



FROM THE GROUND UP



Image captions: 2017 convention (above), National President Eddy Bourque (left, below), National Exec. Vice President Crystal Warner (below)

President's Message EDDY BOURQUE, NATIONAL PRESIDENT

This year has been difficult for everyone: the COVID-19 pandemic leading to a sudden transition to working from home for many of our members and isolating us all from friends and family, the difficult reckoning Canadians are finally beginning to have about anti-Black racism, and the discovery of hundreds of unmarked graves at residential schools across the country reminding us that the work of truth and reconciliation with Indigenous peoples is far from done.

For us at CEIU in particular, we have had a long road over the past four years coming out of trusteeship, culminating in this summer's virtual convention. We have never seen or done anything

like it in this union's history, but I am optimistic that we will make this convention one to remember.

We have a lot to be proud of as Canadians getting through this year, as well as a lot of work to do. The same goes for us as members of CEIU. We have made incredibly important strides since the last convention in remaking this union into a force at the negotiating table and for social justice. I am very proud of the work we've done as a union, and you should be too.

But there is always more to do. I'm excited to see you virtually at the convention and to start our next chapter as a union building off the work we have all done since 2017.



Executive Vice President's Message CRYSTAL WARNER, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

Friends - as I look back on the past four years of our union's work I can see so much progress which has been done. For the first time in our union's history, every region of CEIU has a women's committee. More and more regions and locals have human rights and women's reps and committees. Our equity NVPs now sit at national tables with our three employers and have overseen incredible awareness campaigns. As a union, CEIU has actively worked towards creating an anti-racist labour movement and embracing an intersectional approach to our representation work. We are working hard to raise the bar from awareness to action

by supporting the Black employee class action lawsuit, securing joint employment equity committees with our three employers, hiring a human rights and equity staff representative, and working hard to ensure we remain an equitable employer for our own staff. There is work to be done, but we are now better placed to keep fighting to make our union and our workplaces better and safer for our equity seeking members. Please continue listening and being an active ally to our union comrades who are experiencing discrimination or harm. Together, we have the solidarity to keep fighting to make things better for all workers.

Issues and Campaigns Updates

ESDC

As ESDC considers implementation of a form of pervasive employee surveillance in the form of screen recording, CEIU is working hard to emphasize to the employer that this is intrusive and unwelcome. There is no date for implementation at this point since the employer has just started consultation. We will be surveying the membership on screen recording and surveillance in the near future.

The issue of increasing monitoring goes back several years - under the old phone system in place until March 2020, there was no call recording functionality, so our Business Expertise Advisors (BEA) who monitored calls to perform quality audits had to audit calls live. They were required to hear the call from start to finish, a highly inefficient process.

With the new system in place, call recording became possible, both audio and video (i.e. the agent's screens). This functionality is currently being used for both mentors and auditors to monitor calls live. The intention of the employer is to begin recording audio and video for the BEAs to monitor remotely. Remote monitoring is efficient from the employer's perspective, but the downside is that the screen recording is not limited to the call application and instead captures everything on the screen. This means increased scrutiny of our members - the member's emails, chats, browsing, and other windows would all be immediately available to the BEA and likely the team lead and manager as well. We will be consulting with members about this propos-

al. CEIU has been examining the issue of flexible schedules for call centres for some time, but technological constraints with the former system made this difficult. Now, with the new system providing a centralized queue and members working from home, our coverage becomes more flexible. At the moment, the situation varies across the country. The employer has assembled a working group and we are looking for an update soon.

With regard to training for call centres, CEIU is working toward consulting nationally with the employer on training for members in their call centres. This covers both new hires - a longstanding issue - and the newer items including annual training and crisis intervention.

Unlike in the rest of the department, ESDC call centres have always faced high rates of organizational attrition, which CEIU has pointed to as a problem with the employer - they have finally agreed with the union's position and will be investigating the problem.

CEIU has also begun the process of rolling out electronic union notice boards, an important step for our union now that so many members are working from home.

CEIU is partnering with PSAC to roll out an Uncover the Costs campaign about the outsourcing of 1-800-O-Canada to a private company. PSAC has run similar campaigns for DND and the CRA. Gatestone is a family of companies in the United States and Canada

focused primarily on call centre and debt collection lines of business. In 2020, they were awarded a \$79 million contract to provide call centre services for the O-Canada line, with over \$25 million disbursed in ancillary contracts for start-up and service delivery costs. They have a variety

of other contracts with government, primarily for debt collection services. 1-800-O-Canada has been outsourced to varying degrees since 1982. The previous contract, under which staff were contracted out but workstations, facilities and tools and IT were provided by the Department

expired in November 2019. The new contract fully outsources all of the ancillary services as well as facilities. CEIU has been successful in over 70 jobs into the public service and these are now CEIU-PSAC members. CEIU and PSAC will be running this ad campaign soon.



