders in our community.



This year has been a fantastic year for mushrooms in my area. Everywhere I look this year, there seems to be a new kind of mushroom I've never seen. They have been a good reminder to be curious and to look carefully before you step.

Nomination for Volunteer Co-ordinator

Nominee: Devin Mutic (he/him)

Biography:

Hi, I'm Devin (he/him)! An educator, philosopher, wilderness traveller, and enthusiast in all manners of exploration and poking around in our natural world, I currently have the great pleasure of serving on the 2025-2026 COEO Board as the Volunteer Coordinator. Outside of COEO, I am the Director of the Headwaters Wilderness Program, an educational organization guided by the purpose of developing, implementing, and practicing education needed in our time of great environmental change; education which aims to reconnect a disconnected culture. Centred around enabling entwined relationships with nature and with community, Headwaters partners with schools and utilizes intentional wilderness travel as an ideal medium for a wild, flourishing, forward-looking education.

In addition to my work with Headwaters and COEO, I am active with Pathways and in the academic world. My Master's research focused on investigating the role of education in building community-based environmental ethics, and I am soon to begin a PhD to build on this prior research.

In my spare time, I volunteer extensively with youth groups in my local area, taking kids on camping trips year-round and engaging them in neighbourhood volunteering and service projects.

If elected, what do you want to do in your role on the COEO board?

If elected, my goal is to continue growing COEO's capacity by strengthening our partnerships, expanding our variety of events, and deepening our advocacy work.

In my first two years on the Board, I worked with our wonderful COEO colleagues to kick-start a re-envisioned OWLS (Ontario Wilderness Leadership

Symposium) conference. Taking the form of two canoe trips in June, we sought with OWLS to expand COEO's membership by engaging the summer camp and wilderness tripping community, as well as to fill a needed gap in teacher education by intentionally looking at the deeper philosophical and pedagogical questions that underly outdoor forms of education. In addition to OWLS, I have been working to resurrect our Student Rep program in order to expand COEO's network of engaged universities and to bring more awareness of COEO and outdoor education to students and young people in our province. Another focus of mine has been on helping to lead COEO's advocacy work, especially in regard to budget cuts coming from the provincial government. My goal is to continue working on these three aspects, including by starting-up a winter iteration of OWLS, expanding COEO's regional events, and continuing our advocacy work at the policy level.

What skills do you bring to the COEO Board?

My varied background has allowed me to see outdoor education from a multitude of angles, and to get to know a wide diversity of people working in all aspects of our field. My work has been as an educator in a variety of settings (including camps, canoe trips, environmental learning centres, and public school boards); as an academic researcher in the fields of education and environmental studies; and as the Director leading an organization which merges all three aspects of outdoor education: theoretical research, curriculum/program development, and program delivery/facilitation. With this background, I bring to COEO's Board a broad and multifaceted understanding of what outdoor education means and can look like – an understanding which I seek to bring into all Board discussions so that COEO is able to represent and stay relevant to people committed to outdoor learning across Ontario and beyond, whether they be researchers, classroom teachers, canoe trip guides, or curriculum designers.

I also bring technical skills and knowledge which I am happy to share with the COEO Board. Such as experience with organizational insurance, grant writing, strategic planning, advertising, research, and event coordination.

Why do you want to be on the COEO board? What do you envision for COEO in the 1-3 year term? Members are only elected for 1 year increments, but what are your big dreams for COEO during your 1 year term and beyond?

I hope to be elected to the COEO Board because of my immense compassion and concern for the state of the living, breathing creatures of our planet, and my profound belief in the central importance of education in creating any sort of future wherein our nonhuman kin may flourish. To reconnect a culture, we need – desperately need – organizations like COEO and the wonderful people they represent. For the chipmunk and the bumblebee, the red pine and the forested lake, the human child with wind in their hair and dirt on their face. Life – all of life – is counting on it.

My vision for COEO over the next few years is to see us become better recognized for the expertise we hold. To have COEO and its members be recognized as an organization working at the forefront of educational practice, and to have the institutional world of school boards, governments, and policy setting bodies see the essential nature of outdoor education. To get there, I envision COEO expanding on our vision of events to become a source of pedagogical ideation and enhancement. To take our internal sharing of best practices and to share them with the wider world.

What do you hope to pursue as a board member to support COEO as it looks for ways to meaningfully respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action?

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action are, in many ways, entwined with education. I believe strongly in the role of education in moving both people and our planet forward, and this is never more true than in the area of reconciliation. COEO's unique position as a community-based

organization calls upon us to make connections with First Nation communities on and with whom's lands we live and work. In my work outside of COEO, I aim to bring First Nations communities into the educational conversation in every program we run. It is my goal as COEO board member to bring those same conversations to the work and events that COEO does. This is necessarily relationship-based work that looks different in every interaction, and I strive to bring that awareness to the board.



