



*"Taking action on social and environmental justice since 1973  
at the University of Waterloo and in the KW community."*  
**Waterloo Public Interest Research Group**

**Annual Report: April 2011-April 2012**

**Core Staff:**

Tammy Kovich – *Coordinator of  
Programming and Volunteer Support*  
Reena Reddy – *Coordinator of  
Projects and Organizational  
Development*

**WPIRG Board of Directors:**

Umar Aftab  
Sophie Cote – *OPIRG Rep*  
Hausalya Kulanayagam - *Treasurer, Staff  
Liason*  
Ashling Ligate - *President*  
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Elysha Schuhbauer - *Secretary*  
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**Contract Staff:**

Bernice Kozak - *Transition Coordinator  
(Summer 2011)*  
Alyssa Roth – *Car Free Day Coordinator*  
Leahjane Robinson - *Rainbow Reels Queer  
Film Festival Project Coordinator*  
Kalin Stacey - *School of Public Interest  
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**Summer HRDC Staff:**

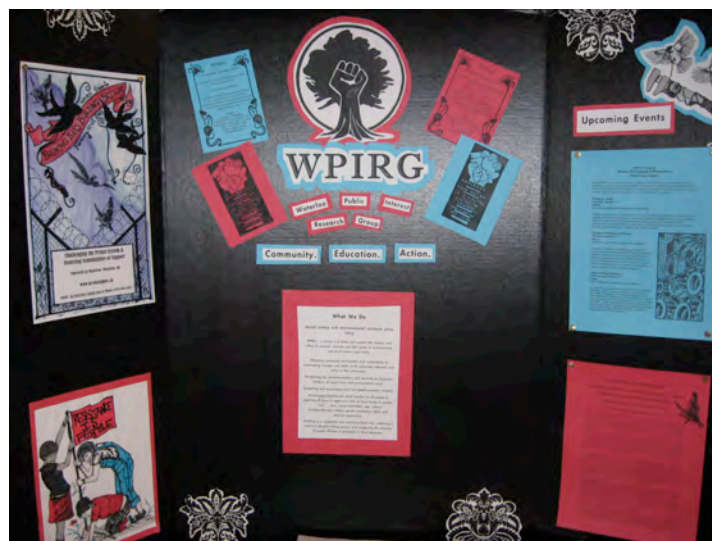
Lindsay Jack Brauweiler - *Climate and  
DisAbility Justice Campaigns Coordinator  
(Summer 2011)*  
Leahjane Robinson – *Provincial PIRG  
Network Researcher (Summer 2011)*

**Our Mandate & Mission**

*WPIRG's mission is to engage students and community members to become active citizens and volunteers on environmental, human rights, and social justice issues. Started in 1973, WPIRG provides a place to research, educate, and take action on environmental and social justice issues.*

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*Our members are full-time undergraduate students at the University of Waterloo, as well as graduate students, alumni and community members who purchase memberships.*

## 1. Introduction

WPIRG has come through another year of growth, change, learning and action. This report provides an overview of the work of WPIRG over the past year, and the impact the organization had on campus and community through events, projects, and action groups organized around specific issues. This report is dedicated to the work of volunteers, staff, board members, and partner organizations that make the work of WPIRG possible.

- WILLIAM SAUNDERS

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## 2. Comments from Staff

### CORE STAFF

It has been such a pleasure to be able to support the inspiring, dedicated and lovely volunteers, fellow staff and Board members I have met this past year through their work with WPIRG. I feel truly privileged to have learned and grown with all of you! My hope for this year had been to strengthen ourselves and our communities by building relationships and support networks through which we could learn from each other, share our skills and resources, connect our struggles and resist together. It truly has been a wonderful year of exciting projects that have done just this! I am so proud of the important work WPIRG does and the role it plays in our campus and community. My deepest thanks to everyone who stepped into our office, attended a film screening, came to a workshop, helped to plan a project, ate delicious food with us, joined an Action Group or learned a Freskool skill. We are what you make us and I'm excited for another active year! It may be from a cheesy web comic but I'll leave you with a quote that's been in my head during my time at WPIRG - "It's time to make yourself proud and everyone else a little nervous!"