IRCC

IRCC is currently in a mode of rapid expansion, with hiring proceeding at a rapid clip. Many teams have been tasked with the landing portion of the immigration process and the employer is funding gaps in processing.

A small but significant minority of our IRCC members strongly want to return to physical offices, and we are working with management to ensure that people who want to return are prioritized for office space, since there is not space for every single member to return at present.

However, the Committee is very concerned that the Domestic section at IRCC will no longer be making final landing decisions, which will now be handled by the centralized case processing and call centres - this is inequitable and punitive and may serve to undermine confidence in the immigration and settlement process.

IRB

CEIU members at the Immigration and Refugee Board have had a difficult time during the pandemic, adapting quickly and effectively to a digital environment while working from home, and the IRB Committee applauds their perseverance in adverse and demanding circumstances - and a special thanks to them for raising awareness of their working conditions to better enable the committee to engage with management on their issues.

The National Executive Vice President as well as the new Employment Equity and Human Rights Officer recently met with IRB senior management about employment equity. We stand unequivocally with our racially visible brothers and sisters.

The Committee is also happy to note that we have successfully added to the study referenced in Appendix R of our Collective Agreement, which deals with mental health in the workplace.



National Committees Updates



Image captions: CEIU NURs meeting (above), sketch for NWC by Liisa Sorsa (below), CEIU convention 2017 (opposite)

Human Rights and Race Relations

The Human Rights / Race Relations (HRRR) committee is comprised of the four equity groups within CEIU.

The Committee is comprised of eight members – two from each of the following groups: First Nations/Métis/Inuit, Members with Disabilities, LGBTQ2+ lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, and trans communities, and Racially Visible.

The committee responds to situations that concerns Human Rights issues in the workplace. The committee recently engaged in a virtual forum on Racism. In this forum, there were three panelists, the panelists consisted of members of CEIU, who reflected on their lived experience by addressing topics on racial profiling, staffing and harassment.

An email was sent to the deputy minister with respect to the hundreds of missing graves of the indigenous children that were found, suggesting that “we continue to take action to educate ourselves & our members about the history of Indigenous people by providing training to help lessen the inequities experienced by Indigenous people. We should begin by a land acknowledgement, as we gather, at every meeting. This is our first step to bringing attention and showing respect to the Indigenous peoples who first lived – and currently live – on the land where we live and work. I would also respectfully request that we observe a moment of silence at any first meetings or events to acknowledge the tragic news of hundreds of unmarked graves that were identified.”

Women’s Committee

In June, the National Women’s Committee successfully completed our second National Women’s Conference – the first virtual conference in our history. There were over 100 women in attendance. We had some spectacular guest speakers.

The conference’s theme this year was ‘Now More Than Ever’. We held workshops related to the need for truth and reconciliation and the 5 Ws of Land Acknowledgements with Shelley Saje Ricci, an incredible panel called ‘Now More Than Ever, Women Need to Find Their Voices’ including PSAC National Executive Vice President Sharon DeSousa, CEIU NEVP Crystal Warner, BC Federation of Labour Secretary-Treasurer Sussanne Skidmore and PSAC Atlantic REVP Colleen Coffey. Additionally, the conference had workshops on intersectionality and anti-racism with PSAC Human Rights Program Officers Danyel Haughton and Seema Lamba as well as on member engagement with CEIU’s own Membership Engagement Officer, Ashley Petrin.

Participants were very happy with the conference. Feedback included such comments as: “The panel!! It was amazing!! The graphic designer was an amazing part of this conference in addition to the beautiful programs for each day.”

The Women’s Committee has also completed the process of designing a new logo, which is featured on the back cover of this newsletter.

Young Workers’ Committee

The Young Workers Committee (YWC) is CEIU’s newest national committee, first formed in 2018. Since that time, we have worked hard to bring awareness to issues affecting all members of CEIU. The YWC started a National campaign to bring Automated External Defibrillators (AED) devices into our government offices.

