



Board of Director's Application Questionnaire:

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January 2026

Q: Why are you interested in joining the Board of Pride Toronto?

A: I am passionate about IMPROVING AND SAVING THE LIVES OF ALL 2SLGBTQI+ (Rainbow Identified) people. I believe it is important to use my privilege and renew my commitment and continue my activism work to ensure the human rights of our many Rainbow 🌈 Communities, especially those which are heavily impacted but less seen and heard. For example - I have been working closely with Two Spirit/Indigenous communities, LGBTQI+ Newcomers from the African continent, Trans communities of colour, Rainbow Youth of colour and Rainbow 🌈 Seniors residing in LTC (long term care) homes.

Q: How will your experience, talents, and skill contribute to advancing Pride Toronto's Mission, Vision, and Values?

A: It is my responsibility to use my privilege and lived experience to continue advancing Pride Toronto's Mission, Vision and Values. I worked in the VAW (Violence Against Women) sector for almost 20 years and I have a successful background in fundraising my own salary. I worked with the Ontario Women's Directorate, the Ontario ministry of Health and the Ontario ministry of Seniors and Accessibility in developing policies to recognize and support the lives of 2SLGBTQI + people. From my resume, you will see that I continue to work in various sectors to uplift and promote the rights of all RAINBOW folX. Since joining the board in 2021, I have improved my governance skills and I am proud to say that I have also advanced Pride Toronto's level of accessibility and accommodation for folX with visible and invisible disabilities. Using my many community connections, I was instrumental in bringing Rainbow 🌈 Seniors (now 6 buses 🚌) into the Pride Parade and getting FREE PSW services/support from our new community partner - VHA (Visiting Homemakers Association: home care agency)

Q: Pride has had a history of anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism, and we are working to address and combat this. What is your experience in working against racism, particularly anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism? What is your vision for Pride Toronto's external work in combating racism?

A: Regarding anti-Indigenous racism: Since 2021 I have been working closely with Kojo to rebuild trust with IndigiQUEERS and 2 Spirited People of the First Nations and I am one of the signatories on the Memorandum of Understanding with these two organizations. I take this responsibility very seriously.



I am a Carib-Indigenous person from Trinidad and I have personally experienced and witnessed anti-Indigenous discrimination in my own country. I was the FIRST non Canadian born Indigenous woman to work at Anduhyaun- the only shelter specifically for Indigenous women in Toronto. During my 9 months working there, I witnessed the extreme racism and exploitation of Indigenous women who were fleeing many forms of oppression, violence and abuse. Many of the women came to the shelter from across Canada, to access health care services which were not available to them in their own provinces. I continue to educate myself on issues affecting Two Spirit and Indigenous people and build relationships with small Indigenous Prides like the Serpent River Reserve in Ontario and the Cross Lake Reserve in Manitoba. We are all living on Indigenous land and it is my responsibility to use my privilege and knowledge to ensure that all Indigenous people enjoy the benefits and human rights which we settlers take for granted on a daily basis.

Regarding anti-Black racism: This type of racism is pervasive and widespread and often discounted. Again, it is my responsibility to use my privilege and access to ensure that internally, Pride Toronto's staff are protected and respected through anti-discriminatory policies/practices. Externally, the board and the organization must set an example for its volunteers, sponsors, donors, community partners and festival attendees that strongly promotes a "no tolerance policy". Personally and professionally, I advocate against anti-Black racism in all areas of my life, with my friends and colleagues.

Since joining Pride Toronto, I have been supporting the African Centre for Refugees and I have been working with LGBTQI + Newcomers from the African Continent in many ways to help them find employment, legal help and housing support.

Q: What is your experience in addressing and combating transphobia, transmisogyny, and transmisandry?

A: My experience is personal and professional. From the first day I landed in Toronto, 55 years ago, I was seen as a boy. When I 'came out' in 1976, I was physically and verbally assaulted because I was read as a 'faggot'. In 1977, I attended the infamous Michigan Womyn's Music Festival. It was at the festival that I first learned about the specific discrimination against transgender women. That was my 'wake up call' and I made it my purpose to fight against that hatred. I was a member of a group of DYKES from Canada who spoke out loudly against their philosophy of "only womyn born womyn" being allowed to camp on the festival grounds. I began doing research and educating myself about the dangers and barriers that transgender people experience on a daily basis, especially trans women. As I got older and started my first full time job, I was called a "he/she". I was working in the corporate world and had to come out again in order to raise awareness about lesbophobia and homophobia. Over the years I have been friends with many trans people and I see how older trans women experience daily risks/violence especially when using public washrooms. I am a bold and



staunch ally to help reduce the stigma and violence against trans folx. At the ECADE conferences in the Caribbean, I learned how and why Black lesbians support Black trans men. For the past 30 years, I am being read as a trans man and I am ALWAYS accosted - physically and verbally - when using women's public washrooms.