- REENA REDDY



*Reena & Tammy*

Working at WPIRG this past year has been such an amazing experience! I've been really fortunate to have the opportunity to meet so many wonderfully dedicated people, and engage in some really meaningful projects. Over the last year, I've been excited to see WPIRG expand and strengthen our community relationships, as well as deepen our connections with grassroots movements. Thank you so much to everyone who has made this possible! Activist work can be hard and on occasion disheartening, but nevertheless is so incredibly important and fulfilling in its own right. I am everyday inspired by those who see injustice in our world (there's certainly no shortage of examples!), and rather than sit passively by, take action. I can't wait to see all that WPIRG accomplishes in the upcoming year.

- TAMMY KOVICH

### SUMMER STAFF

I was honoured to work with WPIRG during the summer of 2011 as the Provincial PIRG Network Researcher. WPIRG is part of a network called OPIRG which is made up of 11 PIRGs in Ontario that conduct research, education and action on social and environmental justice. My task was to look into how the Ontario-PIRGs have historically worked together, and what their current relationship is in order to identify how we can create stronger partnerships within and outside the network, and how we can increase our ability to support and inspire each other in the work we do. In this position I conducted interviews of PIRG staff, board, and volunteers across Ontario and researched historical documents and archives to collect stories of OPIRG's past and the ways that it has changed since its birth in 1973! From this research I gathered important information in a central place for all PIRG staff and board members, and was part of revamping and updating the Provincial PIRG website. I also developed a set of recommendations that I was able to bring to the Provincial PIRG Board of Directors. It's exciting



*Leahjane hard at work...*

to witness some of these ideas coming to life, particularly in the hiring of a Provincial Network Coordinator to help organize and support inter-PIRG activities.

It was an incredible experience to develop a type of “then-and-now” whole picture of what OPIRG looks and feels like, and also to fully grasp the potential for support and action that this network has.

- LEAHJANE ROBINSON

### CONTRACT STAFF

WPIRG is a wonderful place to work, just as it's a wonderful place to volunteer. My position as the SPI coordinator was really fulfilling employment that felt like I was contributing to the PIRGs mission and my own values. We tried some new things this year at the conference – had our own website, provided childcare and billeting, and focused on engaged volunteers and activists rather than outreaching to the uninitiated. All in all it went really well, and we got really good feedback from the many guests who came (many from out of town). The support from staff was excellent, and they were a pleasure to work with, and the conference was a really big success thanks to the amazing organizers who worked with me on the SPI organizing committee. Thanks to Asha, Ashling, Elysha, Kathryn, Paul, Reena, and Tammy for the great experience.



*Kalin swelling with pride for WPIRG!*

- KALIN STACEY

Working along with the organizing committee to bring Rainbow Reels Queer Film Festival 2012 to life, I had the pleasure of being at the centre of the flurry of activity that goes into making this glittery gem of a festival happen. After experimenting with hiring a contract staff person to support the festival last year, this was the first year that WPIRG decided to hire a Rainbow Reels Coordinator for the entirety of festival planning. My role was to keep things going smoothly by coordinating volunteers, press, promotional materials, sponsorship, fundraising, Gala party and generally supporting our hard-working organizing committee. From the film selection process—bringing the best queer films to Waterloo Region—to brainstorming the theme/feel of this year's promotional materials and designing the 2012 website, working on Rainbow Reels was an incredible experience! Stand-outs for me include the fantastic images captured at the Gala photobooth and the unanimously positive response to sliding scale ticket pricing. It was lovely to witness so many queer folks in one place; Rainbow Reels really shows how seriously fantastic and vibrant we are!

