

Committee: **London Diversity & Race Relations Advisory Committee**

Organization/Sector represented: **Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Community**

Name: **Courtney Pitre-Spevak**

Address:

**477 Cotswold Gate
London, Ontario
N6J 2Z1**

Occupation: **Work Transition Specialist**

Work experience: **In addition to my day to day work position, I founded a small organization that offers free educational workshops and presentations pertaining to issues in the sexual and gender diverse community to members/groups through our region. My Work Experience includes: *Founder: Learn 2 Unlearn - small organization to combat homophobia and provide education *Member: HBT (homophobia, biphobia and transphobia) Working Group - assisted in the promotion of the Report Homophobic Violence Period Campaign. *Trainer: Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women in Sport - presented on how to engage newcomer and culturally diverse young women in sport and recreation in our community *Program Director: Rainbow Youth Niagara - a non-profit organization aimed at offering assistance and support to sexually and gender diverse youth. This included working closely with community organizations and the local school boards.**

Education: **I have a Bachelor of Arts - Psychology and a Bachelor of Arts - Health Studies from McMaster University. I am also an accredited trainer affiliated with Rainbow Health Ontario. I have a Level 1 Canadian Coaching Certification.**

Skills: **I have over 10 years of experience in working with community groups and school boards to develop materials and assist to ensure sexually and gender diverse community members are respected, safe and heard. I have an excellent educational and professional background to offer the insight and understanding to assist in ensuring Diversity and Race relations are supported in the City of London; it's committees and policies.**

Interest reason: **I believe very strongly in the promotion of equality and am passionate about assisting to ensure all members of our community are heard and have an equal voice. I believe that this committee is an excellent continuation of my desire to assist in strengthening the ties between marginalized communities and the City of London. I am also very connected to the City of London, I enjoy living in our diverse and culturally rich city. It would be rewarding to be a part of a constantly evolving community and to build alliances to strengthen the confidence in the City of London.**

Contributions: **I believe I can bring an empathetic approach to this community and assist in bridging any gaps there are between the voice of our community members and our City. I am very hard working and believe my expertise in the intricacies of the GLBT community would be valuable to offer an approach that is understanding and supportive. I am not afraid to speak up and express opinions that may be contrary to the previous policy or manners of conducting business in order to ensure all voices are heard and all perspectives are respected.**

Past contributions: **In the past I have served on the Board of Directors for the Niagara Aids Committee. I have performed as the Program Director for a small non-profit who depended on a Board of Directors and various committees to assist in the implementation and development of policies.**

Interpersonal: **I developed a small organization that's primary goal is to respond to the needs of the GLBT community and prepare and disseminate presentations and training sessions that correspond to the audience/workshop participants. My day to day work involved Vocational Rehabilitation, which helps me to utilize my counselling skills. I work to assist those who have been injured on the job to return to work. This takes a lot of skill to work with potentially volatile clients. I utilize my training; Cognitive Motivation Training and Insights Training to listen effectively and deliver information to them in a manner that is conducive to their mind set and their learning styles. My advocacy work in the GLBT community has often been faced with resistance from community members who may not support sexually and gender diverse persons. I have often presented workshops to individuals from various backgrounds and worldviews. This has allowed me to master the ability to learn, allow someone to express their views and then educate.**

Interview interest: **Yes**