I took this photo during a canoe trip I led in Quetico. Taken while camping on the aptly named "Blueberry Island", this photo represents the peace of the natural world, as well as my profound belief in the amazing possibilities which emerge from group travel in natural places.

Nomination for Director-at-Large

Nominee: Rochellie Lywin (she/her)

Biography:

Hi there! My name is Rochellie Lywin and I am an outdoor educator, Early Childhood Educator, and founder of Three Pines Outdoor and Nature Play in Cochrane, Alberta. I am also a Certified Lead Forest and Nature School Practitioner and also currently completing her Bachelor of Child and Youth Care at the University of Victoria.

My work focuses on creating meaningful opportunities for children and youth to play, explore, take appropriate risks, follow their curiosity, and build relationships with the outdoors. I believe outdoor learning should be accessible and welcoming, and that meaningful experiences in nature do not always require extraordinary places. They can happen in neighbourhood parks, local pathways, school grounds, and the outdoor spaces children experience every day.

I also serve on the Board of Directors of Outdoor Play Canada and I also contribute to the outdoor learning community through presentations, professional learning, community programming, and sector initiatives.

At the heart of my work is a belief that children deserve time, space, trust, and opportunities to connect with the outdoors in ways that are meaningful to them.

If elected, what do you want to do in your role on the COEO board?

If elected, I would love to help strengthen connections between outdoor educators working in different settings, including schools, early learning programs, community organizations, and other outdoor spaces.

I am especially interested in helping make outdoor education feel accessible and possible for more educators and the children and youth they work with. Outdoor learning does not always have to mean travelling

somewhere far away or having access to specialized equipment. Some of the most meaningful experiences can happen right in our own communities.

I would also like to support conversations around inclusion and reducing barriers to outdoor learning. Children and youth come with different abilities, cultures, backgrounds, experiences, and levels of comfort outdoors, and I believe there should be space for all of them.

Being based in Alberta, I would also bring a perspective from outside Ontario while respecting COEO's Ontario roots. I would be excited to learn from the COEO community, share what I have learned through my own work, and contribute to connections within the broader outdoor education community.

What skills do you bring to the COEO Board?

I bring hands-on experience as an outdoor educator, program leader, and small business owner, along with experience working with children and youth in early learning, community, and therapeutic settings.

Running my own outdoor program means I am involved in everything from developing programming and building community partnerships to communicating with families and, most importantly, spending time outside with children. This keeps me connected to what outdoor education actually looks like day to day, including both the opportunities and the challenges.

I also serve on the Board of Directors of Outdoor Play Canada and have experience contributing to conferences, professional learning, and outdoor learning initiatives.

One of my strengths is being able to take bigger ideas and think about what they can realistically look like in practice. I bring curiosity, creativity, collaboration, and a willingness to listen and learn. I also value different perspectives and believe strong organizations are built when people can bring their own experiences to the table while working toward a shared purpose.

Why do you want to be on the COEO board? What do you envision for COEO in the 1-3 year term? Members are only elected for 1 year increments, but what are your big dreams for COEO during your 1 year term and beyond?

I would like to join the COEO Board because I really value opportunities for outdoor educators to connect, share ideas, and learn from one another. I also care about making outdoor education welcoming and accessible to people with different backgrounds, abilities, experiences, and relationships with the outdoors.

As a Filipino outdoor educator, I am particularly interested in how culture can shape our relationship with outdoor spaces. Not everyone grows up experiencing the outdoors in the same way, especially when it comes to things like Canadian winters, weather, outdoor play, and perceptions of risk. I would love to help create opportunities where more educators, children, and families can feel comfortable, confident, and that they belong outdoors.

Over the next few years, I would love to see COEO continue creating opportunities for connection, mentorship, and accessible professional learning, while also finding ways to reach communities that may experience barriers to outdoor education.

My hope is for outdoor education to feel possible and welcoming to everyone. I would be excited to bring my own experiences and perspective while continuing to listen to and learn from others.

What do you hope to pursue as a board member to support COEO as it looks for ways to meaningfully respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action?

I would hope to support COEO in continuing to build meaningful relationships with Indigenous educators, Knowledge Keepers, communities, and organizations, and to look for ways Indigenous voices and perspectives can continue to guide the organization's work.

As an outdoor educator, I also believe we have a responsibility to think deeply about our relationship with Land. Land acknowledgements are

important, but I believe the learning needs to go beyond the acknowledgement itself. I would like to support opportunities for outdoor educators to learn more about the histories, stories, relationships, and responsibilities connected to the places where we live, play, and learn.

I would also hope to support ongoing learning within the Board and COEO community so that reconciliation is considered in programming, professional learning, partnerships, and decision-making, rather than being treated as a separate initiative.

I would approach this work as a learner. I don't have all the answers, but I would bring a willingness to listen, learn, build relationships, and support Indigenous leadership as COEO continues this important work.



