



COPKA Corner **Citizens for Respectful Policing**

COPKA Attends National Symposium on Police and Community Partnerships

In March of 2014, COPKA's Genevieve Jones attended the National Symposium on Police and Community Partnerships held at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa. COPKA was honoured to receive a scholarship from the host agency, Pacific Business and Law Institute (PBLI), to cover the \$900 registration fee. Upon reviewing COPKA's application, PBLI's Program Producer Pauline Cusack, LL.B. said, "You are *exactly* the people we want at this conference!"

The symposium was designed to help police, community agencies and non-governmental organizations start and sustain collaborative partnerships. The event was chaired by **Superintendent Shirley Cuillierrier**, Director General of Partnerships and External Relations – Federal Policing, RCMP; **Inspector Jim Potts**, OOM, RCMP and OPP (retired), and **Judge Barry D. Stuart**, (retired), a leader in the field of collaborative partnerships and restorative justice.

Participants included administrators/directors of police (RCMP, OPP, municipal), business/investment analysts, social work and health care administrators, municipal, provincial and federal government representatives, first nations agencies, restorative justice program administrators, school principals, etc... a wide range of community builders.

The recurring message was: "Strong relationships build strong communities."

Topics included:

- comparison of Institutional justice and community justice
- Nova Scotia's progressive and successful restorative justice programs
- essentials of partnership development, collaboration and leadership
- Social Impact Bonds
- developing safe school communities.
- Developing a restorative justice program for court diversion
- Sustainable community initiatives in Fort Chipewa
- exploring existing collaborative partnerships between community agencies

- and police, many using restorative justice models.
- Six biggest impacts on community safety:
 - reducing mental health/addictions
 - increasing collaborative community partnerships (this can take 30-40% of 911 calls out of the system)
 - reducing the number of serious violent offenders
 - increasing jobs and literacy
 - police/community agencies working together on top community priorities
 - changing sentencing practices to jail only dangerous offenders
 - **Molly Baldwin**, Founder of RoCA, described working with high risk young men in Chelsea Massachusetts, helping them get off drugs, find homes and work, using restorative justice Circles in close collaboration with police.
 - **Bobby Matheson**, Director General, Public Safety Canada, discussed justice system costs, showing that without early intervention, one chronic violent offender costs an average of \$1.53 million by age 30. He encouraged the use of social financing to fund social programs.
 - Teachings from **Jim Potts**, Ojibway Elder, retired RCMP/OPP

“I was very proud to represent COPKA at the symposium. We brought a unique voice to the table, and I am inspired again to work for collaboration between our police and our community.”

- **Genevieve Jones**, Executive Director, COPKA

The symposium closed with a final Circle where participants gave thanks and spoke about bringing new vision of inter-agency collaboration to their communities. There is talk of making this an annual event, and gathering the best practices discussed at the symposium into a publication available to everyone.

*Co-Operative Policing Killaloe Area (COPKA) is a local, community-based, non-profit organization, whose motto is **Citizens for Respectful Policing**. COPKA's mission is to improve relations between the police and the public they serve. More information: www.copka.ca or 613-757-3104*