This campaign allowed the YWC to bring a petition to the House of Commons and gain the support of a Member of Parliament. The petition ran for a period of 120 days with the backing of Winnipeg MP Leah Gazan. On June 7, 2021, the YWC received notice that the AED petition was presented before the house and a final decision would be made in 45 days.

The YWC has also created and sent out an onboarding brochure that was distributed nationally to all employees, in hopes of gaining attention from the young workers in our organization. We look forward to connecting with our fellow members. If anyone is interested in becoming more involved with the YWC please let them know that they can reach out to us via email or on social media.

The Committee can be reached at CEIUY-WC.SEIC@JTGmail.com or at our Facebook group, CEIU National Young Workers Group. We hope more young workers will make the choice to get involved with their union and with the committee that is working for them!

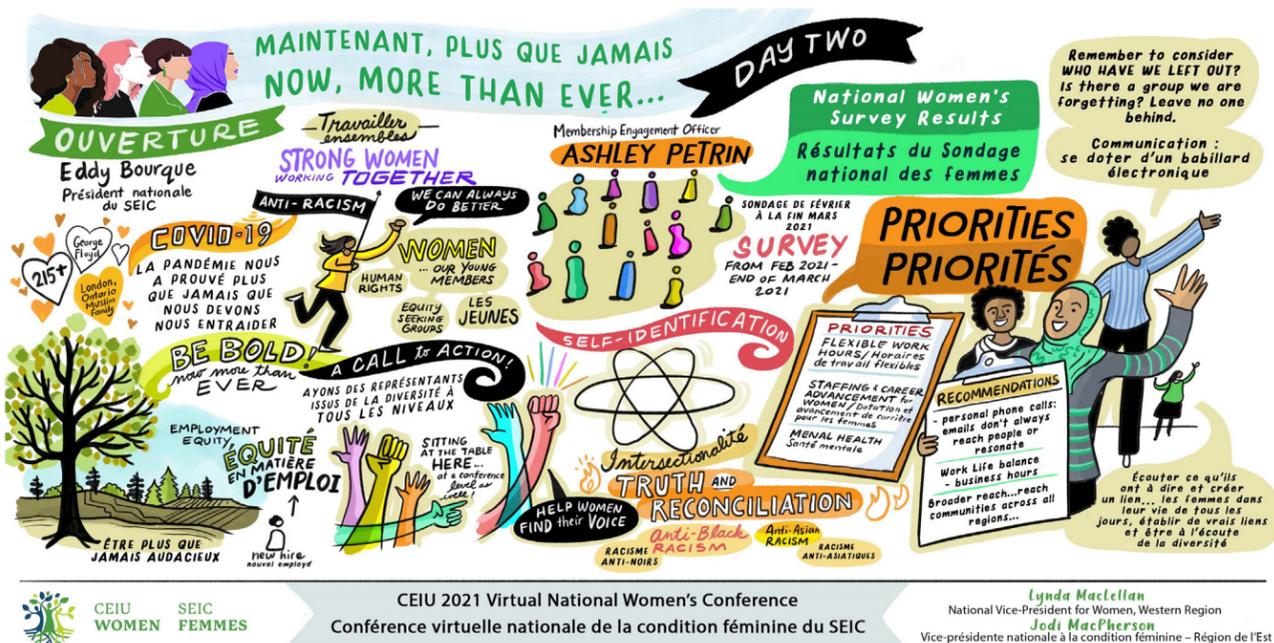
Call Centres Committee

Since the 2017 National Convention, the CCC (Call Centre Committee) has reviewed and updated its Terms of Reference in order to ensure communication on a regular basis nationally and across departments to discuss call centre specific issues and to raise these issues with employer counterparts at national tables.

Some of the important work done by the CCC during their current mandate includes submitting demands for 30 second spacing of client calls, a right to disconnect during an abusive or harassing call, and additional training for dealing with difficult calls.

The Committee has also run a survey of members to get feedback regarding implementation of Article 58 measures, submitted resolutions to the 2021 CEIU National Convention, and is committed to addressing racism, which is an undeniable issue in call centres as can be seen through stabilization exercises and career advancement opportunities. The Committee is pleased that CEIU has committed to supporting the Black Class Action Lawsuit.

The Committee is also working on a variety of training-related files as well reaching agreements with Service Canada on flexible hours and alternate work arrangements.



Kamloops Residential School discovery a call to action

The discovery of 215 previously undiscovered grave sites on the grounds of the former Kamloops Indian Residential School shocked Canadians across the country.

