

WINTER | 2021

LABOUR ACTION

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TORONTO & YORK REGION
COUNCIL



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150 Years - April 12th 2021



1918-2016

Stanley G. Grizzle

LOCAL PRESIDENT

BROTHERHOOD OF SLEEPING CAR PORTERS

- A former Citizenship Court judge, railway porter, World War II veteran, political candidate and labour union activist, Stan was a dynamic force in the African Canadian civil rights community.
- As a railway porter, he helped organize workers under the banner of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, serving as the local chapter's president for 16 years.
- In 1959, Grizzle and Jack White became the first African Canadians to seek seats in the Ontario legislature for the CCF.
- Stan was the recipient of many honours, including the Order of Ontario in 1990, and the Order of Canada in 1995. In the 1990s, he was inducted into the Labour Hall of Fame.

Toronto & York Region Labour Council - Equity Committee - 2021

Labour's Black Leaders



Jack White

IRON WORKERS, CUPE

- Originally from Halifax, Jack was the first black hired to work in the Car Department of the CNR (Halifax).
- He became the first black representative elected in the Iron Workers Union. After a period as interim Director of Social Services at the OFL, Jack was hired as a National Staff Rep by CUPE (one of the first minority members in that position).
- Alongside Stanley Grizzle, they were the first Black candidates to run for the Ontario legislature.
- Over the next two decades he serviced many locals and made a significant contribution in the area of Workers Compensation.

Toronto & York Region Labour Council - Equity Committee - 2021

Labour's Black Leaders



1968-2020

Megan Whitfield

PRESIDENT

CANADIAN UNION OF POSTAL WORKERS, TORONTO LOCAL

- Megan began her career at Canada Post in 1998 as a postal clerk.
- It did not take her very long to become involved with the union – first as a shop steward – and by 2014, she became the first Black woman elected President of the Toronto local.
- An ally to workers worldwide in the fight against oppression, she was a dynamic and fearless leader at the forefront of struggles for pay equity, health and safety, full-time staffing, and respect at the workplace.

Toronto & York Region Labour Council - Equity Committee - 2021

Labour's Black Leaders



June Veacock

DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND RACE RELATIONS

ONTARIO FEDERATION OF LABOUR

- An anti-racism activist and Human Rights advocate, June was the first Black woman to work for a central labour organization when she became Director of Human Rights for the Ontario Federation of Labour in 1986.
- June championed the case of a group of Black and Visible Minority nurses which brought the first successful case of systemic discrimination on the grounds of race to the Ontario Human Rights Commission in 1994.
- Among her many other accomplishments, June was founding member of the Ontario Coalition of Black Trade Unionists.

Toronto & York Region Labour Council - Equity Committee - 2021

Labour's Black Leaders

Labour Council's 150th Anniversary

This year – April 12th, 2021 – marks the 150th anniversary of the Toronto & York Region Labour Council. For a century and a half working people have organized collectively here for economic and social justice. That epic journey will be celebrated over the coming months as we share the stories of those who came before us, and the lessons of solidarity that guide our movement today.

We are in the “Dish with One Spoon Territory,” a treaty between the Anishinaabe, Mississaugas and Haudenosaunee. Our story began on the land of Indigenous communities, and it has been forged by those who have come from around the world as immigrants or refugees to build Canada's largest urban centre. Each generation learns that in order to have a fair share of the prosperity they create, people need collective representation.

From the beginning our Council defined itself as a movement of social unionism, embracing broader goals than just workplace contracts. Our founders believed in the principle “What we desire for ourselves, we wish for all”. They fought for economic and social justice, and after the Second World War racial justice became part of our core purpose. In recent decades, climate justice has become the fourth pillar of our work.

Today the Labour Council represents 220,000 women and men from every sector of the economy. Our collective efforts have strengthened the communities in which we work and live, and helped sustain vital public services and programs.

From personal accounts and letters to video documentaries; from songs to photo exhibits; from statues and wall murals to podcasts... we will explore partnerships with a variety of public institutions and media sources across the region to bring labour's rich and diverse history to the widest possible audience.

An essential part of this journey is the role of individual unions. We hope to feature every union's history on an online platform that includes a variety of media – video, digital images, photos, short stories - and an anniversary book. We plan to spotlight the contributions of 150 individuals over the coming year, starting this February with the Black History Month Profiles of Courage seen here and on our social media.

