

# Municipal Election 2014 – Kitchener

## Survey Results



### Kitchener

WRRC is a volunteer-based community organization that is committed to building a unified voice for gender and sexual diversity for people of all ages in Waterloo Region. We promote sustainable opportunities for advocacy, awareness, education and community-building that are respectful of the diverse interests within the Rainbow community. We work together with local allies to foster a strong and inclusive community.

This candidate survey speaks to the heart of WRRC's mission. The survey has provided us the opportunity to ensure candidates are aware of their constituents within the Rainbow community, prompts candidates to take steps to educate themselves about the concerns and needs of our community, and sets the foundation for eventually engaging our elected representatives in our community building efforts. In addition, by providing the results of the survey to the general public, we are providing an opportunity for members of our community to understand where candidates stand on these important issues – helping us build our unified voice by empowering all of us to make informed decisions.

We encourage you to review the candidate responses, reach out to further engage candidates on issues important to our community and, most importantly, get out to vote on **Monday, October 27<sup>th</sup>**!

Ontario residents are heading to the polls to vote for the:

- City/Township Mayors and Councillors
- Regional Chair and representatives at the Regional Council
- School Board Trustees

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This is your chance to exercise your right to have a say in how you think your municipality should be governed. You have the option to choose the candidate that you think best represents your interests, or to decline your ballot at the polls. Voting sends a powerful message to politicians about what is important to residents within the municipalities.

There are over 200 candidates running in the 2014 municipal election, but which of those candidates are most informed about the Rainbow community? Which candidates are best prepared to take action on issues which are of concern to the Rainbow community? We at Waterloo Region's Rainbow Coalition wanted to better understand what kind of involvement the candidates have with the Rainbow community, so we sent out an email survey asking 3 questions and gave them a 2 week timeframe to answer the questions. We also confirmed each response directly with the candidate to ensure accuracy. Each candidate from the Kitchener, Waterloo, Cambridge and surrounding Townships were asked the same questions:

1. Do you have any experience or previous involvement with LGBTQ community, or any other community that has been marginalized?
2. If elected, how might you promote inclusion and belonging for the LGBTQ community?
3. If elected, how might you address issues of concern to the LGBTQ community, such as the following: *Hate crimes and bullying - LGBTQ youth homelessness - Workplace and employment barriers - Barriers to adoption and assisted reproduction - Access to long-term care and retirement housing - Access to healthcare and social services overall*

We are pleased to report that almost half of all the candidates took the time to respond to our survey. Their responses are included here for you to read and consider when casting your vote on **Monday, October 27, 2014**.

To learn more about how to vote in the municipal election, visit the following pages:

**Kitchener** - [http://app.kitchener.ca/election/es\\_onvoterlist.aspx](http://app.kitchener.ca/election/es_onvoterlist.aspx)

**Cambridge** - <http://www.cambridge.ca/article.php?sid=269>

**Waterloo** - <http://www.waterloo.ca/elections>

**Wellesley** - <http://www.wellesley.ca/misc/elections/?q=misc%2Felections>

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**Woolwich** - <http://www.woolwich.ca/en/council/Municipal-Election.asp>

**Wilmot** - <http://www.wilmot.ca/departments-clerks-details.php?Election-10>

**North Dumfries** -

<http://www.northdumfries.ca/en/newslit/index.aspx?corpId=oFIdMqfyp7dgBaqqB0H38geQuAleQuAl&newsId=AVJ2G0m8Wxudf5lA5HbbeVxGSweQuAleQuAl>

For more information about the election survey or how to get involved with the Waterloo Region Rainbow Coalition, please contact us at [yourwrrc@gmail.com](mailto:yourwrrc@gmail.com).

Sincerest regards,

Jeremy Steffler,  
Chair, Waterloo Region Rainbow Coalition

Tanya Smith,  
Coordinator, WRRC Municipal Election Survey

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### REGIONAL CHAIR – WATERLOO REGIONAL COUNCIL

#### Ken Seiling

ken@kenseiling.com  
[www.kenseiling.com](http://www.kenseiling.com)

1. For many years I have attended events in the LGBTQ community, whether it be Pride festival openings, the centre opening and events, or events at the club in Cambridge. This year I authorized the flying of the rainbow flag at Regional Headquarters during the Pride week events. We also hosted a diversity workshop in the Regional Council chambers. Each year I also wear pink on the Day of Pink to show my support for the community.
2. The Region has an active program of promoting inclusion in all of its work and workplaces and supports the work of other groups advancing an inclusive Region.
3. Many of the areas addressed in your question are the work of other levels of government. However, our Regional Crime Prevention Council works in many areas, one of which is anti-bullying which incorporates the community. We work to ensure no barriers in employment based on gender. We have policies in place to recognize diversity and actively work to implement them. There are a number of initiatives under way with regard to homelessness, a complex issue at best, but one which affect many, especially younger people with LGBTQ issues.

#### Paul Myles

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<http://paulamyles4waterlooregionalchair.weebly.com/>

1. I used to work at Club Renaissance a LGBTQ Bar in downtown Kitchener.
2. By ensuring that funding and community supports are in place from the Region.
3. By ensuring that the WRPS understands that hate crimes are a serious matter and need to be handled properly. Creating an effective solution to youth homelessness in our Region. Putting in place appropriate policies that reflect that discrimination of any sort is uncalled for and will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

### MAYOR

#### Slavko Miladinovic

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<http://www.facebook.com/SlavkoMiladinovic>

1. No. Other than Canada taking the side of the 1990s axis in Yugoslavia, and I, as a Serb, being its victim.
2. I would have a meeting with WRRC to inform me of all the problems the LGBTQ community has faced and is currently experiencing.

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3. Offer LGBTQ community to participate in the Mayor's community awareness Public Announcement videos. I didn't know access to healthcare and social services were denied to LGBTQ community. The public should know.

### James Rhodes

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<http://rhodesformayor.ca>

1. Yes. I have friends in the community.

2. The first way I would promote inclusion and belonging for the LGBTQ community is public appearances at all events. Plus, I believe the City through its resources should actively promote such events and encourage all elected officials to appear as sign of complete acceptance and inclusion of the community. The second way is through funding programs dedicated to ending stereotypes and barriers to the acceptance of the community. This funding should be looked at not only the City level but also the Regional level. As Mayor, I would look into whether funding can be obtained by private business partnerships interesting in promoting their product and the welfare of the community. Part of the role of the incoming Mayor has to be prioritizing funding, and I feel that breaking down the barriers the LGBTQ community faces are high priority.

3. As an elected official, I see it as a duty to stand up and bring the issue to light to show that the community is against the behaviours and actions and they cannot be tolerated. With respect to municipal aspects, I would support the regional and city initiatives into access that fall within each of their powers. For example, criminal actions are the realm of the WRPS, but calls to them from the Mayor for progress updates can push them to respond better to the issue - or re-think their priority on the matter. For issues at the Regional level, as a voice on Council I would vote towards initiatives designed to promote access and equality.

### Dan Glenn-Graham

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[www.electdanmayor.com](http://www.electdanmayor.com)

1. Yes, I have attended every Spectrum or LGBTQ or Aids related event on my calendar. I have often brought greetings from the City of Kitchener and am proud to be supported by Deandra Leslie of Spectrum.

2. Training for city hall staff around opportunities for inclusion at work or how to be respectful to transgender individuals during voting, and also to encourage opportunities for celebration of the LGBTQ community throughout the city.

