

ONTARIO  
ASSOCIATION  
OF  
BLACK  
PARALEGALS

# Annual Report

# 2024

IMPROVING ACCESS TO  
MENTORSHIP,  
REPRESENTATION AND  
JUSTICE

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# Chantelle Campbell



**President**

# Message from Chantelle Campbell

## Standing Tall, Lifting Others Higher: A Canadian Black Joy Reflection for 2024

As we close out 2024 and reflect on all we've accomplished, I am overwhelmed with pride, gratitude, and hope. The Ontario Association of Black Paralegals began as an idea—a vision of what the legal profession could look like if it truly embraced the strength, resilience, and brilliance of Black communities. Today, that vision has grown into a beacon of empowerment and advocacy, grounded in the joy, culture, and tenacity of Black excellence.

## A Mission Rooted in Canadian Black Joy

OABP's mission—raising awareness, enabling change, and fostering inclusion—is about more than addressing systemic discrimination. It's about celebrating the joy of community, the power of shared success, and the beauty of lifting each other higher. In the words of Canadian scholar and advocate Dr. Afua Cooper, "Black people have resisted, and through that resistance, we have asserted our humanity, built communities, and created cultural forms that speak of life, resilience, and hope."

This year, we've continued to center this joy and resilience in all we do—ensuring our work not only dismantles barriers but also amplifies the voices, dreams, and successes of Black paralegals and law clerks across Ontario.

## Highlights of 2024: Standing Tall

- **Education:** Our workshops and seminars championed the integration of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion into legal practice, empowering members to bring their full selves to their careers with confidence and skill.
- **Engagement:** Building bridges within and beyond our community, we fostered belonging and unity, creating partnerships with the Law Society of Ontario and hosting another groundbreaking Access to Justice Week, showcasing the importance of equity in legal practice.
- **Strategic Partnerships:** Through collaborations with funders, legal associations, colleges, and equity advocates, we amplified our collective voice and extended our reach, ensuring that systemic change is both sustainable and impactful.
- **Leadership Development:** Recognizing and nurturing Black leaders within OABP, we built mentorship pathways that ensure our community's growth and legacy.

## Lifting Others Higher: Gratitude for the Journey

Our progress would not be possible without the passion and dedication of our members, volunteers, and supporters. To our visionary co-founders, Deborah Moriah, April Bollers, and Royland Moriah: your courage to plant the seeds of OABP has forever changed the landscape of the legal profession in Ontario. To our staff, committee leaders, and every member: your contributions, whether seen or unseen, are the heartbeat of this movement. Thank you for being part of this transformative journey.

## Looking Ahead to 2025

The work is far from over. As we step into 2025, we remain resolute in our commitment to breaking barriers, forging new paths, and creating a legal profession where equity is not an ideal but a lived reality. Guided by Black joy and resilience, we will continue to stand tall and lift others higher.

## A Call to Action: Building Together

To our members, allies, and partners: your voice, time, and passion matter. Join a committee, mentor a colleague, attend an event, or share your story. These actions, no matter how small, are the building blocks of a just and inclusive legal system.

Together, we are more than an organization—we are a movement. Together, we are OABP. Together, we rise. "There is joy in resistance, and there is power in community." Dr. Afua Cooper

With gratitude and excitement,  
Chantelle Campbell  
President, Ontario Association of Black Paralegals

# Brenell Dean



## Vice President

# Message from the Brenell Dean

As I look back on this year, I am reminded of how far we've come as the Ontario Association of Black Paralegals. This year has been about building on the strong foundation that has been laid and carrying forward the vision of supporting Black paralegals, increasing access to justice, and mentoring and educating those within our profession.

For me, this journey has been deeply personal. Like many of you, I've faced triumphs and challenges in my career as a paralegal—moments where it felt like defeat was inevitable. Yet, being a part of OABP has given me a sense of community and solidarity that I didn't know I needed. It has reminded me of the power we have when we come together with a shared purpose and determination. The work we are doing matters, not just for ourselves but for the generations of Black paralegals and legal professionals who will follow in our footsteps.

This year, we've experienced tremendous growth as an organization. With growth comes learning, and I'm proud to say we've embraced those lessons with resilience and grace. Every step forward reflects the collective commitment to uplift our profession, support one another, and ensure that Black paralegals have both a voice and a seat at the table. I am truly grateful for the incredible members who have poured their time and energy into OABP and made this chapter of our journey possible.