In the sweep of history working people in Toronto have been on a remarkable journey since 1871. Those who started 150 years ago – the equivalent of seven generations – laid a solid foundation for justice in Canada's largest urban centre. We hope to inspire a new generation of activists who will continue to lead these efforts in the decades to come.




Urgent – Legislate Paid Sick Time!

Paid sick leaves save lives. The evidence for this is so clear during the pandemic, resulting in unity among unlikely allies including public health experts and advocates, mayors, progressive business groups and the labour movement. They all call for the Ontario government to implement paid sick days so all workers can take paid time to be tested, isolate while they await test results, or quarantine if diagnosed with COVID-19. Everyone has been saying this for months now – but so far Doug Ford has refused to listen.

We know that people are going to work sick. During the stay-at-home order, frontline workers are still encouraged to go to work. Many have jobs where they are likelier to get COVID, to be paid less and have few or no benefits, no paid sick time, and precarious job security. They can't access vaccines. Getting food on the table doesn't pause if they need to take time off work.

Doug Ford's Conservatives repealed paid sick days soon after their election in 2018, along with other roll-backs to Employment Standards. This was a huge bonus for some of the wealthiest companies in Canada, taking millions out of the pockets of their workers and reducing safety during the

**ALL WORKERS NEED
PAID SICK DAYS**

PERMANENT  **IMMEDIATE**  **NO BARRIERS** 

**Call Premier Doug Ford:
416-325-1941**

or send an email:
decentworkandhealth.org/paidsickdays

pandemic. In the face of growing pressure, Ford deflects responsibility by saying people can use the federal benefit. But experts and anyone who tries to access the Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit know there are shortcomings in the program, especially for those who live paycheck to paycheck. And the CRSB is only a temporary solution.

It is clear we need permanent, legislated paid sick days for all workers in this province. Labour and community are supporting the campaign led by 15andFairness and Decent Work and Health. Ontario NDP's Bill 239 would provide workers with 7 paid sick days and an additional 14 paid sick days during public health outbreaks. Let's get this fixed now!

Covid in the Workplace

With COVID cases reaching new levels, the challenge to protect workers and their communities has never been greater. For those where the virus struck close to home they understand the pain behind the daily statistical announcements. For those confronting the virus at work the resulting stress is often overwhelming - unimaginable unless you are one of those on the front lines of this pandemic.

Efforts must be redoubled in workplaces deemed “essential”. For as long as the pandemic lasts, workers, their representatives, supervisors and employers will need every tool available to them to safeguard workers, their families, friends and communities. There is wider recognition of the potential for airborne transmission, so enhanced ventilation in indoor work settings and public spaces is critical. In Ontario, the use of masks or face coverings is mandatory in all indoor public spaces, including workplaces.

By law, employers must take every reasonable precaution to protect workers from COVID-19. Worker representatives of joint health and safety committees have a legal right to participate in the development of COVID-19 precautions and their evaluation through workplace inspections. Beyond implementing precautions, employers also have an ongoing requirement to provide workers with information, instruction and competent supervision under the Act.

The Workers Health & Safety Centre have been updating and expanding resources to ensure all workers have access to the information and training they need to exercise their rights and responsibilities. Don't hesitate to reach out to this crucial resource created by our labour movement – find out more at whsc.on.ca.



When Canada was a world leader in vaccine research and production

As the Trudeau government struggles to figure out how to get a coronavirus vaccine to Canadians, one thing is clear: this task would be a lot easier if the Mulroney government hadn't privatized Connaught Labs three decades ago. The sale of the remarkable Connaught Labs to foreign interests made no sense back then, and it makes even less sense today.

Indeed, it's ironic — and infuriating — that we find ourselves in a disadvantaged position regarding the coronavirus vaccine since Connaught was a world leader in vaccine development and production. If Connaught Labs still existed today, its scientists would almost certainly be involved in the quest to come up with a coronavirus vaccine, working collaboratively with other researchers — just as they played a key role in helping U.S. virologist Jonas Salk develop the polio vaccine in the 1950s.

From the early part of the 20th century, Connaught created and produced high-quality medical treatments and vaccines for Canadians, including vaccines for smallpox, tetanus, diphtheria and whooping cough, as Canadian medical historian Christopher Rutty has documented. Connaught had so distinguished itself as a vaccine producer that when the World Health Organization (WHO) launched a global campaign to eradicate smallpox in the 1960s, it turned to Connaught for help.