3. The key is to stay committed as a partner to walk alongside the LGBTQ community to work with them and all

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orders of government, and advocate where possible for equality and access. This leadership must be by both staff and our political leaders, including me as Mayor.

### REGIONAL COUNCILLOR

#### Wayne Wettlaufer

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<http://VoteWayne.ca>

1. Very little

2. I have trouble with anyone - minority, groups, associations, LGBTQ or otherwise, being ostracized because of their beliefs or lifestyle. I was raised, and my family has been raised, with the belief that everyone is equal and deserving of equal treatment. However, that could also mean that no one should receive special treatment. Recognition for contributions to society, yes, but no to special treatment. I am opposed to bullying, verbally or physically. I will speak out, publicly, in favour of equal treatment for all and enforcement of all of our laws.

3. Hate crimes and bullying are not Regional Government issues; nor are workplace and employment barriers and barriers to adoption and assisted reproduction. We can work with senior governments, however. I simply will not tolerate unequal treatment based on race, creed, colour, belief or sexual orientation on the issues of homelessness, access to long-term care and retirement housing, healthcare and social services. I will immediately investigate any complaint and solve it.

#### Geoff Lorentz

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<http://geofflorentz.ca>

1. Yes, a little bit. I attended a couple of your meetings when your organization was looking for a permanent home.

2. I have always been a strong supporter of the LGBTQ community and other marginalized organizations. I am elected to assist people and work to making their lives better not worse.

3. I know the Region of Waterloo is the leader in many of the initiatives you have mentioned. We need to keep working toward a society that is inclusive to all walks of life. We are all human and need to be treated that way. As an elected official for the last 26 years I still am committed to those values.

#### Karen Redman

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1. During my time as a Member of Parliament, Canada recognized same sex marriage. I have long been an advocate for the disabled community. I championed the medical use of marijuana for people who used this to

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<http://karenredman.com>

alleviate symptoms of long term debilitating conditions. I advocated changing the EI system to recognize fibromyalgia as a persistent and debilitating condition that should be recognized and for which people should be able to access EI benefits. On a personal basis, sexual orientation of an individual should be a non-issue for employment, services providers and legislators. Because this is not always the case, it is necessary to be vigilant to ensure that policies pertaining to employment, service and complaint processes make fairness a priority.

2. It is essential that LGBTQ community members been seen as the family down the street. People with children. People in family units. People with similar concerns regarding the social safety net and value for tax dollars as all residents of the Region. Many street youth find them marginalized by families who are not equipped to deal with the specific issues of gender identity with which they are dealing. Counselling and providing supports to individuals and their families is a key ingredient to creating a better understanding.

3. All policies must reflect inclusion of the LGBTQ community; There must be a process for redress by individual who have suffer hate crimes, bullying or workplace barriers. Some of these issues have protections through federal and provincial legislation. It is key that the Region ensure its policies and procedures are barrier free for the LGBTQ community. This will be accomplished through using this as one lens through which they review all policies.

### **Greg Burns**

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1. Yes. I have worked in the field of engineering education for a number of years. During this time, I noticed a lack of discussion around how to make the profession more welcoming for LGBTTQQIAA\* individuals. A lot of this starts in the formal education system, with a history deeply rooted in military tradition, it can be a hostile environment for people who don't identify with very stereotypically "masculine" traits. As a response to this, in consultation with LGBTTQQIAA\* members and utilizing the report, Navigating the Heteronormativity of Engineering, I designed a presentation and session to present at student conferences. I have presented it at three conferences. I have also worked with multiple engineering students groups to create or modify language of governing documents to be more inclusive. I continue to try to be the best ally possible to friends who identify as members of this community in my daily life.

2. First, I already have experience in re-writing governing documents to have less exclusive (gendered) language and be more inclusive with pronoun use and would be willing to help the Region in similar tasks. I attempt to be

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inclusive in my own language, which would hopefully create an atmosphere of similar amongst the council, and I would like to hold them accountable to their own language and assumptions. Finally, I would like to see gender-neutral washrooms as a standard for all Regional buildings. I would give my full support to and attend as many LGBTTQQIAA\* community events as possible throughout my term (for example Tri-Pride and the Queer Film Fest).

3. I believe that gender neutral washrooms will play a role in reducing hate crimes and bullying towards this community. I would like to work with the Crime Prevention Council to ensure they have proper training, knowledge, and representation of this community so they can properly address issues that effect this area disproportionately. I would review the Waterloo Regional Police Service and work with the Police Board to ensure they are following the Best Practises in Policing LGBTQ Communities report by the Ontario Associate of Chiefs of Police. I would like to see better diversity training in all Regional workplaces, and organizations that receive Regional funding such as Public Health, emergency shelters, long-term care, retirement housing, so the Region can be a truly inclusive employer and community (I admit this would take further research, as I am unsure of their current practises, but there is usually room for improvement, some organizations/departments will be better at this than others).

**Tom Galloway**  
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<http://tomgalloway.ca>

1. Yes. Numerous committees or Boards I sit on now or in the past have either had representation from the LGBTQ community or have dealt with issues associated with this community or other marginalized groups. Of note is the Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council, Opportunities 2000, Community and Social Services Committee of Council

2. Many marginalized communities find it difficult to engage in public discussion and decision making. We need to be proactive in requesting participation on advisory groups or committees. We need to go and request it rather putting an ad in a newspaper. The needs of these communities need to be included in our Planning Policies, Housing Strategies and other human services we provide.

3. I Chair the Waterloo Region Police Services Board. I believe our service has been responsive to hate crimes and bullying activity and would promote continued involvement in this area. Homelessness is an issue we will continue to address through transitional and affordable housing. I will lobby senior levels of government for more funding. Workplace and adoption barriers may not be in the control of local government but we can promote these causes



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through our regular lobbying of senior governments. There should be no barriers to long term care and if there are we can certainly straighten that out. Similarly with healthcare and social services there should be no access barriers and I would be pleased to deal with them for any services the Region provides.

**Cameron Dearlove**  
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1. One thing I bring to this campaign, and something I am very proud of, are the many relationships I have built throughout our diverse community. I have a history of being an ally and advocate, and working to build a more inclusive community, particularly for those who have been traditionally marginalized. This is certainly true of my engagement with the local LGBTQ community, whether it is from writing articles support gay-straight alliances in schools, to attending community events, to encouraging my workplace to be an LGBTQ welcoming space. This commitment to inclusion extends to other traditionally marginalized communities as well. For example, I have spent time on a board of a local indigenous organization (and have had my campaign endorsed by a local elder and indigenous community leader); I have worked with and supported many ethnocultural groups in our community, and have supported immigrants and refugees; I have led a petition and advocacy campaign for individuals with developmental disabilities; I have a history of working with the community to improve programming to better support community inclusion for women; and I spend my days working with community partners to improve strength-building programming and opportunities for children and youth, including working with a community partner to create a youth skills training social enterprise. Additionally, I have been a member of the Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee of the Waterloo Region District School board, and bring an equity and inclusion lens to my other community involvements. As a regional councillor I will use an equity and inclusion lens when making decisions for our community.

2. One plank of my platform that will be key in this area is encouraging a citizen-led review of our local electoral system with the potential for electoral reform. I want to see our councils reflective of the diversity of our community. Currently all of these above-mentioned groups are underrepresented. We should be looking at our electoral system to find ways to ensure elections bring more representative results. Further, our community will only be truly great when everybody feels a strong sense of belonging within our community. This means not only being proud of the diversity of our community on special celebratory days; this means working with the community towards equity every day of the year.