- LEAHJANE ROBINSON

## SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

*Over the past year at WPIRG hundreds of University of Waterloo students and dozens of community members have participated in 13 WPIRG Action Group; organized and taken part in demonstrations as well as countless student-led workshop discussions; and attended film screenings both on campus and in the community.*

### **3. Action Groups' Activities**

**Books to Prisoners** has had an amazing year! The action group has gained quite a few new members and expanded to become one of WPIRG's most active action groups. The group has continued to collect books on campus and in the community to donate to prisons throughout Ontario. As well, the group has hosted several letter-writing nights in support of political prisoners, organized a handful of fundraising events and documentary film screening. You can find out more about the group's work at: [www.bookstoprisonerskw.com](http://www.bookstoprisonerskw.com).

**Bring Your Own Bottle** has been working hard this year, campaigning for a bottled water-free UW campus by encouraging more sustainable water usage and practices. They continue to bring attention to the detrimental environmental impacts of bottled water creation and consumption, the issues of public access of water surrounding the concern and the myths of bottled water that feed into its use. A highlight of the term was having a booth at World Water Day Celebrations (March 22) hosted by The Water Institute!

Join the campaign to make a  
bottled water free campus!



**Climate Action Project** started off the year by hosting an information session on campus to connect students with environmental groups active in Kitchener Waterloo. Then, they organized educational events on renewable energy policy in advance of the fall Ontario, including Get FIT: A Green Energy Act Information Session in collaboration with Environmental Defense as part of the car free days in uptown waterloo.

### **Community Garden**

In 2011, the UW Community Garden grew some vegetables, spent lots of time in the sunshine, learned about the heartaches and joys of growing food, and developed a deeper appreciation of our food systems. Some garden successes in 2011 included two beds of ground cherries, neon green lettuce, giant fall radishes, raspberries in October, several varieties of tomato, sweet bell peppers, leeks, delicious oversized garlic, gooseberries, purple turnips, and a few squashes and cucumbers. In sadder news, in 2011 the community garden group lost one of their regular gardeners, Mike Murray, who died of cancer in September.

### **Feminist Zine Distro**

Since it's founding in the summer of 2011, the Feminist Zine Distro has focused on printing and distributing literature - zines, pamphlets, reports etc. on issues relevant to feminist social movements and activism. The group has published literature on a variety of topics including: DIY women's healthcare, queer theory, histories of women's liberation struggles, and intersectionality to name but a few.

**Food Not Bombs** continues their important work every Saturday, cooking and serving a free meal that would have been otherwise wasted at Kitchener City Hall. This simple act publicly draws attention to food wastage, our over-consumption of goods, and political issues of poverty in KW. Because food is a right, not a privilege. Because scarcity is a patriarchal lie. Because poverty is a form of violence neither necessary nor natural. Because capitalism makes food a source of profit, not a source of nutrition. Because food does grow on trees. Because we need community, not control. Because we need homes, not jails. Because we need FOOD NOT BOMBS!



### **Grand River Media Collective**

As WPIRG's newest action group the Grand River Media Collective has been working hard to get their grassroots media project off the ground. With the goal of presenting alternative news stories and perspectives, and disseminating information relevant to social and environmental justice activism, the group has been working to develop an independent media website ([www.grandrivermc.ca](http://www.grandrivermc.ca)), as well as developing several radio shows at SoundFM as part of Grand River Radical Radio (GRRR).

**KW Freeskool** started up in summer of 2011 and is now in the middle of its second semester. The group's goal was to create community-based spaces for learning and teaching, and make spaces accessible and informal. They've hosted a bunch of workshops and several ongoing classes, which have collectively brought out dozens of participants. So far topics of learning include DIY skills like screen-printing, zine-making and bread-making, as well as computer security, personal organization, and French.

### **KW Indigenous Solidarity Action Group**

Since the colonialism 101 workshop that the group facilitated during Disorientation, KWISAG has spent the year doing a reading group education project for anyone interested to learn more about the history of colonialism and indigenous resistance. The group also supported Barriere Lake's legal defense fundraising campaign and participated in the Six Nation Solidarity Network. In addition, they're currently helping to put on several local events around the end-of-April rally in Caledonia/Six Nations, and hoping to mobilize members of KW to go.

**Students Against Animal Cruelty** has had a fairly quiet year as the group has worked to develop animal rights and vegetarianism 101 informational materials to distribute throughout campus and in the community. With those materials finally completed, the group now intends to put its energy towards supporting local animal shelters.