The Kamloops Indian Residential School, at one time Canada's largest residential school, operated from 1890 to 1969, and is located on the lands of the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc First Nation in British Columbia.

Even after the disestablishment of the Indian Residential School system, which the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls have called culturally genocidal and genocidal, respectively, First Nations people in Canada have lived with the heavy burden of the schools.

Many survivors of the schools have been marked by the trauma they experienced of being torn from their families, communities and traditions for their entire lives, to say nothing of the horrific abuse that we now know was all too common at many residential schools. That trauma has all too often tragically become a generational phenomenon that continues

to weigh heavily on Indigenous communities.

Canada has to do more to make right the grave crimes committed against Indigenous peoples. The discovery of these grave sites at the site of the Kamloops Indian Residential School – and the subsequent discovery of more graves at other schools – should be a wake-up call to take action on the hard work of reconciliation.

The government committed in 2015 to implementing the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Calls to Justice of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in 2019.

And yet, progress has been slow. Of the 94 Calls to Action, over one in five have seen no progress since 2015 – including a Call to Action to identify residential school cemeteries. Another 60 are in some stage of slow implementation, including very significant ones like the full implementation of Jordan's Principle, which calls for the elimination of bureaucratic delays to critical services to First Nations children – in fact, the government is in court fighting to keep Jordan's Principle as narrow as possible.

Only 13 have been fully

completed.

And regarding the Calls to Justice, the national action plan on implementation was just unveiled in recent weeks. Reckoning with Canada's history is a painful process – this country has created vast amounts of pain in becoming what it is today, and it is only right that today's Canadians, as the beneficiaries of the conscious decisions and historical processes that brought us here, feel the discomfort that that entails, and work harder to make right what this country has done to Indigenous peoples, as well as other racialized and equity-seeking groups.

As a union committed to social justice, we should be committed to making reconciliation a reality, not just as a matter of government policy and action, but in our communities and our everyday lives. That means going beyond land acknowledgements, and acting as a union to build links of solidarity with the Indigenous nations whose land we live and work on.

For anyone affected by trauma from their experience of residential schools, the Indian Residential Schools Crisis line is available 24 hours a day to support survivors and their families at 1-866-925-4419.



CLC Convention Report - Jessica Bonish

I attended the 29th Constitutional Convention of the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) in June-2021. As a fairly new union activist, I went into the convention hoping to find solidarity, mutual respect, and collaboration amongst the various unions and union activists. Unfortunately, the CLC Convention highlighted the fact that the labour movement is a disunited movement that is still rife with misogyny.

Many women within the labour movement, especially those in positions of power, have countless examples of the misogyny and sexism they face as union activists.

I hadn't personally witnessed misogyny within the labour movement until I attended the CLC Convention. Specifically, a male candidate, while speaking on the convention floor, made a sexist comment about a female opponent – He did not apologize, even after being called out. Additionally, there were two slates of candidates running for CLC executive positions – one slate (Team Unite) was made up of three women, and the other (Labour Forward) was made up of two men and two women. I was disheartened when, during the Workers With Disabilities Caucus, the two men from the Labour Forward slate answered 99% of the questions put to their slate. Even if done unintentionally, Labour Forward's approach to answering questions demonstrates that patriarchy continues to impact women in the labour movement.

Our labour movement faces countless barriers and challenges as we try to advance the rights of workers – other unions should not be one of those barriers. Sadly, the debate of resolutions



Image captions: Kamloops Residential School (Canadian Press. article above), CLC logo (above)

highlighted that the labour movement is not a united movement. I recognize that not everyone will be on the same side of a resolution, in fact, healthy debate of resolutions is part of any successful

convention. Unfortunately, there was too little time to properly address resolutions, which resulted in one group of individuals calling the question (calling for debate to cease), on nearly every resolu-



-tion before allowing proper debate. The particular group of people did so in order to push through as many resolutions as quickly as possible. As a result, many delegates were left feeling frustrated;

first time delegates in particular may have been turned off by the whole process.

While the CLC Convention highlighted prevailing challenges within the labour movement, there is reason for hope. CLC delegates sent a very strong message by electing (by a landslide) Team Unite and Larry Rousseau to run the CLC. While this is great, the three women elected (Lily Chang, Bea Bruske, and Siobhan Vipond) will undoubtedly continue to face sexism and misogyny as they lead the CLC. I ask our fellow union activists, especially men within the labour movement, to call out any sexism and misogyny they witness. Sexism and misogyny will continue to thrive if it isn't called out.