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3. As a leader and councillor, I will always wear an equity and inclusion lens when analyzing policy options. But I can't do this in isolation. This will mean working with the LGBTQ and other traditionally marginalized populations to identify system gaps and barriers, and work cooperatively to eliminate these to create a safer, healthier community.

I believe strongly in prevention. We all need to work together, including our Crime Prevention Council, to identify ways we can educate and engage the community to develop understanding and inclusion to prevent hate crimes and bullying before they start. We need to work with families to prevent youth homelessness, and support our social agencies to serve these youth when there aren't other options. As a region, we need to set an example, and work to eliminate any workplace and employment barriers for LGBTQ people. As a community, we need to remove barriers for LGBTQ families, and work together to support them. At the Region, our Public Health department can play a strong role in improving health and wellbeing, and healthcare services for the LGBTQ community. I hope to play a role in creating a more inclusive community for all of our citizens.

### **Elizabeth Clarke**

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1. I'm a career social worker and social work administrator, and have spent more than 25 years working with and for people who are marginalized, including (but not limited to) children and adults with disabilities, youth in conflict with the law, families living in low income, women with mental illnesses and addictions, women engaged in sex work, and women who are incarcerated. For ten of those years, I worked in and for Aboriginal communities in northern British Columbia and Ontario. Currently, I work for an organization that provides services to women and families and trans men and women, and offering and improving the supports we provide to the LGBTQ community is an important aspect of our work and our mission. On a personal level, I have many colleagues, friends and family members who are LGBTQ.

2. I believe that it should be a priority of Regional Council to embrace an approach to government that sees diversity as an opportunity, and builds on it as a strength. While many Council meetings are given over to citizen delegations, it's evident to me that this model of consultation is more frustrating for all parties than it is helpful. A truly open and inclusive government engages in real conversations and collaboration, and this requires outreach, listening, communicating, trusting and empowering. The reasons that citizens feel disengaged from government are varied and complex. Obvious fixes like making materials and meetings accessible for people with physical disabilities, or translating documents for people with language barriers, are important, but don't go far enough. Regional Council should be prepared to do its business differently in order to overcome social and cultural issues

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leading to distrust and exclusion. Council must reach out to unengaged communities to better understand how to help them to feel welcome and able to participate. Council should begin by forming an engagement committee, comprised of members from the diversity communities that make up our region, and should work closely with the committee to develop an engagement strategy with measurable targets and deadlines. True consultation requires conversations, and true conversations involve sharing of ideas – not just of information. They require active listening and giving and accepting of feedback, and they take time. Few citizens, and especially citizens who are marginalized and experience discrimination, are comfortable making formal presentations to council in front of cameras and an audience. Informal conversation tables may be far less threatening and far more conducive to openness and collaboration.

It is a challenge, even for people who are politically aware and technologically savvy and who possess strong English language skills, to access and make use of the reams of technical information posted on the Region's website about Council meeting schedules and decisions. Regional Council must reach out and actively invite citizens to attend upcoming meetings, using means such as social media, and providing plain language summaries of the matters which will be addressed and the decisions which will be made. For many people, the main impediments to their political engagement are their lack of trust of politicians and government, and their sense that they have nothing to offer or that the contributions that they can make will not be valued. Regional Council should build relationships with its citizens by ensuring that the information Council provides is balanced and objective, that its work is open and accountable, and that its consultations are conducted with a clear goal of shared problem-solving and decision-making.

3. I believe that the people who are best equipped to name issues of concern, and to plan solutions to them, are the people with direct, lived experience. I would rely upon the LGBTQ community, and to groups like to WRRC, to inform and advise me, and to work with me and my colleagues on Council, where appropriate, to effect necessary change. Hate crimes and bullying, LGBTQ youth homelessness, workplace and employment barriers, barriers to adoption and assisted reproduction, barriers to access to long-term care and retirement housing, and barriers to access to healthcare and social services overall are much more than just municipal issues. They are fundamental issues of human rights, and ones about which I feel passionate. I would be honoured to be able to play a part in ending them.

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### WARD 1

#### **Niki Allerton**

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<http://www.voteniki.ca>

1. No direct previous involvement with the LGBTQ community (aside from occasionally attending the annual event in Victoria Park) – My family and I were refugees from communist Czech-Slovakia and arrived in Canada as immigrants in the early 90's – this had its own (very different) challenges, but we certainly struggled to be accepted.

2. I believe the best way to foster inclusion and belonging is through equal treatment – I would advocate equal support for the local LGBTQ community as we give other groups within our community.

3. I believe an individual's sexual orientation is something that is deeply personal, and should never affect their opportunities or their ability to access services. If elected, I will address issues affecting the LGBTQ community with the guiding principle of equality. No group of people should have to endure hate crimes or bullying. Homelessness is a broad issue for our community – it must be addressed for LGBTQ or otherwise. I firmly believe that an individual's sexual orientation should not be a relevant factor in whether they have Access to public services such as long-term care, retirement housing, healthcare or social services.

#### **Marcus Drasdo**

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<http://www.marcusdrasdo.com>

1. I lived and worked in a predominately gay community in Vancouver and through my colleagues and friends that I met while living there, I learned a lot about the issues the LGBTQ community deal with. I have also worked and lived abroad gaining international experience in hospitality, tourism and international sporting events. These experiences involved me managing as well as working side-by-side with people of different ethnicities who would describe themselves as marginalized in the countries they came from and went to work in, to earn a living.

2. I would promote inclusion and belonging for the LGBTQ community just as I would for any other community. Throughout my professional and life experiences, I have developed a deep appreciation for how similar all humans are, no matter how seemingly different we are perceived to be. I believe strongly that everyone should be treated with respect and as equals, and I will continue to promote this message and use it as a lens for decisions I make in council.

3. If I had the honour of being elected as Ward 1 Councillor, I would listen to the experiences of people affected by

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issues like hate crimes and bullying, and work with the LGBTQ community, relevant organizations and city council to address these concerns. I would do this for any person or community experiencing these issues. My only intolerance is intolerance.

**Scott Davey**  
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[www.scottdavey.info](http://www.scottdavey.info)

1. No question I'm a supporter. The bulk of my involvement would be through our work on Kitchener's advisory 'Safe and Healthy committee' (of which I'm a board member). We've focused our attention on inclusivity for its intrinsic value, and healthy-neighborhood benefits. We just recently began offering grants for initiatives that meet specific inclusion criteria.

2. I'm happy to continue to promote and financially support LGBTQ events, but this is a tough question to answer if there's an expectation of changed-attitudes. To be frank... it's 2014. If someone in 2014 \*still\* judges or otherwise excludes others based on sexual orientation or gender-identity then they're probably beyond any rational influence.

3. Although serious issues, adoption/healthcare/social services etc. aren't under lower-tier Municipal jurisdiction-- these questions are best left for Regional candidates to address. For workplace and employment barriers, we can influence our own corporation (City of Kitchener) and I'm unaware of any discriminatory barriers. Kitchener has inclusion and diversity policies, but should I be made aware of any barriers; I would work strongly against them, and to swift resolution.