In that campaign, Connaught was tasked with improving standards for smallpox vaccine production throughout the Western hemisphere. Connaught scientists travelled to 12 Latin American countries to teach Connaught's methods.

And, at WHO's request, Connaught produced a stockpile of 25 million doses of the smallpox vaccine in case of an outbreak in Latin America. Clearly, Connaught had ample facilities for vaccine production and had been on the cutting edge of vaccine innovation internationally.

The biotech lab was started in 1914 by Toronto doctor John G. FitzGerald who was appalled that large num-

bers of Canadian children were dying during a diphtheria epidemic because their parents couldn't afford the only treatment available. FitzGerald experimented and developed an antitoxin that could treat diphtheria, and then, with lab space provided by U of T, went on to develop affordable treatments and vaccines for other deadly diseases.

Connaught Labs always put Canadian needs first. Its main customers were provincial governments, to which it provided its products at cost. Even so, Connaught managed to be financially self-sufficient, earning profits by selling its vaccines in the global market, where it outperformed U.S. and European commercial vaccine producers.

But, sadly, Connaught got swept up in the privatization frenzy that gripped Brian Mulroney's Conservative government in the 1980s as it sought to please the business world by selling off some of Canada's best publicly owned enterprises. Today, what remains of Connaught has been absorbed into the vaccine division of foreign-owned pharmaceutical giant Sanofi.

What makes our predicament today particularly galling is that Ottawa invests roughly \$1 billion a year to fund medical research by scientists at Canadian universities. The scientists are permitted to take out patents on the products they develop (with our money), and then sell them to pharmaceutical manufacturers, who sell the products to the public — often at great profit.

We've ventured a long way, unfortunately, from the days when we had a publicly owned and medically innovative enterprise that dazzled on the world stage and kept Canadians at the front of the line for vaccines.

No longer.

(Excerpted from article in the Toronto Star)

By Linda McQuaig

Victory for Tropicana Workers



Tropicana workers ratified their first collective agreement and ended their 7-week strike a mere two days before Christmas. It took over a year and a half since workers unionized and began the collective struggle to achieve a first collective agreement with modest wage increase and other workplace protections.

The strike revealed the management's deep anti-worker orientation, including hiring a racist anti-union consultant and egregious misuse of untold thousands of public funds on security guards and strike-breakers.

Tropicana workers along with all of the SEIU Local 2 would like to extend a warm thank you to the many elected representatives, community leaders, parents, labour unions, and community members who came out in support of workers during their strike.

The open letter in community media by Black union leaders was just one of the many actions that helped them win justice.

AN OPEN LETTER TO TROPICANA DIRECTORS AND MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

As Black Trade Union and community leaders, we are deeply concerned about the conduct of Tropicana Community Services that is at the root cause of the current labour dispute. We support Tropicana workers in their basic right to have a first collective agreement and fair working conditions.

Signed,



Marie Clarke Walker -
Canadian Labour
Congress



Craig Reynolds -
Public Service Alliance of
Canada



Yolanda McLean -
Canadian Union of Public
Employees



Danica Izzard -
Ontario Secondary School
Teachers Federation



Jonathon Lobo -
United Food & Commercial
Workers



Tyler Downey -
SEIU Healthcare



Abdi Hagi Yusuf -
Canadian Union of Postal
Workers



Chris Wilson -
Coalition of Black Trade
Unionists



Janice Gairey -
Coalition of Black Trade
Unionists



Brandon Haynes -
Toronto Public Library
Workers



Jennifer Brown -
Elementary Teachers of
Toronto



Mark Brown -
Canadian Union of Postal
Workers



Felicia Samuel -
Elementary Teachers of
Toronto



Nigel Barriffe -
Urban Alliance on Race
Relations

Take Profit out of Long-Term Care

Every day we see the shocking loss of life and neglect in long-term care in Ontario. Last spring, Doug Ford called for an “iron ring” to protect LTC residents and workers but did nothing. The reality is, Ford has failed: our elderly are neglected, suffering and dying; families are ignored, and workers abandoned.

AUSTERITY

The pandemic exposed – and exacerbated – the chasms in our LTC system. LTC is not adequately funded. With inflation, population growth, and successive governments committed to austerity-based budgeting, provincial funding has not kept pace with need. Long before COVID-19 some seniors died alone because of staffing shortages.

