

2019 OCUFA Status of Women and Equity Award of Distinction

Citation for Dr. Andrea O'Reilly

The logo for OCUFA, consisting of the letters 'OCUFA' in a bold, blue, sans-serif font.

Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations
Union des associations des professeurs des universités de l'Ontario



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Read by Rahul Sapra, OCUFA President

The Status of Women and Equity Award of Distinction celebrates the outstanding contributions of OCUFA members whose work has advanced the interests of professors, contract faculty, academic librarians, and academic staff who are Indigenous, women, racialized, LGBTQ2S+, living with disabilities and/or belong to other historically marginalized groups.

As the founder of the *International Motherhood Movement Network* (the IMMN), Dr. Andrea O'Reilly has distinguished herself as a leading academic in the field and as a scholar and activist committed to advancing women's rights locally, nationally, and globally. As a professor in the School of Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies at York University, Andrea developed the first course on motherhood in North America, catalyzing a wide body of literature on motherhood studies and maternal theory, and founded the term matricentric feminism.

Through the IMMN, Andrea has established a global network of researchers and activists from more than 400 universities and over 100 motherhood organizations vested in feminist perspectives on maternal well-being. Under her guidance, the IMMN establishes an intersectional foundation for this scholarship that recognizes maternal differences in many forms – focusing on mothers from the global south, mothers in poverty, mothers who are activists, mothers with disabilities, mothers on welfare, grandmother caregivers, and many others. Led by Andrea, this broad coalition promotes policy and social changes that are transforming the lives of mothers in Canada and around the world.

In addition to her community collaborations and coalition building, Andrea has founded numerous academic initiatives, including research associations and journals. These include the *Journal of the Motherhood Initiative* – the first academic journal dedicated to motherhood studies; and the grassroots publication, *Demeter Press* – an independent feminist journal that advocates for social justice on behalf of, and showcases the voices of mothers marginalized by race, class, ability, sexuality, or geographical location. These platforms provide an avenue for women with marginalized identities to share their stories, gain recognition for their work, advance their careers, and establish mentorship relationships with other women and early-career scholars.

On campus, Andrea shares her extensive knowledge and expertise as a mentor to advance the interests of other equity-seeking faculty and staff. She has supported countless young women who have gone on to establish successful careers in academia and continue the unfinished work of feminism.



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Andrea's leadership and impact cannot be overstated. In addition to her mentorship work, she is a founding member of the Museum of Motherhood – a heritage site that shares the history and importance of motherhood with the general public and informs the social, political, and academic conversations around the lived experiences of queer, racialized, poor, and disabled mothers. In honour of her exemplary work, she was named the first inductee into the Museum of Motherhood's "Motherhood Hall of Fame." Moreover, the museum's library is named "The Andrea O'Reilly Library."

Professor O'Reilly's lists of accomplishments cannot be fully expressed in this short citation. She is an outstanding scholar, teacher, mentor, publisher, and leader within the academy, and is internationally recognized in the field of motherhood studies. Her ongoing commitment to intersectional feminism has greatly improved the lives of other mothers and parents, both on and off campus. For all these reasons, it is an honour to recognize her dedication and accomplishments with OCUFA's Status of Women and Equity Award of Distinction.