### WARD 2

**Dan Graham**  
dan@dangrahamward2.com  
<http://dangrahamward2.com>

1. Yes, I was involved with a U.S. punk band called Pansy Division and I designed a set of trading cards for their fan club that included a 'Safe Sex' Card (with info on how to properly put on a condom and on the other side contact info for LGBTQ youth help lines on the other side). We also included a condom in the fist 30,000 packs.

2. I have had the pleasure of working with many LGBTQ artists over my many years in the music business and I believe that everyone in our community is equal regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation or level of ability. I would like the City to focus more on youth programs so that the young people can grow up feeling part of the community.

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3. We MUST have a ZERO tolerance for hate crimes and bullying PERIOD! NO EXCEPTIONS! As I stated above I believe we really need to focus on the youth because that is the most fragile time. We need to make sure we tend to the LGBTQ youth in a sensitive and supportive way and also work with other youth so that there are no prejudices. All workplaces should hire the best person available for the job regardless, and the same for adoption, if there are good people willing to raise a child with love then all people potential parents should be evaluated on their skills and love, not on their sexual orientation. All Ontarians should have equal access to healthcare regardless of sexual orientation.

### **Dave Schnider**

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[www.daveschnider.com](http://www.daveschnider.com)

1. Not personally, but when I was Program Director at 105.3 KOOL FM and 99.5 KFUN I arranged free promotion of events like the Tri-Pride Music Festival, the ACCKWA on line auction and A Taste for Life through the Kool to Care/KFUN Cares program. This program gives free 30 second commercials 3 weeks in advance of an event and during the event. It also gets the charity event promotion on the station websites.

2. I am in support of an inclusive and diverse community. I would attend events and promote and support events and initiatives through my personal social media accounts.

3. These issues affect the LGBTQ community and other groups. I will voice my opinion that any prejudice or hate cannot be tolerated. Where I can do something locally I will. Where it is a provincial, federal or global issue, I will voice my and your concerns with our local MPs and MPPs. I would also want to meet with directors of WRRC and ACCKWA to listen and better understand where and how I can best be effective in supporting your work.

### **Chris Letizi**

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<http://www.chrisletizi.ca>

1. I have worked with several communities that have been marginalized including but not limited to Ethnic woman, youth, at risk families, and people with mental and physical disabilities. I have worked to represent their best interests and advocate for their needs and promote equal access to programming and services as well as advocating for inclusivity for them. I do not have any direct involvement with the LGBTQ community but strongly believe in our community being fully inclusive for everyone.

2. Promoting inclusion amongst all groups is something I strongly believe in and promote inclusion for everyone regardless of what community, ethnic group, or culture they belong to or regardless of any physical or mental disabilities. I would encourage policies to not exclude any group and to be fully inclusive as is expected with any basic human rights.

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3. Working with the community to obtain feedback about the issues and gaining an understanding of the strategies they believe would be most effective. I would encourage and support policies that support these groups and raise awareness of these issues. The more aware we are as a society of these issues the greater our understanding. The greater our knowledge, the more we can develop to ensure these barriers are broken down to allow for everyone to be treated equal.

### Grayson Zeilstra

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[www.GraysonWard2.ca](http://www.GraysonWard2.ca)

1. I personally don't have previous involvement with the LGBTQ community. I have noticed that the LGBTQ community has shown leadership in terms of providing a strong voice for all marginalized groups.

2. Promoting inclusion is vital to our community as a whole. As a region, we are fortunate to have a diverse community and that is something that should be celebrated. In order to promote inclusion, we must start with education to remove many of the barriers that are present.

3. By promoting inclusion, it will have a positive effect in regards to the issues mentioned in the above question. In regards to hate crimes and bullying, we must take a zero tolerance approach. Improved education will promote greater knowledge and understanding. In terms of homelessness, employment barriers, adoption, housing and healthcare, all levels of government must lead the way and work cooperatively to promote equality.

### WARD 3

### John A. Gazzola

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1. Yes. Members of my family are members of the community. Many people in our society are and/or have been marginalized. As a Member of City Council for the past 12 years I have been involved in many cases.

2. I like to think of myself as a diverse individual. I embrace diversity and inclusion. I would treat the LGBTQ as I hope I have treated all other community groups. Everyone is important. If anything I tend to favour the "underdog" more. Having said that I do not feel any one or any group is entitled to anything. As the current leader of the RC Church (Pope Francis ) has repeatedly said..."who am I to judge?"

3. All of the items listed above are rights that all human beings are entitled to throughout the world and especially in our Country. The LGBTQ deserves no LESS or no more on any of these issues. I consider myself as a fairly

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religious person. There is no room in my beliefs for any contrary position regardless if in the past members of my religion may have not adhered to these basic principles. At election time candidates often say what they suspect audiences want to hear whether they believe in them or not. I assure you that is not the case with me.

### WARD 4

#### Wayne Buchholtz

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<http://waynebuchholtz.ca>

1. Yes, I have had involvement with students and staff as both a principal and trustee with the Catholic School Board
2. I would continue to promote fairness and equity for all and ensure that their needs were fully met at all times. I would continue to support all initiatives involving members of the LGBTQ community
3. Members of this community have the same rights as the rest of the overall community and I would work every way possible to ensure that those rights were respected and supported. I am a firm believer in the concept of inclusion and that means for everything in society.

### WARD 5

#### Lala Malik

lalamalik@hotmail.com

1. I have come across many people belonging to LGBTQ community at place of work or social circle and I find them the same. It is your choice what you want to do with life and no one has any right to treat you differently.
2. I would treat everyone equally with no preference as far as race, gender, religion, or sexuality is concerned.
3. I am against all hate crimes and bullying anyone for any reason whatsoever. I believe in Live and Let Live. We are all equal and should be treated equally in all aspects of life.

#### Mary Henein Thorn

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<http://focusing-on-what-counts.com>

1. Unfortunately we do have communities that continue to be marginalized and yes, I am very passionate about making sure everyone is treated equally. Everyone should have the same opportunities, respect and a feeling of inclusion. My experiences with LGBTQ is with family friends and others who have shared their stories of what it is like to be marginalized unfairly. I have walked hand in hand with a young man though his journey in determining his true identity about his sexuality and sharing the truth with his parents and family. I witnessed his pain and saw

<http://yourwrrc.ca>



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his struggles. No one should have to endure these feelings. No one should be teased or harassed. I have worked closely with new immigrants, youth, elderly and anyone who has been marginalized to raise awareness and empower them. I have advocated for poverty (House of Friendship and Bless Canada), services for new immigrants (ethnic community leaders & Immigration Partnership), embracing youth (community events and Community Centres).

2. Once elected I think the best course of action is to meet with community members on a regular basis - see what their needs are and how we can best service them. Constant communication, putting a plan forward and a method to measure the results of our efforts will lead to success. Partnering together to meet the needs of the community is how we will make sure that everyone has a sense of belonging and inclusion.....Something I am very passionate about!

3. Some of these issues fall under the Provincial jurisdiction and having worked with all 3 levels of government I have the resources to lobby on the LGBTQ behalf. Youth homelessness amongst the LGBTQ community is a huge concern along with the other issues mentioned above. (Employment, adoption, long-term care and retirement housing, social services etc.) These issues require first and foremost a line of communication between the elected official(s) and the community. Should I be elected I would be very committed to that line of communication. Through this communication - strategy and development would ensue and in turn solutions to these problems. These are not simple issues to tackle nor are they to be handled by one person. It takes a group of caring people to make the world a better place. I am one of those.