MIKE HARRIS MADE LONG-TERM CARE “OPEN FOR BUSINESS”

Funding shortfalls are just the beginning of the problem. Doug Ford’s Conservative predecessor Mike Harris deliberately shaped the approach that resulted in the slow decay and now horrific situation in LTC.

- As part of his Common Sense Revolution in the 1990s Harris repealed long-term care standards and staffing ratios
- Harris Conservatives allocated precious provincial long-term care capital funding to their political contributors to build more for-profit facilities
- For-profit homes render fewer hours and lower quality of care, lower wages and heavier workloads for staff, and more medical transfers to hospital than either municipal and non-profit homes



- In 2020, three big private LTC chains paid out more than \$171 million in dividends to shareholders
- As part time chair of Chartwell Homes’ Board, Harris earns \$237,000 a year

THE LINK BETWEEN HARRIS AND FORD

At present, over half of Ontario’s 630 LTC homes are for-profit, while 16% are public, and 27% are non-profit. The for-profit sector is increasingly “financialized”, meaning chain homes are treated more like stock market commodities than care homes. Yet Ford continues in his determination to mirror Harris and grow the for-profit footprint in LTC.

- In November 2020, the Conservatives awarded a number of contracts to private LTC corporations, many of which have roots in the development industry, to expand the number of for-profit beds
- Ford curtailed the legal liability of operators for negligence that results in harm or death of residents

FORD’S FAILURE

Ford and his Long-Term Care Minister Merilee Fullerton have utterly failed in dealing with the fatal damage COVID has inflicted on LTC residents and workers.

- Unlike in Quebec which recruited and paid for three months' training of PSWs between the two COVID waves, Ontario did nothing to prepare for the second wave
- The roll-out of a recent government-funded wage top-up for LTC was a complete mess
- The Ford government continues its appeal of a pay equity ruling in the sector
- The Conservative promise to require an average four hours of daily care is postponed until 2025

Today, the situation is disastrous. The LTC system is in trouble. But it is clear there is a particular problem in the for-profit sector: with double the number of COVID outbreaks, 78% more resident deaths have happened in for-profit homes than elsewhere. Apologists have tried to argue that the key issue is the age of buildings, or how many four-bed rooms a facility has, not the dynamics of profit-taking. The new common sense is that profit has no place in long-term care. Even some pension plans are pulling their investments for ethical reasons.

PRIVATE PROFIT AT PUBLIC EXPENSE CREATES MULTIPLE CRISES

Along with a health crisis, we have a gender crisis, a racism crisis, and a working class crisis. In long-term care, women represent more than two-thirds of residents and 90 % of paid staff (in the GTA, most staff are also racialized). More than 80 percent of unpaid

family caregivers are women. We see disrespect for workers and the working class, as we watch private profit grow at public expense.

Labour Council demands that the Ontario government:

- Immediately prioritize staffing through recruitment and intensive training
- Adequately fund long-term care and shift as quickly as possible to a minimum four hours of care per resident
- Regulate long-term care, ensuring accountability, enforcement and penalties for non-compliance
- Ensure adequate wages for staff and 70% full-time jobs and provide mental health supports
- Prioritize vaccinations for all LTC residents, staff and essential caregivers
- Support shut down measures to reduce community transmission
- Agree to negotiate inclusion of long-term care as part of our health care system under a parallel to the Canada Health Act
- Stop development of new private long-term care facilities and provide that funding to municipalities
- Transition away from private ownership of long-term care by revoking licences of negligent operators, ending renewals for any private chains
- Provide and fund adequate home care support so seniors can stay at home safely if they wish to, for as long as possible



Honouring Black Construction Workers



Rosemarie Powell,
Toronto Community Benefits
Network



Desiree Smith is among the Black women working in construction.



Yolanda McClean,
CBTU Ontario

Each day, right across Toronto and the rest of Canada, millions traverse their neighbourhoods and cities and towns in all parts of the country. It's certain that few people ever think of who would have constructed the homes, apartments, offices and other imposing edifices that dominate the landscape. Fewer still will know that many of the construction projects in Canada involve the work of Black Canadians.