**Waterloo Region Rainbow Coalition** has had a busy year, creating a central hub for the local Rainbow community. Their continuing work includes establishing a Rainbow community centre and building partnerships with several community groups in the Waterloo Region.

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## **4. Summary of Events**

### **i) WORKSHOPS**

WPIRG launched the *Seeds of Resistance Workshop Series*, a series of awareness-raising, skill-building and analysis-developing workshops aimed at sowing the seeds of resistance, and providing participants with the tools, both practical and conceptual, to engage in struggles for social and environmental justice. Workshops included:

- Anti-Oppression
- Consensus Decision-Making
- Racism in our Communities: Anti-Racism Practices
- Direct Action Gets the Goods!
- Anti-Capitalism 101
- Grassroots Facilitation
- Alternative Media
- Canadian Mining Injustice
- Bike Repair
- Activist Self-Care



- Permaculture: a two-part series
- Web Research Skills for Activists
- Women and Trans Systema Martial Training
- Making Herbal Medicine
- Unsettling Ourselves: Decolonization for Settlers
- DisAbility Justice
- Zine Making
- Campaign Planning and Strategy

## ii) OTHER EVENTS

Over the course of the past year WPIRG has organized countless events. Here's a snapshot:

### **BEEHIVE PRESENTATION**

WPIRG excitedly welcomed the Beehive Collective to the University of Waterloo to put on an interactive, art-based presentation to discuss the devastating effects of resource extraction, specifically mountaintop removal coal mining.



### **A GRASSY EVENING**

In the summer of 2011 WPIRG organized 'A Grassy Evening'- an event to raise-awareness about the ongoing struggles of the Indigenous community of Grassy Narrows. We screened the documentary 'As Long as the River Flows', and brought in Grassy Narrows Blockader Taina DaSilva for a Q&A period.

## MAPUCHE SOLIDARITY EVENT

Members of The Women's Coordinating Committee for a Free Wallmapu visited Kitchener-Waterloo to present several documentary films outlining the struggles of the Mapuche people in Chile, and to discuss the ways in which people from North America can support Mapuche struggles.

## DO GOOD THINGS REALLY GROW IN ONTARIO? MIGRANT WORKERS & THEIR RESISTANCE TO EXPLOITATION

Justicia for Migrant Workers facilitated a participatory workshop that looked at the history of the migrant worker programs, current issues facing migrant workers and the numerous forms of resistance that workers and allies have engaged in over the past several decades.

### iii) WPIRG-SPONSORED EVENTS & INITIATIVES

In 2011-2012 WPIRG was happy to sponsor a long list of great campus and community based events and initiatives, including:

- Islam Awareness Week
- Creation Story: A Rain Dance Theatre Production
- KW Poetry Slam Launch
- Raise the Rates Panel Event
- Justice for Pakistan: Women's Rights Documentary Screening & Dinner
- Education Under Fire Event
- 'In Dialogue': Linking Students & Street Youth
- A Night in Solidarity with African & Native People
- Class War on the Workplace Floor: Labour Organizing and the Postal Workers' Strike
- G20 Anniversary Festival
- Independent Living DisAbility Justice Training
- Anti-Colonial Action Project
- War Resisters Conference
- The United States v. Omar Khadr: Documentary & Discussion
- Running Down the Walls: Fundraiser for Political Prisoners
- Poverty Makes Us Sick Festival
- Canadian Youth Climate Coalition Training Camp



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## 5. Summary of Projects

### i) DISORIENTATION

From September 19-24th WPIRG organized DisOrientation- an alternative orientation week. DisOrientation 2011 introduced students, both new and returning, to the activist oriented side of campus and the community. Acknowledging that university life can so much more than exams and pub crawls, the week introduced students to the possibilities of becoming engaged in social and environmental justice work. The schedule of events was jam-packed with workshops, social events and fairs. DisOrientation programming included:

- Barriere Lake Fundraising Barbeque
- Alternative Learning Teach-in
- Zine Making Skill-Share
- Students in Revolt Documentary Film Series
- Alternative Media Fair
- Intro to Dumpstering Workshop
- Print Making and Social Movements Workshop
- Action Group Fair
- Feminism 101 Teach-in
- Reproductive Justice & Loving Your Body Workshop
- Media Analysis & Activism: G20 Info Session
- History of Colonialism in Canada Teach-in
- Yes Means YES! How to Be a Living Lover and Build Safer Community Facilitated Discussion
- Books to Prisoners Book Fair
- Engineering Change Presentation
- Bike Tour of Kitchener-Waterloo
- FreeSkool Launch Party
- WPIRG Volunteer Training

### ii) CINEMA POLITICA

WPIRG worked in partnership with the Multicultural Cinema Club to put on a free documentary film series. Screenings took place on UW campus, as well as at Queen Street Commons Café in Kitchener. We screened films on a wide variety of topics including: climate change, indigenous sovereignty, resistance and the criminalization of dissent, community gardens, biking and human rights.



*A Cinema Politica Film:  
You Never Bike Alone*

### iii) INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S WEEK

In March, WPIRG worked in collaboration with The Women's Centre to host a week of activities, presentations and educational events for International Women's Week. WPIRG brought in guest speaker Igna Muscio, feminist activist and author of 'Cunt: A Declaration of Independence', as well as organized several workshops including: 'Got Your Back! Building Support and Healing Into Our Movements', 'Class Struggle & Women's Liberation: Developing an Anti-Capitalist Feminism' and 'Herbal DIY and Female Reproductive Health'.

### iv) SCHOOL OF PUBLIC INTEREST 2012 - Breaking Bars, Building Bridges: Challenging the Prison System and Fostering Communities of Support

For the third annual weekend-long School of Public Interest conference, we focused on the intersections between the prison system and other systems of social oppression. Volunteers and community activists had the chance to participate in workshops, listen to presentations, and learn how activists can build skills to challenge and transform the prison industrial complex, as well as build support networks for political and social prisoners.

The weekend opened on Friday evening with a keynote lecture from Ann Hansen, life-long revolutionary, former prisoner, and dedicated prison abolition activist. After Ann Hansen's speech, the audience of roughly 150 was treated to When Words Resist 3, a showcase of phenomenal local political SLAM poetry and spoken word, followed by a raucous dance party.

Saturday and Sunday featured nearly 30 workshops and presentations, loosely categorized into four streams: the criminalization of dissent, challenging the prison system, exploring its intersections with other forms of oppression, and building communities of support. Workshops focused on the criminalization of poverty, disability, and mental health struggles, the new Conservative crime bill and how to fight against it at the grassroots level, prison radio, books to prisoners strategizing, and much more. Throughout the weekend we had incredible local food available from a combination of our volunteer food team and The Working Centre – food got the most compliments from our 200+ guests and participants, many of whom traveled to the city from across the province to attend. The weekend finished with a keynote panel including Maryam Adrangi, Alex Hundert, Sharmeen Khan, and Ajamu Nangwaya, who spoke to the social and environmental justice activism WPIRG supports, and how we protect ourselves, and support each other, from criminalization for that necessary and important work.

The conference gave guests and volunteers a chance to develop their understanding and analysis of the prison system, and network with each other in hopes of building a stronger regional network of prison justice groups and activists.



## v) RAINBOW REELS QUEER FILM FESTIVAL 2012

From March 1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup>, in its biggest year yet, Rainbow Reels 12 delivered an exciting array of the newest films, documentaries, and shorts detailing LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer) experiences from Canada and around the world. Kicking off with a campus film screening of the comedic, *You Should Meet My Son!* the festival continued with glamour-filled exuberance at the Gala Party at the Canadian Clay & Glass Gallery. Folks from Kitchener-Waterloo-Cambridge and beyond showed up in their finest to dance and mingle and enjoy a jazzy evening complete with a live band and photobooth to capture the zany energy of the night.