**Kelly Galloway-Sealock**  
kavgalloway@yahoo.ca  
<http://kellygallowaysealock.ca>

1. Through my role on council I have had the opportunity to learn more than I already knew about the LGBTQ community. I have attended the tri-Pride Festival on a few occasions and have brought greetings on behalf of the City of Kitchener. I have been the council representative on the Kitchener Youth Action Council (KYAC) that organizes the Pride Prom every year. Prior to being on council I worked with adults with developmental disabilities which is another community that is marginalized. I have also been the council representative on the Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee (GRAAC) which advises on accessibility and barrier free issues.

2. There needs to be a proactive approach in reaching out to the LGBTQ community for input on all important issues throughout the city and also in seeking participation on the city advisory committees. The city needs to seek

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input from all communities in order to have a variety of perspectives, diverse input which is representative of our community. I will be an advocate for the LGBTQ community and help to assist in any way I can but usually the best ideas come from within the community itself. Therefore I will be an elected representative that is approachable and open to ideas to promote inclusion and belonging for the LGBTQ community.

3. The biggest thing I believe I can do is be available and open to listen and respond to concerns or ideas. Again I believe that the LGBTQ community has the insight and knowledge of how many of these issues can be addressed, so it's working with you to understand and come up with ways to improve these areas. With respect to employment barriers, I would be more than willing to make sure all human resource policies are up to date and inclusive. Also ensure they are fluid and change as the needs change to be inclusive as possible. I would work with the police to come up with strategies to eliminate hate crimes and bullying across the board. In a proactive way always promoting inclusion and acceptance. Again be an advocate where I can to assist with some of the issues that don't fall under city jurisdiction to try and affect change.

### WARD 6

#### Steve Bongelli

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[www.bongelliward6.weebly.com](http://www.bongelliward6.weebly.com)

1. Well, I have friends that are lesbians, gays, not sure on the rest to be honest. I don't see people as a "label", they are just people, and if I like them, it's because they are good people. If I don't get along with them, it's because of their personality, not anything else.

2. Every "group" has the right to express themselves, regardless of "labels". As long as they are respectful, I will treat them the same.

3. These are real issues that happen not only to the LGBTQ community, but others as well. My opinion is that we as a society have to look at people as people, not putting labels on them. We have to do what we can for those that need assistance, but we also have to treat them equally and without bias.

#### Wanda Kampijan

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1. My daytime work has provided me opportunities to work alongside Lesbian moms. The centre I work for provided safe space for this group to meet and play with their children. The group met regularly for a couple of years however due to a decline in attendance the interest waned and the group stopped coming.

2. I would seek out the leaders within the LGBTQ community (and any other marginalized community) and engage

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in dialogue to help me better understand the needs of this community. I would then work alongside these champions to increase engagement opportunities that provide a greater sense of belonging.

3. Equitably....each of the issues described above deserves equal weight within all communities. Engaging the various levels of government and community organizations that are in a position to increase awareness and advocate for change.

### WARD 7

#### Harald Drewitz

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[www.vote4drewitz.ca](http://www.vote4drewitz.ca)

1. I was 2 years old when my parents came to Canada from Germany. I did not want to go to school, i.e. Grade 1, because I was called names, punched and bullied because of my broken English and my German background. We lived in Kelowna, BC at the time.

2. NO RESPONSE.

3. Stop the bullying!!

#### Fauzia Mazhar

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<http://fauziamazhar.ca>

1. Since moving to Canada in 2000, I have worked with various different marginalized groups, including low income families, visible and religious minorities, and newcomers. Through my work in professional capacity and as a volunteer, I have helped people to overcome barriers and integrate into the Canadian community. In 2010, I founded and still chair the Coalition of Muslim Women of KW, which works to create a community in which Muslim women are valued and admired for who they are. I have attended several training sessions and workshops on issues facing LGBTQ community, presented by LGBTQ activists and professionals. I also have had the privilege of working alongside with many LGBTQ activists and advocates on several community projects. I am aware of the challenges the LGBTQ community faces on a daily basis and this awareness demands action. I will be an ally and a strong voice for LGBTQ community's rights at the Council.

2. Externally, I would review the City's strategies to engage marginalized groups such as the LGBTQ community, and work to ensure that community consultation includes specific efforts to include members of those groups.

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3. The City of Kitchener has made some excellent progress towards a barrier-free workplace with its inclusion program, undertaking activities such as diversity training, and establishing a diversity committee and employee advisory committee. I would strengthen these efforts and would appoint an inclusion advocate. Not all of the above mentioned issues are within the City's purview, but where we do play a role - such as public housing - I will ensure that those inclusion efforts are directed outwards to provide equitable access and service to the LGBTQ community.

### WARD 8

#### **Eric Bohner**

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<http://ericbohner.ca>

1. I am a member of PFLAG Canada. As a friend and landlord to members of the LGBTQ community, I have always supported them in their personal identities without prejudice.
2. I believe that in order to promote inclusion and belonging I must continually educate myself on what barriers exist that prevent the LGBTQ community from participating. As a member of government, I will make it my agenda to ensure all constituents are treated fairly and equally, regardless of their respective communities or identities.
3. Frankly, these are serious issues that the government needs to address and at the municipal level, we need to demand funding from the provincial and federal levels to put into programs that address these issues.

#### **Margaret Johnston**

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<http://margaretjohnston.ca>

1. As a Public School Board Trustee I have supported our GSA's and feel that they are an integral part of our Equity and Inclusion initiatives and have done a lot to create safe, supportive spaces within our Schools. We need to continue with these and other initiatives in our schools.
2. As a Public School Board Trustee I have worked to educate myself about our LGTBQ community, I have attended the Spectrum Opening last year and will attend the 2nd Anniversary this year. I have reached out to ACKWWA and have toured their spaces and attended their fundraisers and learned about their education programs. If I had been a City Councillor in Kitchener, I would have voted in favour of flying the Rainbow flag at City Hall, I was very disappointed in the way the debate went...they eventually had the right outcome but there was no need for the issue to have been so divisive in our community.

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3. The first thing we can do to address all of the above concerns is through education and community support. I believe we missed an opportunity to reach out to the Rainbow community over the controversy about flying the Rainbow Flag at Kitchener City Hall...this was a teachable moment for our city councillors and our entire community and would have done much to send a positive message to our LGTBQ community. By speaking up as an elected representative whenever I can regarding equity, acceptance and inclusion I will do my part to change viewpoints and attitudes...many issues outlined above are not part of the purview of a councillor, but I can help by speaking out about what is right.

### WARD 9

#### **Tessa Jennison**

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1. Yes, I do have first-hand experience with the LGBTQ community in several facets of my life. In addition to having several friends and past co-workers who are LGBTQ, the most prominent of my personal experiences is the fact that my husband's little brother is gay. I have seen first-hand how stifling it is for youth to hide their sexual orientation for years. Since coming out in his 20's, my brother-in-law has become the most amazing involved person. It is integral that youth feel supported by their families and their community to be true to themselves and are able to grow and thrive and achieve their full potential.

2. In order to fully understand any aspect of our community, it is integral to encourage an open dialogue between the members of the community and the elected representatives. I always seek to fully understand any community issues by opening a dialogue with all parties involved and encouraging communication. It is in my nature to be accessible and approachable, which are essential qualities needed when potentially sensitive issues are being discussed.

