



2024-2025 Equity and Social Justice Award

Citation for Wesley Crichlow

Written by:

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Equity and Social Justice Awards Selection Committee

OCUFA

The Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations is honoured to present the 2024-2025 Equity and Social Justice Award to Wesley Crichlow of Ontario Tech University. Ontario Tech University is situated on the lands of the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation. This land is covered by the Williams Treaties and is part of the traditional territory of the Mississaugas, a branch of the greater Anishinaabeg Nation, including Algonquin, Ojibway, Odawa, and Pottawatomi.

Wesley is being recognized for his unwavering commitment to advancing equity, social justice, decolonization, and 2SLGBTQI+ inclusion across the university and beyond. He has demonstrated this commitment through his scholarship as a professor in the Faculty of Social Science and Humanities, his service on the UOIT Faculty Association (UOITFA) Executive, his equity advocacy and leadership at Ontario Tech University, and his sustained public engagement in diverse policy communities.

Wesley is a trailblazer whose impact spans decades. His active call for institutional leadership to challenge anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racisms, ableism, cis-heteronormativity, and to support decolonization and Indigenization frameworks at Ontario Tech University has played a transformational role at the university. He has organized and led a range of firsts at Ontario Tech University: the first critical race theory conference (2005), Black History Month panel (2005), Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) conference (2019), and numerous town halls and panels focused on EDID and accessibility. As Ontario Tech's first Dean of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, he led the President's Equity Taskforce and authored the University's first EDI Taskforce Report in 2020.

Wesley has also brought his commitment to equity and intersectionality to his service on the UOITFA, of which he has been an active member since 2009. His work on the Executive, and in the areas of collective bargaining, grievance, and EDID, has been instrumental in pressing the

university to collect and report on equity data, embed EDID in collective agreements, and challenge systemic oppression in institutional policies and practices.

Wesley's scholarly contributions, deeply rooted in critical race theory and queer intersectionality, have also been groundbreaking, as attested to by his impressive list of research projects and publications. His was an early and important voice contributing to Black genderqueer theories, the most recent application of which is a SSHRC-funded, national bilingual study that centres the voices of Black male same gender loving, non-binary, and trans men re-entering society after incarceration. He has also been exemplary in his integration of EDID and 2SLGBTQI+ commitments into his classroom teaching.

Wesley's scholarship has consistently informed his transformative service and institutional advocacy well beyond the university. He has brought his expertise to bear on public issues, as a frequent media and public speaker, and through his service on a wide range of provincial and national educational, government, and community organizations and equity initiatives, including the groundbreaking work of the LGBT Purge Fund's National Monument project.

Wesley's leadership is characterized by principled courage, strategic clarity, and a steadfast dedication to structural change. He has modeled for us what it means to be a scholar-activist—one who works tirelessly to ensure inclusion, representation, and justice for historically marginalized communities. It is my privilege to honour Wesley Crichlow as an exemplary and deeply deserving recipient of OCUFA's Equity and Social Justice award.

The OCUFA Equity and Social Justice Award celebrates the outstanding contributions of OCUFA members whose work has contributed meaningfully to the advancement of members of the academy (professors, academic librarians, and other academic staff) who belong to historically marginalized groups