While our vision is not yet fully realized, I am excited for what lies ahead. We are committed to going further, striving higher, and achieving excellence together. This is a collective journey, one that requires the strength and dedication of every single member, partner, and supporter.

Together, we will carry this vision to completion and beyond. I want to express my deepest gratitude to everyone who has joined us on this journey. Your belief in OABP and your contributions to its growth mean more than words can say. I am energized and determined as we continue this important work in the years to come, knowing that we will go far together.

With gratitude and excitement,  
Brenell Dean  
Vice-President, Ontario Association of Black Paralegals

# Our Board Members

Our diverse team of dedicated professionals is committed to advancing the interests of Black paralegals across Ontario. With a common shared passion for justice, we strive to empower our members and combat systemic racism within the justice system. Get to know the faces behind our mission.



**Chantelle Campbell**  
President



**Brenell Dean**  
Vice-President



**Royland Moriah**  
Co-founder and  
Treasurer



**Benaiah Eche**  
Board Member



**Shenell Monteith**  
Board Member



**Sehmani KingSun- Leo**  
Board Member



**Alicia Clarke**  
Board Member



**Scott Kennelly**  
Advisory Board  
Member



**April Bollers**  
Co-founder and  
Advisory Board Member

# Our Mission



OABP exists to raise awareness and enable change to end systemic discrimination and increase racial diversity in the legal system. We educate and mentor Black paralegals and law clerks in Ontario, creating a supportive network to help them confidently advance their careers. We encourage and support non-Black legal professionals in the pursuit of learning more about systemic discrimination and racism in the workplace, and how it impacts their colleagues and clients through sharing strategies for impactful allyship.

You can count on us to do this in ways that are collaborative, inclusive, open and transparent, with the goal of creating a safe space to share and grow for everyone who hopes to be part of the journey to end systemic racism.



# PEER MANDATE

Our "**PEER** Mandate" improves access to justice and combats systemic racism within the justice system by:

**P**roviding mentorship opportunities for Black paralegals to help build capacity within the Black legal community and promote career equality and advancement

**E**quipping Black paralegals with the tools to navigate systemic injustice in the workplace

**E**liminating the economic barriers which inhibit racialized Ontarians' ability to pursue civil matters related to racism, discrimination, diversity and inclusion.

**R**ecognizing, denouncing and combating systemic inequality in the justice system while equipping all legal professionals with the tools to do the same.





# Strategic Planning

# Our Committees

Our diverse team of dedicated professionals is committed to advancing the interests of Black paralegals across Ontario. With a common shared passion for justice, we strive to empower our members and combat systemic racism within the justice system. Get to know the faces behind our mission.

## Education Committee



**Danielle Monsegue**  
Chair



**Carla Graham**  
Committee Member



**Olivia Myers**  
Committee Member



**Ti-Anna Hall**  
Committee Member

## Membership Engagement Committee



**Benaiah Eche**  
Chair



**Nickisha Lee**  
Committee Member



**Khadija Da-Silva**  
Committee Member



**Thomasina Smith**  
Committee Member

## Communications Committee



**Sephrah Luke**  
Chair



**Asha Walker**  
Co-Chair



**Ashleigh Waite**  
Committee Member



**Liz Smith**  
Committee Member

## Law Clerks Committee



**Sehmani KingSun- Leo**  
Chair



**Danielle Monsegue**  
Co-Chair



**April Bollers**  
Committee Member

## Governance Committee



**Asha Conley**  
Committee Member



**Shevaun Pierre**  
Committee Member



**Halim Rayo**  
Committee Member



**Taylor Preddie**  
Committee Member



**Ashleigh Waite**  
Committee Member

# 4 Key Pillars

In 2023, OABP had the privilege of working with Endeavour Consulting to create our very first strategic plan. The plan sets out the organization's immediate and long-term goals for growth, the organization's immediate and long-term goals for growth, capacity building, sustainability and succession.