This year's film line-up was one of our strongest to date, featuring critically acclaimed films *Pariah* and *Weekend*, as well as upcoming documentary *Gen Silent*. With record attendance throughout, the festival closed with the completely sold-out screening of independent film *Cloudburst*. Other films in the festival line-up included *Leave It On The Floor*, *Married in Spandex*, *Tomboy*, *The Wise Kids*, *Call Me Salma*, and *Patrik, Age 1.5*.

Particularly exciting was this year's shorts program, which featured the work of the Local Youth Shorts Contest Winner, along with films exploring the ways in which race, sexuality, gender, and class inform how we love and relate to one-another. The winners of this year's People's Choice Awards as voted by the audience were *Cloudburst* for Best Feature Length Film, and Melissa Sky's *The Prince's Sword* for Best Short Film.

Festival goers were vocally appreciative of this year's reduced option ticket prices and pleased with the festival promotional materials. Coverage and advertising in local media such as Rogers Community Living, Imprint and The Record, and the support of our many community partnerships was key to making the festival such a smashing success!



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## **6. Collaborations, Partnerships & Funding**

Over the course of the past year WPIRG was fortunate to have the opportunity to work with a wide-variety of social and environmental justice groups and organizations. Some examples:

- Poverty Makes Us Sick
- Ontario Coalition Against Poverty
- Justicia For Migrant Workers
- No One is Illegal
- Working Centre
- Grassy Narrows Women's Drum Group
- Guelph ABC
- KW Anti-Torture Coalition
- The Spot Collective
- Kitchener-Waterloo Community Support
- Common Cause
- Engineers Without Borders
- KW Poetry Slam
- Muslim Student's Association (University of Waterloo)
- Insurgent Theatre
- Termite Collective
- End the Prison Industrial Complex (EPIC)
- Justice for the Victims of Police Killings
- RedBird Prison Abolition
- Fierce & Fabulous Krew
- Save Our Prison Farms Organizing Committee
- UW Students for Justice in Pakistan
- Movement Defense Committee
- We Remember Ashley Smith Campaign
- Sexual Assault Support Centre of Waterloo Region
- Beehive Collective
- Women's Coordinating Committee for a Free Wallmapu
- Barriere Lake Solidarity
- Multi-Cultural Cinema Club

WPIRG receives the majority of its funding from University of Waterloo undergraduate students every term, however, applications for funding are often placed to support particular projects and contract staff positions. The following funding was awarded to WPIRG in the past year:

- The Canada Summer Jobs 2011 program financially assisted us in hiring two students during the summer to engage in special projects. The Provincial PIRG Network Researcher was able to look into the OPIRG network, of which WPIRG is part of, and develop recommendations to ensure it remains strong, sustainable, and able to support and connect PIRGs across Ontario in their social and environmental justice work. The DisAbility and Climate Justice Campaigns Coordinator worked hard developing a DisAbility Justice Strategy for WPIRG moving forward

as an organization, as well as fostered conversations about Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation in Waterloo Region by organizing a two-part Information Session in August 2011.

- The City of Waterloo gave the Rainbow Reels Queer Film Festival a Community grant for the March 2012 project. Using this funding, we were able to make this year's Rainbow Reels bigger than ever, while striving to remain accessible to the students and community members of Waterloo Region and beyond.

-The Ontario Arts Council awarded WPIRG a Compass project grant to begin the incorporation process for the Rainbow Reels Queer Film Festival project we have run for 12 years. A consultant, Cheryl Ewing, was hired to help the eventual Board of Directors for Rainbow Reels to organize their vision for the Festival, while creating a mandate and policies rooted in anti-oppression to begin the ongoing process. In the next few years, we're excited to see the places it goes!