Additionally, I take the use of pronouns very seriously. Once I learn how a person identifies and their pronouns, I support them by using their pronouns and gently correct people who misgender them.

Although I am not a trans person, I am humbled and angry by what my friends experience daily. This personal lived experience deepens my understanding and motivates me further to use my privilege to publicly take a stand against transmisandry, transphobia and transmisogyny.

Q: Accessibility is a crucial aspect for Pride Toronto's celebrations, but we still fall short in providing a completely accessible Festival, especially for people with mobility issues, and the D/deaf and Hard of Hearing communities. What experience, resources, and knowledge do you have in engaging and supporting these communities?

A: Please also refer to my answer to question 2.

I acquired a physical disability in 2007. Prior to 2007, I was completely physically mobile. I was in a coma for 2 months in January/February 2007, due to alcohol poisoning. When I miraculously awoke from the coma, I experienced 6 months of intensive physical, occupational and speech therapy. The doctors told me that I would never walk again. Due to my determination, tenacity and persistence, I left the rehabilitation hospital using a cane and a walker (my first mobility device was Hugo). During my 6 month recovery period at the hospital, I was trained to use a wheelchair.

Prior to my coma, I was working with DAWN (the Disabled Women's Network) and several of my friends and colleagues were disabled in different ways - visible and invisible. As an event organizer over the years, I was always mindful of "access and accommodation". My awareness was raised even further once I was facing the challenges of mobility and accessibility myself. Hence my motivation to make the Pride Festival (and all our events) as barrier free as possible.

During my second year on the board, we accepted a Deaf board member and it became a huge learning experience/opportunity for the staff and board to accommodate and support them. I continue to work and learn how to be a better advocate for the D/deaf and hard of hearing communities.



I was instrumental in getting FREE PSW care for festival attendees on the Pride weekend due to my community connections with VHA. At the Inter Pride conference in 2023, I learned about The Sunflower 🌻 Scheme (it helps to identify folX with invisible disabilities) and I spoke with Kojo about how it would improve access and accommodation. It was successfully implemented at the Pride 2025 festival. Volunteers now receive training on how to work with and support folX using mobility devices and those wearing the sunflower 🌻 lanyard.

I floated the idea of the “loan of mobility devices” program under the previous executive director but it went nowhere. I floated it again with Kojo and he and the team made it a priority. I used my community connections and my contacts with the LTC Department at the city of Toronto to increase the number of Rainbow 🌈 Seniors participating in the Pride Parade. Kojo and the operations team shortened their wait time and they are now “in & out in less than 3 hours”.

Due to personal circumstances, I recommended a port-a-potty at the Wheel Trans drop off and pick up points. I have been told by wheel trans users, that they truly appreciate this essential accommodation.

Despite these successes, we always have more to learn from the lived experiences of the many disabled communities.

Q: Pride Toronto's Membership has voted to ban instruments and symbols of policing, including uniforms, cars and weapons, from participating in the Pride Parade and StreetFair. If elected to the Board, how would you ensure that this commitment is upheld?

A: Since I came out in 1976, I have been protesting against the police for their human rights violations and abuses. I was brutally assaulted by the police in September 1989 while sitting outside a lesbian bar waiting for friends to give me a ride home. Other white lesbians were present and did nothing to prevent the violence or to help me. (Ironically, in my day job I was working to educate the police about the rights of women who were experiencing violence in their domestic relationships with their male partners.) I knew my rights and told the 2 cops that I had their badge numbers. They replied “we can find out where you live”. That bold threat made me more determined to educate our Rainbow communities of colour about safety plans.

In many countries of colour, the police do not represent help or support. In 2025, I still hear stories about Trans women of colour being abused and harassed. Black and Indigenous people are still targeted by the police and adding the layer of queerness puts them at a higher risk. Recently I was stopped by the police for no good reason but I suspect it was because I was driving a NEW car 🚗.



I firmly stand by Pride's ban to prevent the police and their weapons from participating in the Pride Parade or Street Fair.

Q: Any further information you would like to share with us?

A: I live and work from an anti-oppression, pro-Indigenous, intersectional, intergenerational and access-inclusive perspective. Advocating for others and using my privilege is central to who I am as a human being. I believe I bring many benefits and strengths to the board and the Pride Toronto organization. I feel I will be an asset moving forward given the changing political climate. I know that my activism, community engagement/organizing and 5 years of previous board and organizational management experience will be invaluable and instrumental in succession planning.

I won't stop my fight for equity and equality for all Rainbow 🌈 Communities and keeping Pride Toronto alive in celebrating, protesting and inspiring!!

PS - I am an excellent golf cart driver ✅

Thank you for your time and consideration of my application for renewing my term. 🌸