



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Launch of the Guelph Equine Public Policy Group

“The Guelph Equine Public Policy Group will ensure that Canada’s governments understand how they can – and why they must – serve the equine community public interest.”

Guelph, Ontario – Friday, 15 March 2019

The University of Guelph periodically calls together Canada’s horse community, to develop a consensus on the community’s shared national priorities. The university’s most recent Equine Industry Symposium (EIS) has now created the Guelph Equine Public Policy Group, to advance those priorities with Canada’s governments and public institutions.

“The members of the Guelph Equine Public Policy Group include national athletes, industry leaders, horse welfare advocates, heads of international institutions, and highly respected figures from the worlds of Federal, Provincial, and Indigenous government,” said Abby Hodder of the EIS Organising Committee. “They are ideally placed to lead this new, independent initiative.”

Group members are all volunteers, and were selected for their expertise in equestrianism, equine industries, horse welfare, and public affairs. The full list of members and their biographies are [available](#) at the Group’s web page.

The Group’s mandate is to develop and to champion public policies that will support the ability of the Canadian horse sector to be: humane, accessible, and professional; economically, environmentally, and inter-generationally sustainable; and integrated into coherent policy frameworks for education, employment, and culture. The Group is also responsible for meeting and working with ministers, legislators, and public authorities, to press for implementation of those policies.

“The hard reality is that Canadian horses and horsepeople suffer when our voice goes unheard in the corridors of power,” said Akaash Maharaj, the Group’s Chair. “The Guelph Equine Public Policy Group will ensure that Canada’s governments understand how they can – and why they must – serve the equine community public interest.”

The Group conducts its work transparently, invites public participation, and welcomes public scrutiny. It [publishes open accounts](#) of its activities, its decisions, and its meetings with public policy makers. It is independent of the University of Guelph and of the EIS. It receives no public or university funding.

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Editors’ Notes:

Group web page: <https://bit.ly/2H8k1SU>
Group members: <https://bit.ly/2EU3ZKk>
Terms of reference: <https://bit.ly/2HIBZkn>
Representative image: <https://bit.ly/2TFWTB4>



Members of the Guelph Equine Public Policy Group 15 March 2019

Each member was selected for his or her expertise and insights, and is part of the Group as an individual, not as a representative of an organisation or constituency; we have listed external affiliations only to describe members' experiences and areas of interest. The Group receives no public funds and operates independently of the University of Guelph. All members are volunteers, and we are grateful to them for donating their talents, time, and service.



Julia Alebrand

Equine science students, industry trainees, and new professionals

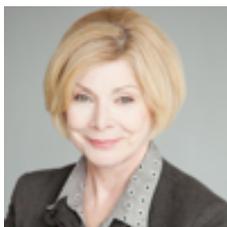
- Student in Bio-Resource Management (Equine Management)
- Student organiser of the Equine Industry Symposia
- Schleese Saddlery, Saddle Fit Technician trainee



Al de Jong

Green Party policy development and caucuses. Ontario Public Service.

- Former Horseshoe Region Representative to the Ontario Green Party
- Former public servant at Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA)



Cheri DiNovo

NDP policy development and caucuses. Multi-partisan legislative coalitions.

- Former NDP Member of Ontario's Provincial Parliament
- Minister at the Trinity-St Paul's United Church
- Host of CIUT-FM's *The Radical Reverend*

**Vel Evans**

National equine industry sectors and international trade

- Strategic Equine Consulting, Senior Consultant
- Primary author of the *Canadian Horse Industry Profile Study*

**Sonja Gagnon**

Equestrian service industries

- Saddlefit for Life, Global Education Coordinator

**Dolly Kruger**

Indigenous horse traditions. Public policy on free-roaming horses.

- Co-Coordinator for the Penticton Free-Roaming Horses Project: land management; horse welfare and stewardship; immunocontraception; education and promotion of Indigenous horse practices
- Former Band Councillor with the Penticton Indian Band
- Active in building inter-governmental relations between First Nations governments, Canadian federal and local governments, and public agencies

**Akaash Maharaj**

Chair

- Former CEO of Equine Canada
- Former national equestrian athlete in Tent Pegging
- Former Member of the Canadian Olympic Committee for Equestrianism
- Mosaic Institute, CEO

**Kerri McGregor**

High performance and international equestrian sports

- Former Team Leader & Chef de Mission, Canadian Equestrian Team
- Former Member of the Canadian Olympic Committee for Equestrianism
- Former Board Member & national Sport Council Chair, Equine Canada
- Outrageous Creations Digital Marketing, Chief Strategist & Creative Director



Dennis Mills

Liberal Party policy development and caucuses. Horse racing industry.

- Racing Futures Inc, President and CEO
- Former Liberal Member of Parliament
- Former Chair of the House of Commons Sub-Committee on Sports
- Toronto Partners Inc, CEO



Dominic Morrissey

Conservative Party policy development & caucuses. Rural public policy. Community sport.

- Former candidate for Ontario Progressive Conservative Party nomination
- Member of the Cedar Valley Polo Club



Roly Owers

Horse welfare. International standards. Equine public policy.

- World Horse Welfare, CEO
- EuroGroup for Animals, Chair of the Equine Working Group
- British Equine Veterinary Association, Treasurer
- European Horse Network, Board Member
- Former Veterinary Officer, UK Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment



Ian Russell

Equestrian commercial and retail sectors. Economic and fiscal public policy.

- Greenhawk Inc, CEO



Beth Underhill

High performance athletes. Young athlete mentorship and development.

- National equestrian athlete in Jumping
- Member of Canada's teams at the World Championships, Olympics, Pan American Games, and Nations Cups
- Beth Underhill Stables, Owner-Operator



www.maharaj.org/pdf/eppg_members.pdf