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CEIU National Vice President – Human Rights
Fall 2018 Report

I am excited to state that there is new interest from members these days with regards to participating, engaging and promoting human rights in the various Equity committees and activities across the regions. It is comforting to know that there is also enthusiasm from **young workers** who have expressed an interest in getting involved.

I have participated in the following activities and briefly mentioned some of the issues that were discussed:

April 07- 08th 2018: CEIU National HR/RR committee (Human Resources/Race Relations) meeting:

- The committee members agreed that the unjust profiling statement should include gender expression and genetics characteristics; accordingly a motion was passed directing the NVP-HR on behalf of the committee to submit this recommendation at the next National Executive meeting in October 2018.
- An educational presentation around Gender & Sexual Diversity www.ccgds-ccdgs.org was provided to the committee from the Canadian Centre for Gender & Sexual Diversity (CCGSD).
- CEIU National Executive passed a motion directing the committee to identify three (3) recommendations from the 28 recommendations found in the final report of the Joint Union/Management Task Force on Diversity and Inclusion, and the recommendations should be submitted at the October 2018 NE meeting.

April 10th 2018: HRUMCC (Human Resources Union Management Consultation Committee Meetings).

- **Difficult clients:** I indicated that in-person employees (front end and back end staff) are also exposed to difficult clients. Consequently, a clear procedure for employees exposed to difficult clients (citizens) is needed.
- **Recruitment:** I mentioned the importance of a pro-active approach and targeted hiring, and indicated that this subject is helpful as a standing agenda item.

I asked if there is a plan to deal with indigenous retirements and if the minutes from the Regional diversity committees can be provided, along with regional diversity stats. Employer indicated they will provide Regional stats to the committee members, further stating that the department has worked with the Indigenous Employee Circle using specific initiatives for recruitment, retention and advancement for indigenous people. Employer stated that once the visible minority employee network is active again, similar work can be undertaken with these members.

April 11th 2018: PSAC-NHRC (National Human Rights Committee) Conference call.

Discussed issues in general as follow:

- Aboriginal shortfall in executive level.
- Hiring & training and development of members with disability.
- Women's struggle and abuse resulting in mental health issues.
- GLBT awareness and understanding example gender identity, gender expressions, gender neutral washrooms, training, hiring process.
- Ontario became the first Province to include Gender identity and expression in their Human Rights Code.

April 11th 2018: National Executive conference call

- NVP reports were read out from the NVP's that did not present their reports at the March NE meeting.
- Crystal Warmer CEU-NEVP discussed her meetings with the call center committee and the young workers committee.

June 01th 2018: National Steering committee for diversity

- Employer stated that they would engage in targeted recruitment. (Forecast to determine the anticipated shortfall).
- Review retirement in the next 5 years in the various targeted groups.
- Employer clarified that targeted recruitment will be done by HR from advertised and from non-advertised pool, in addition to dealing with retention.
- Launched Aboriginals inventory to assist with addressing the gaps.
- Selected working groups to assist manager and EE's in the GLBT group.
- Focus on Positive space.
- Launching a Racially visible group network, they hope to launch it this year by September.

June 02nd 2018- Ontario Regional Council meeting:

- Among other things, the committee discussed staffing with respect to non-advertised postings, performance agreements, issues and concerns with talent management.
- Filing a staffing complaint with PLRSB Public Service Labour Relations Board, there is no support in the collective agreement.

July 05th 2018: Disability Network conference call

- Have a repository system; employees should not have to resubmit a request over and over again.
DTA disability is visible / invisible, employer will check on the confidentiality aspect.
- An employee stated that people with disability look normal, but they have a disability, hence they encounter issues with employees think they are misusing their position.
- SABA (ESDC's new Integrated Learning Management System), many employees have difficulty in navigating SABA. Employer stated that the issues were brought forward and they are discussing this with the SABA folks.

July 18th 2018: HRUMCC (Human Resources Union Management Consultation Committee) Meeting:

- Employer initiated a Project Management Competency Development Initiative; I asked if anything has been considered or if they have any plans in place to assist members with a learning disability. Employer stated they have not yet put anything in place; however they will definitely look into this and take it into consideration.
- Diversity & Employment Equity Action Plan: Rawan El-Komos, Director, Corporate Services HR Branch, stated they are working with ATIP (access to information and privacy) and the legal services to launch a self-identification blitz in the fall.
Rawan further stated that they were working on facts sheets for the HR community and managers to help them with targeted recruitment.
I mentioned that there has been a consistent negative gap for the aboriginal peoples with only a slight improvement, with that said I suggested that an action plan be put into place to narrow this gap even more. Rawan stated that the focus this year will be the recruitment strategy based on lessons learned as well as retention strategies.
- Talent management – I stated that the recruitment plan does not consider talent management approach and it should be reviewed as it is often used and results in indeterminate appointments. Gail Johnson, ADM-HR stated they are in the process of reviewing talent management approach and more to come on this subject.
Rawan El-Komos stated she will look into the current communication strategy to ensure information is disseminated globally and concretely to all, including the regions.
- Gender Neutral washrooms: I explained the problems and concerns members who are transitioning and sometimes are affected by their distress and physical, mental health issues when it comes to using gender based washrooms.
Benson Gorber, DG Regional Services & Real Property, stated that they have been proactively working with the (PSPC) Public Services Procurement Canada and the Pride Network since March 2017 to evaluate opportunities to advance the use of (GN) gender neutral washrooms within ESDC space. Majority of the space is located outside of ESDC space and the property of PSPC or private landlords and are not under the control of ESDC.
Benson further stated that ESDC interior design standard proposes two solutions to address GN washrooms based upon site conditions.