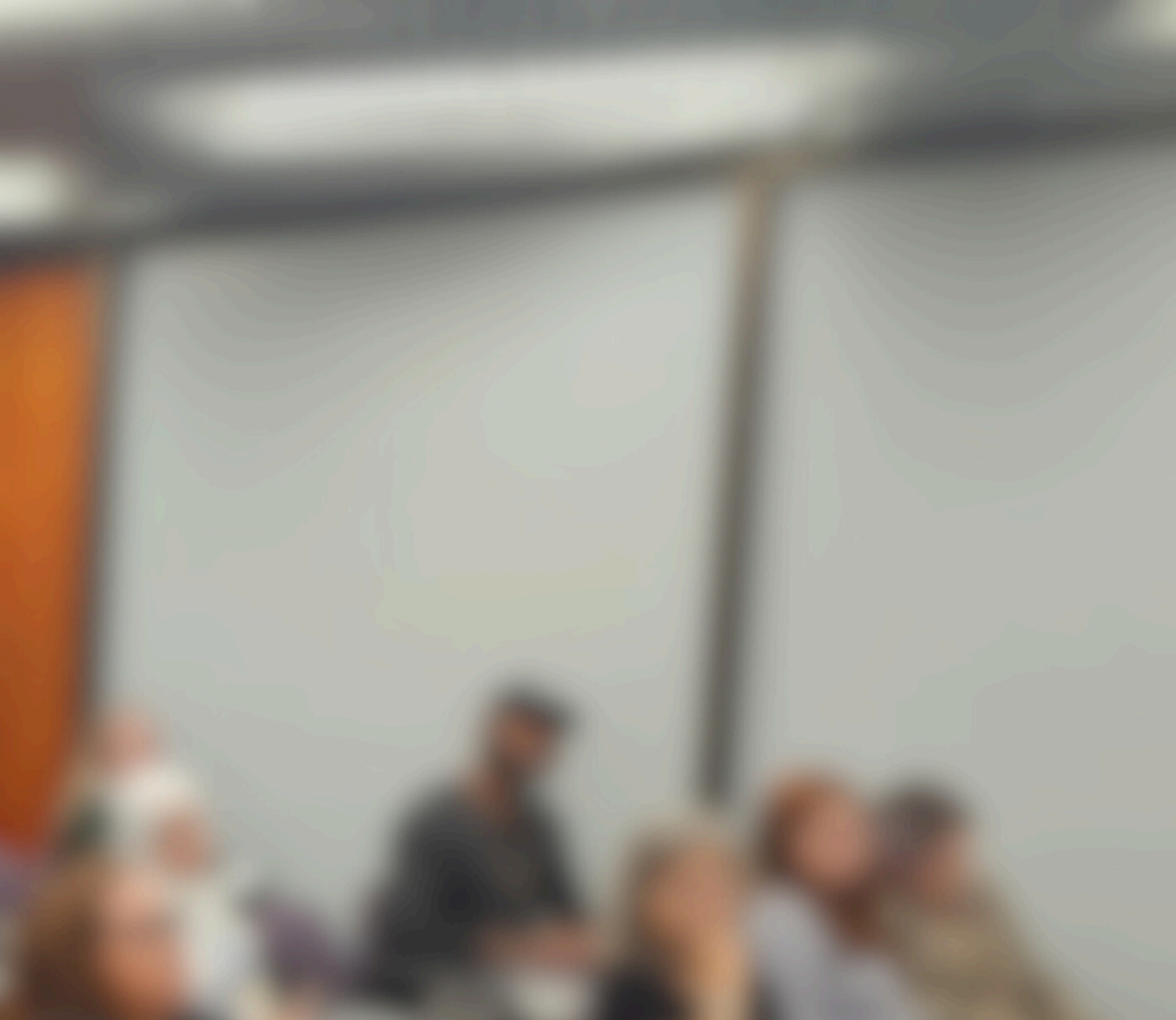
Over the next 5 years, OABP's key pillars are:

**Governance** : To establish a formal organizational structure, clearly defined roles and responsibilities, operating process, controls and policies, and performance evaluation standards.

**Engagement**: To improve engagement and attendance from the target audience and members.

**Education**: To develop a certain number of CPD workshops focusing on practical knowledge for legal professionals to fill the gaps between formal education and workplace needs. As well, as to keep ourselves up to date with general legal knowledge.