Education is the best way to promote inclusion and belonging for the LGBTQ community. Forming community partnerships to collaborate on LGBTQ events further promotes the community engagement and inclusion of all groups within our city. It is also important to raise public awareness of ways that the LGBTQ community contributes to our city as a whole, and what kinds of resources they have to offer, to promote collaborative partnerships and further integrate the LGBTQ community into other facets of our urban lives.

3. Once again, I believe that education and the sharing of information is essential to breaking down barriers in various facets of our community, ranging from schools to work-places, social services, housing, etc. I'm not

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simply referring to school programs for children (although educating children on these issues is the best way to omit future stigmas and to develop a more empathetic and caring community). It is also essential that staff working at these various facilities are properly trained not only to provide their services, but also receive sensitivity training in order to provide an empathetic personal experience and to create an environment where citizens do not feel marginalized. It is essential that we offer services where citizens are welcomed and accommodated without judgement.

It is also beneficial when staff working at these sorts of facilities are able to gain a first-hand understanding of the LGBTQ community. For example, it would benefit our community greatly if the LGBTQ community were to partner with various community resources and services to develop collaborative community education and training programs. For example, forming partnerships where LGBTQ young adults speak in schools to motivate and empower LGBTQ youth in those schools, will also educate their non-LGBTQ peers and friends. These kinds of initiatives build support networks through empowerment and education. The same kinds of empathy-building and motivational public-speaking initiatives could easily be provided at youth homeless shelters, and members of the LGBTQ community could develop their own customized sensitivity training programs in partnership with other community programs, facilities, and groups, to train staff at various facilities in the city.

### Steve Strohack

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<http://believeinsteve.ca>

1. This brings to mind a very personal story. In my younger days while living in Brampton, Ontario, I had a local pub where I would gather with friends to have a few drinks, chat and enjoy one another's company. Among this group was a man named Hank. Over the years Hank and I became quite close and to this day, some of my favourite memories are of discussions and revelry with my good friend. Hank was a gay man who had been disowned by his family and was no longer acknowledged by his own parents. To Hank, the group of us at the pub became his family. We talked together, laughed together, and commiserated on just about any topic that you can imagine. A number of years ago Hank passed away as a result of AIDS. With his family situation being what it was, there was no funeral. The group of us at the pub got together and had a 'wake' in Hank's honour. To this day, I feel uplifted to know that despite the misguided approach of his biological relatives, Hank did in fact have a family that loved and accepted him for who he was. Hank was just like me. We both desired to love and be loved in return, just as any human being does. I truly believe that if everyone had a "Hank" in their life, the barriers of ignorance would fall and understanding and a true community of the human race would rise in its place.

2. First and foremost is the importance of education. Hate comes from fear and fear comes from the unknown. If

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we strive to educate the public at large in regards to these issues, we can begin to eliminate the root causes of hate and ignorance. While there are some legislative steps that can be taken (see next answer), the true battle comes with the hearts and minds of the citizenry at large. While you may not be able to change the minds of all people, through time, evolution, awareness and education, you can show the vast majority of people that we are all just that - people.

3. In regards to hate crimes and bullying, I believe that the long term solution again lies with education. In attacking the root causes of the hate, we can aim to minimize these terrible incidents. In regards to the barriers mentioned, it is as simple as acknowledging that LGBTQ rights are human rights. As for this specific election, many of these issues need to be addressed at provincial and federal levels as opposed to municipal. Having said that, I would support any and all legislation that supports finding jobs, housing, family needs, health care and social services to all people regardless of race, creed or sexual orientation.

### Frank Etherington

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<http://franketherington.ca>

1. As a journalist, I frequently wrote opinion pieces about social issues including gay rights, poverty and mental health subjects. I recently raised the issue and pushed Kitchener councillors to be more inclusive and support the issue of the rainbow flag flying outside city hall in support of our gay athletes in Russian Olympic games. When councillors refused to fly the flag in front of city hall, I worked with Coun Berry Vrbanovic to totally rework our flag policy and have councillors agree to have rainbow and other community flags flown outside city hall and at the downtown Speakers Corner. A majority of councillors eventually voted to change our policy and, in my opinion, helped in a small way to create a more inclusive community.

2. If re-elected, I would do everything possible to continue efforts to make Kitchener a more understanding and accepting city. I would lobby and push to expand the annual Gay Pride celebrations at city hall and throughout the downtown. I would also encourage the city to become involved in organizing wider educational programs and activities to increase inclusiveness and create an improved sense of belonging in our community for LGBTQ community members.

3. This question relates more to the school board trustees, regional council and to higher levels of government, particularly the federal government. However, as a councillor in a downtown ward, I would pledge to work with police and regional councillors to further discourage any form of hate crimes. I would also reach out to school trustees and educators to continue the ongoing struggle against bullying. As councillor, I would support

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municipal council resolutions to lobby higher levels of government to eliminate barriers against adoption and assisted reproduction. I would work to ensure that employment barriers were removed and human rights legislation was enforced.

### **Terry Ross**

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<https://www.facebook.com/TerryRossforWard9>

1. I have no experience or involvement with LGBTQ community. But I do have friends who match the community. My other involvement would be with people with addictive personalities for the last 7 years.

2. The LGBTQ community would be treated like other associations. I. E. the neighbourhood associations. These groups have a voice in the community as to what happens in their area and LGBTQ are worthy of the same consideration. When I am elected I would like to be able to attend the business meetings so that I can be more informed so that I can support the community members at council when needs arise.

3. The LGBTQ community is entitled to receive the same considerations as other people. No one should be denied due to race, religion or sex. It is wrong and I will listen to the person and act accordingly based on my beliefs that everyone is equal.

### **WARD 10**

### **Adam Kochanski**

adamk1985@hotmail.com

1. I have past experience and involvement with members of the LGBTQ community, sex workers, the impoverished, the homeless, newly landed immigrants, political activists, people with "criminal records" and people that self medicate without a doctor's prescription.

2. If elected I will promote awareness around the issues and struggles that exist when one is a member of the LGBTQ community and use my voice at City Hall and to the media to advocate for anything that means more rights, freedoms and promote enlightenment to the general public on behalf of the LGBTQ community. I will push for non-discrimination policies and initiatives throughout the City of Kitchener community and provide a positive support base and listening ear to deal with any hardships or issues that may arise.

3. If elected I will advocate and support anti hate crime, anti bullying campaigns and ask media to broadcast educational pieces about life as a LGBTQ member and all of the pertaining issues. I will also spread awareness



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about the workplace / employment barriers, barriers to adoption / assisted reproduction, access to long-term care, retirement housing and access to overall healthcare and social services access by fighting to have equal rights for everyone in the City of Kitchener community regardless of their age, race, creed, color, sex, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, marital status, and socioeconomic status.

**Gabriele Korschewitz**  
support@gabrielekorschewitz.com  
<http://gabrielekorschewitz.com>

1. No, I do not have experience nor involvement with LGBTQ community. I did volunteer at the Sunbeam Residential Development Centre.
2. My platform is Trust, Respect and Collaboration. I respect all people.
3. The issue you indicate are at the Provincial and Federal level. ie Employment Standards Act addresses that all persons have the right to be free from harassment.