Rather than merely walking away from the CLC convention feeling defeated and frustrated, we must translate the frustration into concrete action and change. At every level of the union: local, regional, and national, we must look at who is participating, who is elected, and who isn't there. When a group of individuals is absent, we must ask ourselves why they are absent. Racism? Sexism? Ageism? Homophobia? Transphobia? Nepotism? Additionally, it isn't enough to merely have a diversity of people at the table, we must ensure that everyone has a voice. As seen with the Labour Forward slate, they had two women on their slate, but they did not have an equal voice at the caucus.

CLC Convention Report, cont'd

CEIU must also continue to work with other unions to address common goals. When another union's members are on strike, we must join them. When another union has a petition to address an issue their members are facing, we must sign and share the petition. If another union invites us to an event, we should participate. True collaboration will only occur at convention if relationships and solidarity are built outside of the convention setting.

While experiences like the CLC convention may leave equity seeking members (members with disabilities, racially visible members, LGBTQ2+ members, Indigenous members, and women) questioning whether to get involved with the union, I encourage them to not let the challenges stop them from joining a committee, becoming a steward, attending a convention, or running for an elected position. Change will not happen if equity seeking members don't take an active role in our union. Additionally, while some people will try to tear down equity seeking members,

I can guarantee that there will be an even longer line of people there to pick them up and support them.

I'd like to end by expressing my gratitude to my fellow CEIU activists. I have had the opportunity to work with CEIU members and staff from across the country, and feel so fortunate to be connected to such a wonderful group of people. No matter how frustrated I felt while attending the CLC Convention, it was clear that my fellow CEIU delegates were just as frustrated and determined to create change as I am. The support and encouragement from CEIU members and staff has helped me grow as a union activist, and in turn I have supported others as they explore their role in the union. This isn't to say that CEIU is perfect, it's not. CEIU has its fair share of racism, sexism, ageism, homophobia, and transphobia. Ask yourself: Will you be part of the problem or part of the solution?