1. An additional universally accessible gender neutral washroom in addition to separate gendered washrooms.
2. Unique stand-alone Gender Neutral washrooms throughout the site.
 - * Signage in the IDS for Gender Neutral washrooms shows a toilet with no reference to gender. This solution would remove the issue of gender being a binary definition and instead focus on the function of the room.
 - * Existing ESDC sites with separate “universal toilets” within ESDC space will be reviewed to determine feasibility of changing them to universally accessible Gender Neutral washrooms.
 - * The Atlantic region has a Gender Neutral washroom at the Dartmouth Management Centre with a sign that shows both genders.
 - * The NCR region is looking into providing universally accessible Gender Neutral washrooms as part of a minor refit to existing washrooms at Phase II.
 - * The Ontario Region has universally accessible Gender Neutral washrooms on each of the three (3) floors in their new site on Renzo Drive.
 - * The Quebec and Western Territories regions are in the planning stage for future projects.

August 23th 2018: NE conference call.

- Provided an update on the NE follow up.
- Regional H&S committees for Service Canada
- Update on staffing (in camera session)
- Update on the website.

September 08th 2018: CEIU National HR/RR Committee meeting

- Regional Equity Committees contract list was presented by Amit Tandon who contacted the NVPs regarding the regional committees and provided the information to the committee and asked for their feedback.
- 2019 Conference planning
- The committee reviewed the proposed annotated agenda focusing on that the resolution and election process be reviewed.
- Review of the Terms of Reference
- Motion that the Terms of Reference be posted on the website under the HRRR section and further that Sebastian address the issue on observers at the next NE meeting.
- Final Report of the Joint Union/Management Task Force on Diversity and Inclusion were reviewed and the recommendations were submitted as their top priorities to the NE, however the committee felt it was important to state that it supports the implementation of all the recommendation provided in the report.
- A discussion was held around promoting the HRRR committee and committee felt it would be beneficial to launch a poster contest in collaboration with the CEIU rebranding exercise currently being developed.
- The committee had a roundtable discussion focusing on important issues that were discussed during the meeting.
- Amit Tandon-A/NVP HR provided an update and suggested the committee consider the National Centre for Truth & Reconciliation’s Call to Action booklet

<https://shop.nctr.ca/product/booklets/> is purchased by national as an educational item for the 2019 HRRR Conference.

- Crystal Warner-NEVP proposed to the committee that the HRRR committee work in collaboration with the National Young Worker's and National Women's committee. The leadership is not reflective of the membership and this joint meeting can help create an inclusive environment for all.
- Eddy Bourgue-NP informed the committee that Workplace Issues should be a standing agenda item at every meeting.

September 15-16/2018 CEIU Ontario Region HR/RR conference:

- The conference provided various training which helped the new delegates & observers better understand Human Rights issues.
- The training and discussions held, further strengthened the perceptive of Equity issues that relates to other groups and how they impact our members.
- Each group met in caucus and discussed concerns and prepared resolutions.

September 20th 2018: Conference call with the EWDN (Employees with Disabilities Network).

- Harassment in the work place continues to take place, specifically to members with disabilities.
- Andre Demers (Chair and Champion) Director IT-Accessibility discussed the following:
 - Bill C-81 was discussed - The Accessible Canada Act: An Act to Ensure a Barrier-free Canada, the Government of Canada is fulfilling its mandate promise to introduce new accessibility legislation. The Government of Canada will continue to work with Canadians with disabilities across the country towards an accessible Canada.Andre stated that there is a big push to hire more persons with a disability. Mentorship programme in the EX-1 & EX-2 category for mentoring employees with disability. Employees would be asked to express an interest and this will go to the confidential data with employees who self-identify and mentoring persons with disability at Managers level.
- Positive recruitment will be done externally; they will put up job postings and approach students with disabilities across Canada.
- A member requested to make documents more user friendly for members with disability.
- A member stated that an unconscious bias exist with members with a disability. The Champion stated that they will always advocate in the best interest of the members with a disability.

In closing, I would like to add that when we suffer silently and refrain from exploring our rights, we not only do injustice to ourselves, but to humanity itself. We must reach out or get involved so that we can influence change. They say a snow flake by itself is harmless, but watch what it can do when it collectively falls together in solidarity - it can paralyze a city.

We often take what we have for granted, on that note I feel it's important to acknowledge with appreciation and gratitude that our CEIU's National Executive, National office and RUO's staff have been diligent in providing all around outstanding support to our members, in particular, when promoting Human Rights initiatives. I am truly proud and honoured to be part of a Union where fundamental human rights are promoted and respected, however there is still work to be done to ensure that the mindsets of individuals are receptive to the changing environment.

Respectfully submitted,

Sebastian Rodrigues

*National Vice President Human Rights &
Chair National Human Rights/Race Relations Committee*

"We are way more powerful when we turn to each other and not on each other, when we celebrate our diversity... and together tear down the mighty walls of injustice." Cynthia McKinney