**Communication**: To build brand awareness and clear messaging of OABP offerings within the community, to have a functional system in place to support those from racialized communities and to build intentional, value-adding relationships, establish stronger collaboration and more effective resource sharing with legal or cross-profession organizations.



# Workshops

# Navigating Racism in the Workplace

In 2024, the final session for Navigating Racism in the Workplace was held. With the assistance of STR Consulting, OABP designed and delivered this workshop. This trauma-informed, strength-based program was designed to support Black legal professionals while closely considering their strengths, experiences, values, and learning needs. The course also explored the responsibility of all legal professionals to recognize, denounce and prevent systemic injustice directed at colleagues. Although the program was designed for Black legal professionals, it was well received and attended by community members navigating discrimination in their daily lives. The program was held at City Hall in March 2024.



# Notarizing and Commissioning: LET YOUR APPOINTMENT WORK FOR YOU!

In September 2024, the Education Committee held its first event entitled Notarizing and Commissioning: LET YOUR APPOINTMENT WORK FOR YOU! In collaboration with the Membership Engagement Committee, the Education Committee delivered an event that provided attendees with the knowledge necessary to become successful in adding notary services to their businesses or as an additional skill. This event was open to all legal professionals and was well received by attendees. The program was held at City Hall. This free event was a great way for legal professionals to network and allowed those on all parts of their legal journey to attend whether they were students, just starting their practice or seasoned legal professionals.





# Networking



# Networking: Board and Committee Meeting

OABP held its first in-person meeting with our newly appointed board and committee members. This was an opportunity for our various committees to meet for the first time, discuss goals for the future and get to know each other. The meeting took place in Mississauga as our organization is Ontario-based. We are looking forward to hosting many more networking events in 2025.



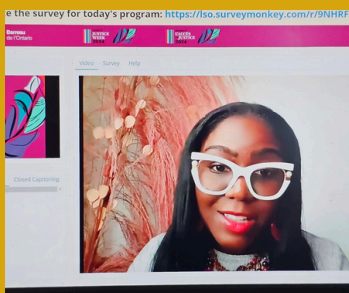
# Networking

## LSO Events:

### Sunrise Ceremony, Access to Justice Week 2024, Paralegal Reception

OABP co-hosted two programs during Access to Justice Week. These virtual programs were catered to the public and newly licensed Paralegals. To kick off A2J OABP attended the Sunrise Ceremony. A2J Week 2024: Meet Ten Paralegals in Different Legal Practice Areas Who Can Help YOU with Every Day Legal Problems and A2J Week 2024: Thinking Outside the Box? had some of the highest numbers of registrants seen during A2J Week. OABP looks forward to next year's event to help legal professionals and the public by providing programming that advances systemic change in the justice system.

OABP also attended the LSO's Paralegal reception which was held twice this year. During the ceremony, we were able to connect with many newly licensed Paralegals. Our various board and committee members that attended introduced those within our community and allies to OABP's mission and membership benefits. It was a great opportunity to network, learn, welcome new Paralegals and see the variety of voices that can advocate and work to provide more Access to Justice.