Skilled artisanship is not a new phenomenon in the lives of Black people, whether they live in Africa, the Caribbean, Canada or the United States. The construction of the pyramids involved moving huge quantities of limestone blocks that were transported along the Nile River. Today, more than 100 of these amazing masonry structures are still to be seen in Egypt. The Pyramid of Khufu is the largest Egyptian pyramid. It's the only one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World still existing. Another sterling example of African skilled workmanship was in southern Nigeria. Its capital was known as Benin City, which dates back to the 11th century. The planning and design of Benin City followed done according to careful rules of symmetry and proportionality.

Today, Black Canadians run their own construction companies. Some are architects and designers. Many are involved in various skilled trades. Others are leaders in unions representing construction workers.

"These are good jobs and they are rewarding jobs. Especially here in Ontario, these are good unionized opportunities, where you can really earn a sustainable income for yourself and your family," says Rosemarie Powell, executive director of the Toronto Community Benefits Network (TCBN).

TCBN, established just over five years ago, is a coalition of 120 members drawn from community and labour organizations and groups and social enterprises. Among its membership are Ontario's largest construction unions. TCBN was founded to address the challenges of access to good jobs, local economic

development and neighbourhood revitalization, with the goal of ensuring Toronto becomes “an inclusive, thriving city in which all residents have equitable opportunities to contribute to healthy communities and a prospering economy”.

To support these goals, TCBN also established the NextGen Builders Mentoring Program. The mentorship initiative was piloted in 2018 to prepare racialized workers, women, and newcomers – groups that have been historically under-represented in the construction industry – to enter the workforce of skilled trades’ employees. It was initiated with the vital support of the LiUNA African-Canadian Caucus.

Chris Campbell, labour co-chair of TCBN, is the Equity and Diversity Representative of the Carpenters’ District Council of Ontario. Campbell is encouraging more young Black men and women to consider careers in the construction industry where, even as an apprentice, “you have the best pension, you have best benefits and you have free training once you’re a member of the union”, he says.

The Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU) has given its complete support to TCBN and its NextGen Program. “It’s not just having young people doing the job but also about the retention of the job,” Says



Chris Campbell, Carpenters Local 27

Yolanda McClean, CBTU president and a national executive board member of CUPE. “The retention is really our key.”

TCBN’s negotiations with employers have led to equity hiring on a number of construction job sites, including the Eglinton Crosstown transit line that is being built by Metrolinx. More than 350 workers from equity-seeking groups have obtained employment on the Eglinton Crosstown subway project. And it is helping the City of Toronto shape its Community Benefits Framework.

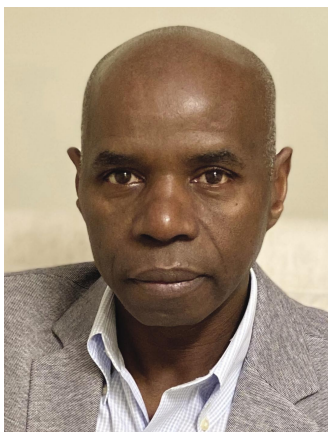
“Jobs like these are opportunities to help build the infrastructure in your community and in your country,” Powell argues. “When we invest locally, that money remains locally, for the most part; it gets circulated within the economy and it is going to help to build the economy within our local communities and within our Black community in particular.”

TCBN not just strives to increase black representation in construction and the skilled trades, but Powell believes that not enough recognition has been awarded to African-Canadians’ contribution to infrastructural building in Ontario and Canada.

“Many of the Black trades people, who for years have been working to build up infrastructure in our communities have not gotten the recognition they deserve. It’s just so important that there is a recognition of the hard work and sweat that Black people have put into building up this country.’ Find out more at communitybenefits.ca.

Excerpted from article in Caribbean Camera

By Lincoln DePradine



**Mamadou Bah,
LiUNA Local 506**



**Anthony Tubbs,
LiUNA Local 183**

Breakthrough in Climate Jobs



The “jobs vs. environment” debate has raged on since the idea of a Green New Deal rose to national prominence in recent years. In New York state, unions and environmentalists have ignored that framing, instead rolling up their sleeves and spending the last six years forging a strong alliance rooted in a concrete program for renewable energy job growth.

New York has started to build the largest offshore wind project in North America, along with the Danish company Ørsted. The project is key for the state’s goal of obtaining 70 percent of its energy from renewable energy by 2030. These offshore wind turbines will generate thirty gigawatts of offshore wind capacity that could supply millions of homes with clean energy, as well as create some 80,000 quality union jobs.