**James Howe**  
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<http://jameshowe.ca>

1. My experience with the LGBTQ community has primarily been through living my daily life. I have been involved with other marginalized communities such as people living in poverty. I advised ALIV(e) on setting up its blog. I invited 4 of its members to attend a free a full day social media conference I organized and gave Opportunities Waterloo Region \$400 of the proceeds. My desire to help improves the lives of people in poverty comes from a variety of experiences over my life. Most recently from when I was communications director of the local YMCAs and previously working at Toronto's Daily Bread Food Bank. In both cases, this included supporting these organizations work with immigrants or advocacy for them.
2. I believe I have a record of being inclusive. I have been engaging people in discussions about making Kitchener the best place possible for 5 1/2 years on Twitter and 4 1/2 years through my blog. There was also a place for everyone when I ran Social Media Breakfast: Waterloo Region. Living and modeling inclusion *is* my preferred tactic. If work needs to be done to make the City of Kitchener as an organization more inclusive with a greater sense of belonging, I'd like to learn more about that need. I expect I'd be supportive of efforts to make any needed improvements. I think the city should be open to working with groups such as WRRC to ensure that a diverse range of voices are heard as part of city decision-making.
3. I have been a member of the Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council and for several years been on its

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Community Relations subcommittee. I advocate for its smart on crime approach that emphasizes addressing the root causes of crime. I see that approach as being the most appropriate way to deal with hate crimes and bullying. Programs that work with youth such as Say Hi (in the schools) and THINK (before using social media) are excellent initiatives. If these types of local initiatives are not yet a part of city programming for youth, I'd like to see how they could be. Similarly, I propose starting youth advisory councils (similar to KYAC) at Ward 10 community centres. I'd hope that these groups could assist in breaking down stereotypes and misconceptions that play such a big role in fostering hate crimes and bullying.

### **Sarah Marsh**

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1. When the City of Kitchener was discussing whether or not to update the flag policy, I spoke at council to encourage them to update the policy and wave the Rainbow Flag in time for the Tri-Pride Festival 2014. In the end, the policy was amended and the Rainbow Flag was raised for the first time last spring. I was pleased to be one of many voices that made it a reality.
2. Our city needs to be a place where members of the LBGTQ community feel a sense of belonging and inclusion. It is part of the city's commitment to diversity. I would promote that through inviting participation from LBGTQ groups whenever we hold community-wide events or consultations. I would also invite input from members of the community on ways the city could do better at promoting inclusion and belonging.
3. As Ward 10 Kitchener City Councillor, I will advocate for addressing these serious, concerning issues. Within the scope of the City's role, we can work with individuals and organizations to raise awareness about the issues faced by the LBGTQ community. We need to put an end to discrimination of all forms, including hate crimes, bullying, and systemic barriers. Youth-focused work is vital to shifting attitudes and norms toward being able to embrace diversity. I would continue to support the Kitchener Youth Action Committee's work on organizing the Pride Prom, and I would support other initiatives that seek to make a positive impact on the level of inclusion in our community.

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### WATERLOO REGION DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD - KITCHENER

#### Kathi Smith

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1. I have had involvement and experience with many marginalized communities over my lifetime. As someone who has a high level of empathy, I have always gone out of my way to learn about the challenges of others. When I attended University, I was the person who provided notes to international students who had a hard time keeping up with all English lectures. I have worked with young people for most of my career and have frequently been the adult to whom they have come to talk to about a variety of issues. I was often the first straight adult that glbtq youth came out to - sometimes testing for reactions. Some of those youth would come to me for advise and support as they grappled with whether or not to tell their family or to deal with the aftermath of telling their family. I have been invited to work with a variety of multicultural communities, especially to help bridge the communication gap between parents and their children. I have served on the equity and inclusion advisory committee for the Waterloo Region District school board. As the first woman to Chair the Chamber of Commerce and one of two women who became the first to join Rotary, I have been welcomed by many marginalized groups as someone who may have better understanding of their challenges. I have attended training through the Simon Wiesenthal foundation in the area of equity and inclusion.

2. I will continue to support and work with our Equity & Inclusion Advisory Committee, our equity officers and our staff who work within the schools daily to support our LGBTQ community and who work to educate those within the schools and those who have children in the schools. Through my committee work, I have been continually reminding our staff that we must have gender/barrier free washrooms in all of our schools for students and their families. I will continue to attend all of our GSA (Rainbow) semi-formals to let both staff and students that I am there to be supportive - that there is a trustee who believes in equity and inclusion for all. Above all, I am there to listen and to problem solve.

3. I will do whatever I can to promote supports, education, acceptance and understanding of our LGBTQ Community. The more we understand one another as human beings and not labels, the more we step toward acceptance of one another. I will do what I can to provide our students with safe, caring and supportive environments. No one should be subjected to any kind of bullying or hateful behaviour.

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### **Mikael Beijbom**

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1. Not the LGBTQ community directly. I am a case worker in Oxford County for Ontario Works and have contact with clients who are part of that community and in receipt of OW assistance. I deal daily with persons in poverty.
2. Support schools to establish LGBTQ clubs. Have the LGBTQ community sit in on committee meetings, where possible, to explain their issues.
3. The school board has an anti-bullying policy. It needs to be enforced when students, parents, staff and administrators bring up issues. Some of the other areas you are mentioning are not in the scope of the school board but local politicians.

### **Fiona McAlister**

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<http://fionamcalister.weebly.com>

1. Not really no. I mean, like everyone else, I have friends and family in the community but no organized involvement.
2. I am running for school board trustee (public) and making schools respectful and caring places is one of the jobs of a the trustees so this will be my goal for everyone including LGBTQ community members. Specifically, how that will happen, I can't say with any degree of certainty since this is my first time running but I am open to ideas.
3. I think the most important thing to do is to listen to those who are affected. So, if any members of the LGBTQ community have issues within the school board I would be happy to hear them and work to make things better. I am also happy to hear ideas about how to be proactive about making things better rather than waiting for things to go wrong before they are addressed.

### **David Kuhn**

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<http://www.davidkuhn.ca>

1. I was born with Cerebral Palsy (or CP) which is a physical disability. As a result, I have used a walker and wheelchair for my entire life. I have faced a number of barriers—both physical as well as social—because of my CP. It is because of my lived personal experiences that I am especially aware and sensitive to the need of having an inclusive community for all. I have served as a member of the Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee (GRAAC) since 2011. GRAAC is a cross-disability municipal advisory committee, which provides advice to the Councils of the Cities of Kitchener and Waterloo, the Region of Waterloo and the Townships of Woolwich, Wellesley, and North Dumfries relating to accessibility as well as inclusion for persons with disabilities. In addition to my work with GRAAC, I also contributed to one of the Region of Waterloo's successful Dialogues on Diversity

<http://yourwrrc.ca>

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pertaining to disabilities. As a co-op student at Conestoga College I also did a placement with the Region in the Chief Administrator's Office, again dealing with inclusion. There, I began work to design a checklist that staff across the Regional Municipality of Waterloo could use in order to organize and host inclusive meetings for all (including members of the LGBTQ community).

2. If am I elected as a trustee on October 27th one of my goals will be to see that the Waterloo District School Board continues working to foster accessibility, diversity, and inclusion for all students and staff attending school and working within the WRDSB. As a trustee, I will advocate on behalf of students and their parents in areas like networking with teachers and support staff to offer more opportunities for learning so that all students have the support they need to succeed. Inclusion for everyone regardless of gender, race, or religion is something that needs to be supported at all levels so that nobody feels left behind or less than someone else. As someone who lives with a physical disability and has for their entire life, as I have stated already, making sure that we have an inclusive community is important to me. School Trustees do a lot more than attending board meetings and committees related to the WRDSB and public education in the general sense. They're links to other areas of the community; they should bring people together and create connections. Trustees must work together with the board and local governments as well as organizations and community groups for the well-being of their students and the community as a whole.