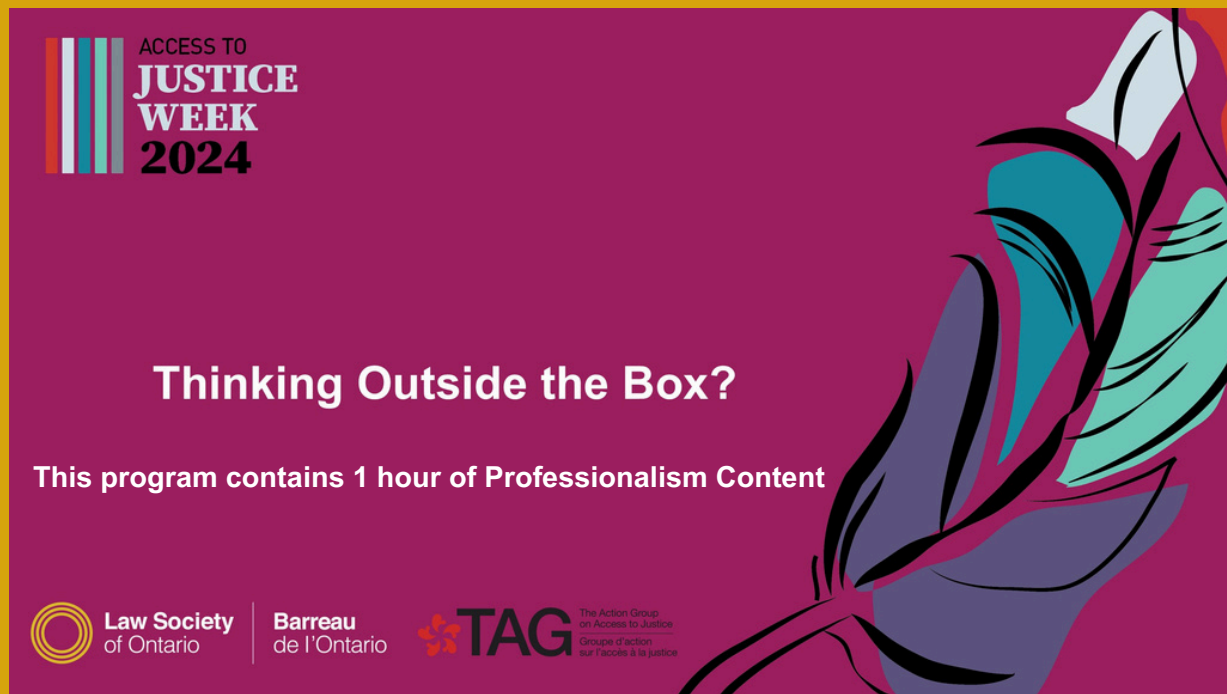


# Networking

## Access to Justice Week 2024

### Recordings




Click the images below to watch the recordings of our two events:



**ACCESS TO JUSTICE WEEK 2024**

### Thinking Outside the Box?

This program contains 1 hour of Professionalism Content

 Law Society of Ontario |  Barreau de l'Ontario |  TAG The Action Group on Access to Justice / Groupe d'action sur l'accès à la justice



**ACCESS TO JUSTICE WEEK 2024**

### Meet Ten Paralegals Who Can Help YOU with Every Day Legal Problems.

This program contains 2 hours of Professionalism Content

 Law Society of Ontario |  Barreau de l'Ontario |  TAG The Action Group on Access to Justice / Groupe d'action sur l'accès à la justice

# Funding

# Funding

Since 2021, OABP's main funder has been the Government of Canada via the Supporting Black Canadian Communities Initiative (SBCCI). Funds are dispersed through an intermediary--Tropicana Community Services.

The federal government has provided a total of \$146,997.50 between 2021-2024 through SBCCI:

2021 - \$30,637.50

2022 - \$26,360.00

2023 - \$45,000.00

2024- \$45,000.00

This funding has supported the following initiatives:

- Development & delivery of the Navigating Racism in the Workplace Series
- Professional Accounting Services
- Social Media Consulting
- Development of OABP Governance Manual
- Pre-production of the Documentary

In 2024 the funding allowed OABP to grow by hiring an executive assistant.

In 2024 OABP also received the Canada Summer Jobs grant. We were provided with \$5182.73 from the Federal Government. This gave us the opportunity to hire an administrative assistant and give valuable experience to an individual within our community to help our organization grow.

# Funding - We need your support!

Your support is essential to ensure the SBCCI initiatives, funded by the Black Philanthropic Fund and Social Finance Fund, continue beyond March 31, 2025.

These programs play a critical role in sustaining the Ontario Association of Black Paralegals.

SBCCI was established to strengthen the capacity of grassroots non-profit organizations that support Black communities across Canada. They have supported organizations through:

- Funding
- Growth Support
- Inclusion

Click the link below to sign the petition:





# Our Partners

# Our Partners

The following companies and organizations have provided support to OABP through collaboration and/or providing discounts to our members:

Alterna

Aspire CPA

CPD Online

Emond Publishing

Endeavour Consulting for Non-Profits

Downsview Park: The Hub

Government of Canada, The

Intuit Quickbooks

Journal That Talks Back, The

Law Society of Ontario, The

Legal Line

Paralegal Pathway Ontario

Storwell Self Storage

STR Consulting


Toronto City Hall

Tropicana

Vision in Numbers

York Region Paralegal Network



A hand holding a smartphone with various social media app icons on the screen. The background is blurred, showing a person's hand holding the phone. The text is overlaid on a dark horizontal band across the middle of the image.