A Jobs-Led Strategy

The progress with New York unions on the issue of climate change is the fruit of years of patient and constructive organizing work. In the wake of Hurricane Sandy, unions in the state got together to develop a serious plan to address climate change that would center working people.

Climate Jobs NY was formed as the coalition vehicle to move this program forward. A deliberate approach was taken to ensure that workers who would be impacted by an energy transition were the ones that crafted the agenda. Mike Fishman, former Secretary-Treasurer of SEIU, has been a key architect of the

coalition’s strategy, along with Gary LaBarbera of the New York Building Trades. Fishman was a key-note speaker at the WorkingGreen 2050 kickoff event sponsored by Labour Council and the Labour Education Centre.

Lara Skinner, executive director of the Worker Institute at Cornell, explained, “Climate change impacts working people. There are some major opportunities here for labour if we can get ahead of this thing. What we’ve done is a very investment-led strategy, a very jobs-led strategy.”

Their approach was to focus on the projects that both labor unions and environmentalists could get behind. The policy platform of Climate Jobs NY reflects this vision of pursuing goals that create good union jobs and benefit the broader public. Ambitious but practical, the platform includes the expansion of mass transit, construction of high speed rail, 7.5 gigawatts of offshore wind energy by 2025, and the retrofitting of all public schools.

The New York experience has led to coalition work in other US States. Through the Climate Jobs National Resource Center, an entire program taking shape that working people can understand and support. This can only be achieved through an approach that puts workers in the driver’s seat and builds maximum unity around concrete objectives. The Ørsted offshore wind project shows the vast possibilities that exist for workers to use their skills to transform the future.

Retail Workers Rising with Indigo Organizing Victories!

This past September, workers at Chapters Indigo bookstores began an exciting organizing campaign that quickly spread across the country. It began with the workers from the Indigo store at Square One in Mississauga. In addition to low wages, inconsistent hours, unfairness and lack of job security, the book-sellers were being forced to clean customer washrooms. Prior to contacting UFCW, the workers had petitioned management to close customer washrooms, particularly since there had already been Covid-19 outbreaks at the shopping mall. Management refused and threatened to terminate anyone who would not clean the washroom. That's when the workers contacted the union.

The campaign led by the Indigo Square One workers became a model of how to effectively organize during the pandemic. These young, politically conscious workers reached out across their networks and garnered support from activists, politicians and authors, including Olivia Chow, Zoe Whittall, Naomi Klein, Libby Davies and Matthew Green. This support directly contributed to helping the workers defeat the company's anti-union machine.

As soon as the 40 workers at Square One won their vote, another campaign began at the Chapters in Coquitlam, B.C. Picking up where the workers began in Mississauga, the young workers in Coquitlam utilized their networks to secure community support, culminating with a visit to the store from Jagmeet Singh on the eve of their vote.

Soon after the successful Coquitlam vote, Indigo workers in Montreal unionized their store. And then a fourth store unionized at the beginning of 2021. Continuing to use a combination of virtual meetings, electronic card-signing, and effective social media

campaigning, the 45 workers at the Indigo store in Woodbridge won another landslide victory on January 8. The workers in Woodbridge and Square One are now members of UFCW Local 1006A. They have elected their negotiating committees, conducted their proposal meetings, and have commenced collective bargaining.

The movement to unionize Indigo is something that can provide us all with hope and inspiration. What began in Mississauga was made possible by workers who were active with a variety of social and community movements that could be called upon to help workers win their union. As Jennifer Mitchell, one of leaders at Square One, said: "When we win this vote I will be proud to be part of a community of people committed to ensuring fairness and justice for all workers!"



YES, IT MATTERS!

SELF-CARE KIT AGAINST RACISM



Racism and discrimination continue to negatively affect the lives of people of colour. One of the many places it shows its ugly face is in the workplace. At times, racism is obvious, such as the use of racial slurs, graffiti, or even violence. However, many times it is subtle, such as assumptions, or exclusion.

Regardless of how people of colour experience racism and discrimination, it causes added stress and challenges to their lives. This poster is designed to help people of colour find ways to cope with, and address racism and discrimination in the workplace.