I chose a tree because it represents being grounded while always growing. Its branches reach outward in many directions, reminding me to stay open to new possibilities, perspectives, and learning. Like a tree, I hope to keep growing while staying connected to the people, communities, and places around me.

Nomination for Director-at-Large

Nominee: Rayanna Santiago (she/her)

Biography:

Hi, I'm Ray (she/her)! I first came to know COEO at the 2023 Fall Conference and fell in love with the community and the values it stands for. Since then, I have supported COEO as registrar for the conference committee and as a Board Member at Large for the Board of Directors since 2024. I'm currently a graduate student in the Master of Education program specializing in Environmental and Sustainability Education at Lakehead University. My research focuses on how critical place-based, post-secondary education supports students in developing an environmental ethic of care and meaningful relationships with our more-than-human kin. During the school year, I am a teaching assistant for the School of Outdoor Recreation, Parks and Tourism, supply teacher at the LDSB outdoor education centre, and forest school educator. In my spare time, I can be found somewhere in the woods, whether it be on a canoe in a backcountry lake, in a tent under fall foliage, or attempting to snowboard and cross-country ski through snowy terrain. I'm always eager to further my abilities as an outdoor educator and love finding opportunities to learn from and with the land and its inhabitants.

If elected, what do you want to do in your role on the COEO board?

If I'm elected for the 2026-2027 year, I would love to continue helping COEO's Ontario Wilderness Leadership Symposium (OWLS) expand. For the last two years, fellow board members and myself have been working towards this event becoming a yearly and sustainable event for COEO. I strongly believe in OWLS and believe that it's an important area of development for COEO as it creates space to support young and early-career outdoor educators, a group that is often underrepresented at COEO's fall and winter conferences. I would also like to help revive regional and

topic-specific events for COEO members. Ontario is a vast province, and outdoor education encompasses a wide range of careers. It is important to me that there are regional and topic-specific events that meaningfully supports community building across this diverse field. With these aims in mind, this year I would like to host a conference for outdoor educators in northwestern Ontario. I am also interested in building connections to universities, colleges, and organizations. I believe that COEO has great potential to further their connections and invite various perspectives and voices into the community.

What skills do you bring to the COEO Board?

After being on the Board of Directors for the last two years, I have become familiar with the constitution, events, board meetings, and general operations of the organization. One of the strongest qualities I bring to the COEO Board is a genuine eagerness to support fellow board members in bringing their ideas and visions for COEO to life. I enjoy working through the process of turning an idea into something real, like an event that brings people together. Another quality that I bring to the board is my enthusiasm for collaboration and teamwork. I believe that the best ideas and plans emerge through group discussion as people can share various perspectives and build on each other's strengths. This is especially helpful when planning events or engaging with advocacy work. When part of a team, I strive to consider the diverse perspectives in the room, those that might be missing, and the potential best practices that help ensure COEO aligns with its core values and meets people in their diverse ways of being. I am deeply passionate about COEO, their values, the community, and their events, and I am committed to helping the organization reach its goals through dedication, hard work, communication, creative problem solving, and being open and receptive to new and various ideas.

Why do you want to be on the COEO board? What do you envision for COEO in the 1-3 year term? Members are only elected for 1 year increments, but what are your big dreams for COEO during your 1 year term and beyond?

One of the main reasons I want to join the COEO board is to support and give back to the community of educators who bring so much love, care, thoughtfulness, and attention to not only their students, but to the natural world. I also want to help ensure that outdoor education continues to have a place in Ontario's education system, both now and for future generations. Outdoor education is a vital part of learning that fosters meaningful education and enables the flourishing of both students and our more-than-human kin. Within the next one to three years, I envision COEO growing its membership base in a way that better reflects the diversity of both the outdoor education field and its educators. I hope to see this vision realized by strengthening connections with universities, colleges, and organizations, and by hosting more events that foster community engagement, such as OWLS, regional events, and theme-specific events.

What do you hope to pursue as a board member to support COEO as it looks for ways to meaningfully respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action?

As a board member, I hope to support COEO in its actions towards meaningfully responding to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action by continuing to learn and change my practices as I gain new perspectives and understandings around decolonization and Indigenous ways of knowing and being. I also hope to support and uplift COEO members community members voices, ideas, and perspectives regarding meaningful responses to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Actions. Additionally, I aim to decolonize my own teaching and leadership practices around outdoor education and its colonial histories in relation to Indigenous and land-based education. Through this aim, I hope to provide opportunities

and learning moments that are culturally appropriate, respectful, and responsive to the communities in which I teach, learn, and live.



This photo was taken during a field trip to the LDSB outdoor education centre with a 3rd and 4th year experiential education class. This image encompasses the importance of connection and the multitude of relationships that we have to each other, the more-than-human world, and the places that we learn and live with.