3. Bullying can impact anybody. In recent years we have seen that impact in the extreme for students here in Canada and North America. It is sad and totally unacceptable when any student is bullied because of who they are or where they come from or what they look like. It's even worse when that student feels like they can't do anything about it. I experienced bullying when I was growing up in school and it was hard to deal with at times. Looking back I wonder if teachers could have done anything differently, and yes, I think they could have. Talking to students about bullying is one thing, but actually teaching them why it's wrong and its impact on others is another. I think that there have been steps taken to do that in our schools, but the job isn't simple and it's not ever something that can stop. If I am elected as a trustee, I want to talk with students and their parents and teachers about bullying. I want to hear their stories and how they feel it should be handled. There are many different perspectives when it comes to bullying and there is no one size fits all approach to how it can be dealt with. Obviously there should be no tolerance for bullying. But how it is dealt with shouldn't just focus on punishment either. Prevention is an even bigger part of the equation and I think we need to look deeper at that. We need to

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work harder to stop bullying before it starts, and to do that we need to have conversations. We need to talk with those who see it, experience it, and deal with it the most in order to prevent bullying before it happens.

### **Matthew Ichim**

mattichim@gmail.com

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Elect-Matthew-Ichim-for-Kitchener-Public-School-Trustee/267632386727445?ref=bookmarks>

1. I have not had much direct experience with LGBTQ however in terms of communities that have been marginalized, my parents were immigrants and we grew up in poverty. I personally witness much discrimination directed toward my parents because they were immigrants. As well growing up poor I felt marginalized as my family did not have money for new clothes and I wore hand me downs as a result I was discriminated my classmates because they had all of the expensive brands.

2. I would ensure that there are no barriers to prevent anyone for LGBTQ community to achieve their potential as students.

3. From the perspective of the school board I would ensure that workplace and school harassment policies are appropriately implemented. In terms of LGBTQ youth homelessness we need to ensure that there is appropriate counselling services available to students to ensure that the mental health aspect is appropriately taken care of.

### **Brad Davidson**

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1. I have family members and friends who are part of the LGBTQ community and are living openly and proud!

2. Since I am running for the WRDSB for the position of Trustee I would help promote gay-straight alliance groups to counter homophobia and bullying in school.

3. If elected I would promote a change in the curriculum to include LGBT topics. We need to adopt a broader, educative approach to deal with the difficult issues of harassment, homophobia and discrimination.

### **Doug McKlusky**

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1. As a secondary school teacher and vice principal I worked with Gay Straight Alliance groups that were in my schools. As the vice chair of the Safe and Healthy Communities Advisory Committee of the City of Kitchener I work to promote inclusion of all marginalized groups within the city, and helped develop the terms of reference for the committee which has a focus building bridges to inclusion for all community members. I also volunteer with the St Matthews Out of the Cold Program during the winter and do outreach on Wednesday evenings in the downtown

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core over the summer months, providing food and fellowship to our downtown friends.

2. If elected a public school trustee for the City of Kitchener, I would continue to promote inclusion and belonging for the LGBTQ community by supporting the policies of inclusive and discrimination free schools that are in place in our schools and striving to support Gay Straight Alliances in our public schools.

3. Any barriers that prevent someone from feeling that they do not belong, or are excluded, need to be addressed. As a school board trustee I would be in the position to address through school board policies any inequities that exist and work to build bridges to inclusion for all members of the LGBTQ community, with a special emphasis on LGBTQ youth.

### Joyce Palubiski

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1. I have not had any previous experience other than to make myself aware of some of the issues facing the community and especially interested in the high school age students who have requested community members to become aware as well as the recent interactions with Kitchener City Council on the request to fly a flag at city hall square.

2. Making myself aware of the issues to better understand and make meaningful decisions when asked to do so if elected.

3. The issues above are community issues not issues of one group as many of the residents of the City of Kitchener as well as the Municipality of Waterloo are dealing with these issues some are more prominent than others depending on the issue that affects them personally. Awareness of the concerns, addressing the issue, understanding diversity in thought as well as lifestyles will build knowledge to make informed decisions.

### Ted Martin

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1. I have a strong track record for working with marginalized communities, including serving on a coalition to help refugees and new immigrants, promoting Wear Pink day at the Board table (circa 2007, after hearing about the high school students in Nova Scotia), encouraging Gay-Straight Alliances in our schools, etc.

2. If re-elected, I will continue to model accepting behaviour and promote policies and initiatives aimed at inclusion and belonging. I will continue working to revise our hiring policies to ensure that our staff better reflects

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the diversity of our students.

3. If re-elected, I will continue to speak up for inclusion, acceptance and equity, and will continue to have an open dialog with the LGBTQ community to find ways in which I can assist because an equitable and inclusive society benefits not only those who are currently marginalized, but benefits all by creating a stronger, more vibrant, and more robust society.

### **WATERLOO REGION CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD - KITCHENER, WILMOT**

**Anthony Piscitelli**

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1. During my first term as a school Board Trustee I have primarily focused upon supporting LGBTQ youth in our system. I supported Gay Straight Alliances as a means to assist LGBTQ youth, I was also instrumental in passing a motion expressing support for our teachers and support staff members efforts to support LGBTQ youth. The motion read: "THAT the Waterloo Catholic District School Board as a demonstration of its commitment to inclusion of all its students and staff respects OECTA's right to make its own decision regarding its support for the LGBTQ community."

2. Trustees, by virtue of our position, are leaders in the Catholic community and our words and actions impact the understanding of inclusion by our fellow local Catholics. If elected to a second term I will continue to speak out in favour of a broad definition of inclusion and I will support efforts of the LGBTQ community to codify in school board policy supports and protections for LGBTQ staff and students.

3. I believe how LGBTQ teachers and support staff feel they are treated is an important indicator of the success of our school system. I therefore support a 'treatment of staff survey' created by the Board of Trustee. This survey will be used to follow up on previous surveys and to identify the issues within our system. Previous surveys have been led by senior administration; I believe it is essential that the Board of Trustees lead survey efforts to ensure the results are unbiased and to ensure problems are addressed. I also support involving our labour union partners in identifying the questions to ask in the survey, this will ensure the issues that are most important to our employees are addressed. I hope that this will be a safe and anonymous avenue for LGBTQ staff to share their concerns with the Board of Trustees which will allow us to address these issues.



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### **Amy Fee**

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1. I have considerable experience with marginalized groups through my work as a broadcaster. As a reporter and anchor, I've covered everything from PRIDE celebrations to anti-poverty demonstrations.
2. I will continue to support the teachers as the current Trustees have (with the backing of OECTA) in the PRIDE parade and gay-straight alliances in our schools. Supporting all students and staff in the LGBTQ community is a very important part of being inclusive within the WCDSB.
3. Bullying and hate crimes can be major issues among youth. The WCDSB needs to have a zero-tolerance towards any form of bullying. I feel the gay-straight alliance groups are beneficial in helping students from the LGBTQ feel supported within the school system and we need to build on that within the WCDSB.