RACE-RELATED STRESS IS REAL

Being the "diversity hire" to fill a company or organization's yearly quota can be a huge burden. You may feel added pressure to perform on behalf of your community, defy stereotypes, and "prove yourself." There are many consequences when these issues are not addressed. Suppressing your feelings or experiences of racism or discrimination can have many negative outcomes, especially for your mental health.

RECOGNIZE THE SIGNS

- A sense of being isolated and an outsider
- Feeling fearful, anxious, frustrated, helpless, depressed, or angry
- Consistent thoughts of quitting
- Difficulties with concentration and motivation
- Being unsure or confused about whether one is being treated differently because of race or ethnicity
- Decreased self-esteem
- Fear of repeat discrimination
- Substance misuse or overuse
- Reluctance to be a "team player"

GET EMPOWERED

It can feel defeating to experience racism or discrimination at work. That's why it's so important to push back, in the best way YOU know how. Here are just some of the ways you can do it:

- Use humour to challenge offensive statements
- Start an anti-racism group to educate people
- Write about it (either publicly or privately) - this can help you keep track of different instances
- Reflect on what you admire about your race and/or culture

FIND SUPPORT

Finding people to speak to who are sympathetic or going through similar experiences may not resolve the issue, but it can help you release stress and reduce feelings of isolation.



PRACTICE SELF-CARE

Filing a report to your manager or union representative may not result in a positive outcome, and going through the Human Rights Commission can be lengthy and exhausting. It's normal to have feelings of hopelessness.

Practicing self-care can help you cope in a positive way. This is key to improving your mood and reducing stress. It may include:

- Spending time outdoors
- Sleep
- Practicing a healthy lifestyle (exercise, eating healthy)
- Cook or bake
- Meditation
- Exercise
- Volunteer
- Trying a new hobby (i.e. music, painting)

REPORT RACISM

It's your right to report racism or discrimination in the workplace to a person of authority. You can go to your Human Resources department, tell your manager, or speak to your union representative. If your internal complaint results in zero action, you may consider turning to the Human Rights Commission.



AFTER THE NOOSES

Last summer Torontonians were sickened by the placing of nooses on a number of construction jobsites in the city. Unions and contractors immediately issue statements condemning these acts of hate, and workplace meetings held by unions made it clear there would be zero tolerance for racist acts. In the case of Michael Garron Hospital incident, criminal charges were finally laid. In another case the culprit was immediately fired and his union membership removed. But far more needs to be done.

Community members mobilized, spurring Mayor John Tory to convene meetings of developers, contractors and unions to address the issue. Labour Council worked with affiliated construction unions

to create a plan that would be “actionable and intentional” – with concrete steps to be followed. Outreach took place to employer groups and key builders to support a sustained approach.

The entire industry has now endorsed a ***Declaration of Inclusive Workplaces and Communities***, acknowledging that systemic racism is a reality, committing to addressing it and affirming that the industry needs to be safe and welcoming for everyone who helps build our city. The next steps are to implement industry-wide anti-racism training – starting with apprentices and supervisors, and to develop ongoing programs that build a culture of safety and inclusion for all.

TORONTO Declaration of Inclusive Workplaces & Communities

The construction industry in greater Toronto is one of the strongest and most dynamic sectors of our economy. It owes its success to the hard work and tenacity of people at every level of the industry – including those born here and those whose families have come from elsewhere to build a better life.

As developers, contractors, supervisors and skilled workers, we recognize that systemic racism is a reality in today’s world, and that discrimination in any form harms our construction community. Dividing people because of race, religion, colour, ancestry or any other difference which undermines human rights serves only to weaken our industry and our society.

We commit to standing up for the rights and dignity of all in order to promote inclusive, equitable, safe and respectful workplaces and communities.

THIS IS WHY WE AFFIRM THAT:

- The dignity of every person is essential to a safe, healthy and vibrant workplace, and we will work together to create welcoming and inclusive workplaces and training opportunities.
- Anti-Black racism, bigotry, or discrimination of any kind has no place in our workplaces or communities.
- Our industry will have zero tolerance for discrimination or acts of hate against anyone in our workplaces or enterprises.
- We will develop policies, programs and initiatives at every level of the industry to reduce and eliminate racism, intolerance and bigotry.

THE REAL COST OF UBER + LYFT



A new coalition has been formed to challenge the unfair impact of the gig economy on workers and public services in the GTA. RideFairTO brings together taxi and ride-hailing drivers, public transit workers, environmental organizations, cycling and pedestrian advocates, labour and community groups.