# **Social Media: Growth and Impact**

# Social Media: Growth and Impact

With the addition of our Communications Committee, OABP has seen tremendous growth on our social media platforms. The Committee has been crucial in providing updates on various social media platforms and updating our members and subscribers about upcoming events and opportunities. This year, OABP's LinkedIn profile grew by over 200 followers.

With more exciting collaborations and events we expect to see more growth in 2025.

Instagram: 380 followers

LinkedIn: 910 followers

Newsletter Subscribers: 150+

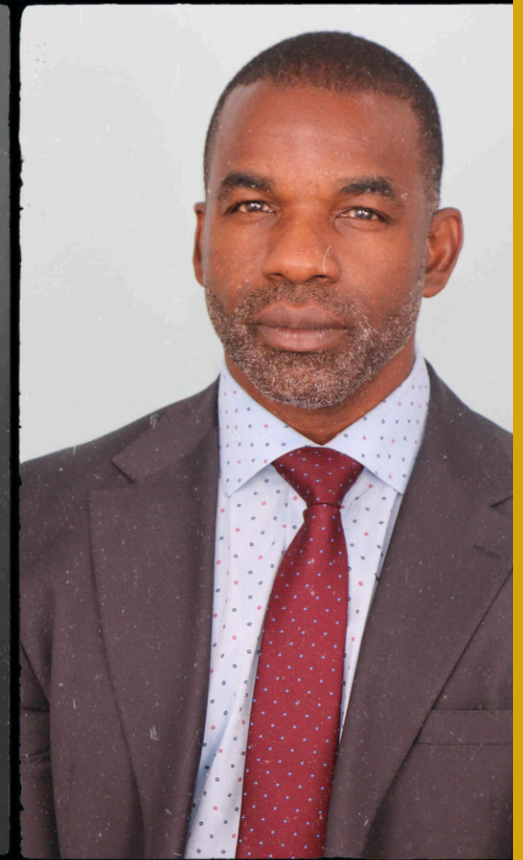
# Our Founders



Deborah Moriah



April Bollers



Royland Moriah

**ONTARIO  
ASSOCIATION OF  
BLACK PARALEGALS**

[WWW.OABP.ORG](http://WWW.OABP.ORG)

# Message from the Founders

As founders of the Ontario Association of Black Paralegals (OABP), we reflect on the remarkable journey that began just four years ago. In those early days, our shared vision was born out of a profound need: to create a space where Black legal professionals could find mentorship, support, and opportunities to thrive. Today, as we celebrate OABP's growth and achievements, we are filled with gratitude and pride.

Launching this organization was no small feat. It took courage, countless hours of hard work, and an unwavering commitment to justice and equity. We set out to address the systemic barriers that Black paralegals and law clerks face, and the response has been extraordinary. In just a few years, OABP has become a vital hub for mentorship, education, and community-building. It's humbling to see how far we've come and exciting to think about the future.

Our growth would not have been possible without the incredible people who believed in our mission. This year, we proudly welcomed a dynamic new leadership team: Chantelle Campbell as President, Brenell Dean as Vice President, and Asha Walker as Executive Assistant. Alongside our dedicated board and committee members, their expertise and vision will undoubtedly take OABP to new heights. We are honoured to have had the chance to work with such talented individuals who share our passion for uplifting the Black legal community.

As we prepare to transition leadership, we are reminded of the saying, "If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together." OABP's success is a testament to the power of collaboration. Together, we've cultivated a community of support, fostered systemic change, and highlighted the importance of access to justice for so many. With new leadership, we know this legacy will continue to flourish.

To our members, partners, and supporters: thank you. Your faith in OABP and your commitment to our shared vision have been the foundation of our success. As we pass the torch, we remain steadfast in our belief that the work we've started will endure and grow.

With gratitude and excitement,  
Deborah Moriah, April Bollers, and Royland Moriah  
Founders, Ontario Association of Black Paralegals

# JOIN OABP

If you are interested in becoming a member, joining one of our committees or collaborating please don't hesitate to reach out.

Stay tuned for all of the wonderful projects we have planned for 2025!



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