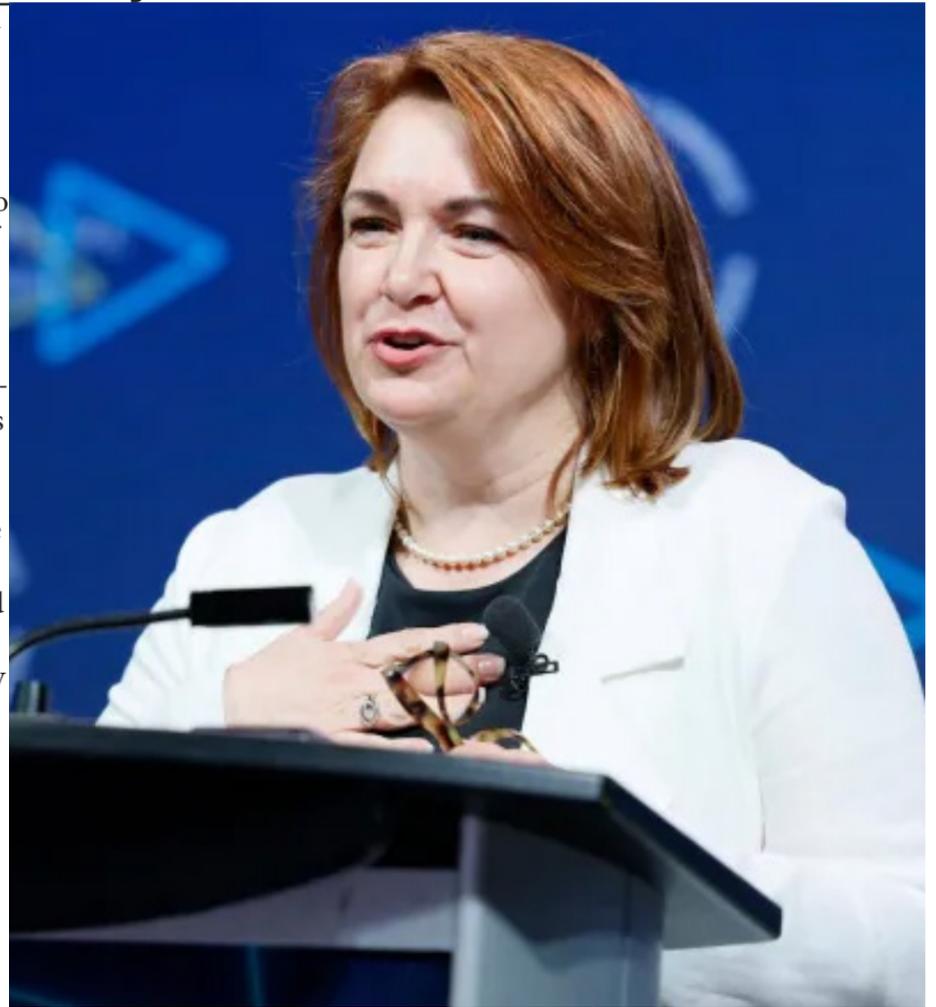


Image captions: New CLC President Bea Bruske (CLC, above), Phoenix rally 2020 (below)

Want to be in the next issue of the CEIU newsletter? Send your letter or an article idea to editorial@ceiu-seic.ca!

2020 Public Service Employee Survey



2020 was a landmark year for Canada's public service and for CEIU members in particular, with work from home, new services rolled out overnight, and major service interruptions. The results of the 2020 Public Service Employee Survey were recently released – the findings reflect that CEIU members and other dedicated public servants weathered the pandemic reasonably well.

Large majorities of people across the public service reported being satisfied with the steps taken to support employee mental health and physical safety, as well as to

keep them updated with timely and accurate information about the pandemic.

On the flip side, however, slightly more employees reported work-related stress than last year due to heavy workloads and short-staffing – given the stresses of the last year, this is not a surprising result and shows that the employer still has to find ways to manage the backlogs of work created by COVID.

Just over 10% of public servants felt that COVID-related stress was impacting their work, over 20% felt stress from balancing work and

caregiving, and over 15% felt stressed from being disconnected from colleagues.

Indicators related to satisfaction with the public service as a workplace stayed relatively flat from last year. 83% of respondents said that they liked their job compared to 81% the year before, roughly three quarters reported getting a sense of satisfaction from their work across both years, and 82% felt satisfied with the quality of their supervision (up slightly from 79%).

Encouraging majorities of public servants felt that they could speak out about racism in the workplace and raise concerns related to racism. However, only 10% of those affected by discrimination were satisfied by how their department handled the situation – clearly, there is a lot of work to do to make the public service an anti-racist place to work.

Worryingly, the vast majority (77%) of public servants who reported on-the-job discrimination said that they were discriminated against by individuals with authority. Only 6% filed a grievance or complaint, and half took no action at all.

Compensation issues are still a major problem for many pub-

lic servants – 37% of employees reported pay or compensation issues related to Phoenix, and of those, only 37% had those issues resolved, just over a third of those affected. 15% of employees, including those who had not experienced pay issues, reported that Phoenix worries kept them from seeking or accepting a different position.

CEIU departments fell short for their workers in several important ways. For example, at the Immigration and Refugee Board, 38% of employees felt very supported in balancing their work and personal lives, compared to 45% across the public service. Service Canada employees at ESDC were much less likely to feel supported in bringing forward a new idea – 55% compared to 65% across the public service.

A strong union is vital for public servants. Together, we can work to make the public service a world-leading place to work where employees are valued and free from harmful discrimination. CEIU will always fight for our members.



SEIC
FEMMES

CEIU
WOMEN

Primary, bilingual and horizontal, full colour



CEIU WOMEN
SEIC FEMMES

Secondary, bilingual and stacked, full colour



CEIU WOMEN
SEIC FEMMES

Secondary, bilingual and horizontal, full colour



Symbol only, full colour above, Facebook profile picture frame (below)

National Women's Committee National Vice Presidents

Lynda MacLellan and Jodi MacPherson

It is our great honor to reveal our new National CEIU Women's Logo. It has been our vision to create a logo since the inception of the CEIU National Women's Committee. We began our design process in collaboration with the NWC after the new National CEIU Logo was launched.

Our logo combines both the silhouettes of women with the silhouettes of trees in the wind. The overlapping of arms and roots symbolize growth, stability, depth, solidarity and unity.

The open roots symbolize far reaching and the ever-deepening relationships. The trunks symbolize diversity and the strength of the women in the union. Like women; trees support the network of life around them. Like trees; women communicate and cooperate with each other to support a healthy balance of community.

Our strength comes from the coming together of every contribution, no matter how small or large. It is the roots, that you often don't see, that keep us united and strong as they stabilize the earth below. The logo reminds us to always go back to our roots with full gratitude for the women who came before us.

We hope you like it as much as we do!