Ride-hailing companies like Uber and Lyft have made it easier for people to summon and pay for trips in a private vehicle. Unfortunately, the lack of sensible regulation and the exponential growth comes with serious side effects. Digital platforms offered the promise of easy mobility but ended up contributing to clogging up city streets, rising carbon emissions, and replacing taxi jobs with even more precarious work.

With fares subsidized by international venture capital, ride-hailing companies like Uber have also undercut public transit. By moving public transit users into thousands of individual cars, they are eroding transit authorities' capacity to provide (and grow) an effective public transit network.

Like other internet-based companies, ride-hailing platforms seem to play by their own rules. They extract value from our communities by using public infrastructure, but don't pay anything back in taxes or decent jobs. They facilitate a race to the bottom that needs to stop.

In February, Ridefair Toronto released a report to

show that, in 2019 alone, the Toronto Transit Commission lost an estimated 31 million transit users to Uber and Lyft. Moving these users into private vehicles not only translates into estimated lost revenue of \$74 million, but it also adds to congestion and greenhouse gas emissions.

These findings mirror reports from other major transit rich cities in North America like Chicago, San Francisco and New York, where ride-hailing has grown rapidly, and public transit ridership has fallen. Uber arrived in Toronto in 2014 and initially operated in violation of existing regulations. Two years later, the City of Toronto largely de-regulated its vehicle-for-hire sector to allow it to operate legally. Lyft started operating in 2017 and by early 2018, average daily ride-hailing trips exceeded 100,000. Since then, research has mounted to show that ride-hailing companies neither provided the good jobs it promised, nor managed to reduce vehicular use.

In California, the two companies spent an estimated \$200 million to defeat legislation that would require them to treat drivers as employees with the right to decent wages and conditions. Here in Toronto, the fight is on to ensure ride-hailing can begin to operate in ways that protect our transit system, public spaces, workers dignity and the environment. Find out more at ridefair.ca.



CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

Bromley L. Armstrong Awards



Bromley L. Armstrong demonstrated a lifelong commitment to the trade union movement and the battle against disadvantage and discrimination. For more than six decades, Armstrong worked for human rights, helping to generate civic and government support for racial equality and advocating for human rights reforms in public policy.

The prestigious Bromley L. Armstrong Award is presented to an individual part of a Toronto & York Region Labour Council affiliated union, who has demonstrated excellence in areas of labour equity, human rights, and inclusion. For the first time, there will also be an award presented to a union that has taken important steps to act on the many policies and protocols against systemic racism.

The awards will be presented during the annual Bromley Gala, a celebratory and inspiring evening, which will be held virtually on May 26, 2021.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS: MARCH 26, 2021

For full details and to complete the nomination forms, please visit our website below. Stay tuned for further event details. We look forward to your nominations!

WWW.LABOURCOMMUNITYSERVICES.CA/BROMLEYGALA

REFUGEE NEXT DOOR

NEW EDUCATIONAL VIDEO AVAILABLE REFUGEES IN CANADA: FACTS AND MYTHS

Canada has historically welcomed refugees from all parts of the world, fleeing war, political oppression, hunger and environmental degradation of their home countries. To fight against all divisive myths about refugees, the Refugee Next Door Advisory Committee, comprised of Labour Community Services staff and union leaders, have put together an educational and informational video: *Refugees in Canada: Facts and Myths*.

Through highlighting facts, while dispelling myths about refugees and the refugee experience, we hope that everyone will find the presentation a useful tool in understanding and standing up for human rights.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE TO WATCH

Visit our website below to watch the video and learn more about the Refugee Next Door Campaign. For any questions, please contact Sharon Simpson at: ssimpson@labourcommunityservices.ca



WWW.LABOURCOMMUNITYSERVICES.CA/REFUGEE NEXT DOOR



The Toronto International Women's Day March is the largest in North America. This is the first year the rally is being held virtually, under the slogan "Rising Above the Pandemic". iwdtoronto.ca

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MAKING GOOD TROUBLE*



**SUNDAY
MARCH 21ST
3:00 PM**

To register:

tinyurl.com/IDERD2021

*Slogan of John Lewis, legendary civil rights leader



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How we dismantle systemic racism
In workplaces • In schools • In healthcare • In society



**International Day
for the
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