## **7. Messages from the Board**

*The Board of Directors represents WPIRG's members and oversees the long-term planning, administrative and financial needs of the organization. The board creates the budget, monitors finances and supports staff, while holding regular meetings focused on major decisions that improve the ability of the organization to fulfill its mandate.*

Looking back on this past year makes me swell with admiration for the dedicated folks who pour their creativity and love into WPIRG. Kalin Stacey, this year's coordinator of our School for Public Interest (SPI), built a strong scaffolding for one of the most powerful and timely conferences WPIRG has hosted in recent memory. His management skills enabled the individual planning committee members to bring their passions to their work. The office had but a moment to draw in a breath before we leaped into the glittery world of the Rainbow Reels Queer Film Festival (QFF). Leahjane Robinson, this year's coordinator of QFF, proved that it is possible for human beings to be in four places at once and balance a million tasks *and* look fierce while doing it. She was a very positive supporter of the organizing committee and encouraged members to run with individual projects. None of the work that we do at WPIRG would be possible without the incredible dedication of our two office staff, Tammy Kovich and Reena Reddy. As someone who has been involved with WPIRG for the past three years, I cannot overstate my appreciation for what Tammy and Reena have brought to the organization. Anyone who regularly spends time in the office will know how well our staff work together. Tammy is the 24-hour firecracker atop Reena's homemade Lots O' Meat Lasagna: together, they engage with, feed, and care for our membership and communities in Kitchener-Waterloo. I am honoured to work with and learn from all of the countless people who continue to make WPIRG a strong justice-based organization on campus.

-ASHLING LIGATE

This past year has been really great at WPIRG. We've had lots of new action groups start up, and have seen passionate volunteers continue to contribute to ongoing ones. The biggest projects I've been involved in this year, offhand, have been KW FreeSkool, Food Not Bombs, and SPI. It feels like I've been around more than that, somehow, but that must have something to do with the welcoming atmosphere that volunteers, board, and staff members create in the office and the wider community with the work they do. FreeSkool broke out with a strong start with our kickoff party in the fall, and has continued to host a range of workshops and classes from Linux and Breadmaking to French Conversation and the Anti-Colonial Reading Circle, and many others in between. I really hope that it continues to grow as a platform for folks to share skills and have conversations that might not be possible otherwise. Food Not Bombs celebrated another amazing year of taking action on feeding KW's hungry bellies every Saturday, with support from multiple local organizations, and the perpetually wasteful food system. Breaking Bars Building Bridges, this year's SPI, was a raging success that I have the honour of saying I was a part of. We had a strong organizing committee, team of volunteers, and enthusiastic facilitators and attendees come out from both Canada and the United States of America to share their experiences and insights within and without the prison industrial complex. I appreciate everyone's creativity and dedication that is brought to each day and event at WPIRG, and I look forward to what the next year will bring!

-ELYSHA SHUHBAUER



*Archana Datta, Sophie Cote and Umar Aftab excitedly using consensus decision-making!*

So many things have happened during the past year, that it's easy to overlook some of the awesome work that went on behind the scenes. Lindsay Jack shone as one of our summer staff this year, taking on the challenging dual role of Climate and DisAbility Justice Campaigns Coordinator. On the disAbility justice side, this involved taking a look at our

organization to determine how best to improve our understanding and implementation of disAbility justice, and help us start on the path to becoming more accessible to everyone who wants to be involved with our organization, and to create a space to incorporate the perspective of people with disAbilities in our work. This was balanced with the other role of trying to start a local conversation around adaptation to climate change aimed at supporting the most impacted groups locally. Leahjane also took on some challenging work in her role as OPIRG researcher, trying to understand the PIRG network and where it could go in the future. This type of work is crucial to building organizational capacity, and moving into new areas of activism.

-WILLIAM SAUNDERS

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## 6. Thank you(s)

Board and Staff would like to thank volunteers for their amazing energy, creativity and passion over the past year.

The Board would like to thank all staff members for their contributions to the organization this year - especially our core staff Tammy and Reena, who make everything possible.

The Board would like to thank departing board members Umar Aftab and William Saunders and interm board members Elsyha Schuhbauer and Fig for their dedication to WPIRG over their terms as directors. The Board would also like to thank Emily Pittman, Veronica Diaz and Archana Datta, whose terms on the board of directors ended before the Annual General Meeting, for their service on the board - we couldn't have done it without you.

*We wish all outgoing Board, staff members and volunteers  
continued success in your next life adventures!*

