



SOCIETY *of*
UNITED PROFESSIONALS
IFPTE 160

PRIDE & SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE

REPORT 2017-2018



This year the Pride & Solidarity Committee was established as an equity committee of the Society of United Professionals. The first meeting was held on Oct 27th, 2017 and met eight times during this reporting period. The Committee mandate is to advance lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans*, questioning, queer, and two spirited issues (LGBTQ2) in the workplace, the union and the communities where we live.

We have started an email distribution list of members that have shown interest in LGBTQ2 issues and in May 2018 we circulated our first e-newsletter to this list updating them about the committee and committee activities.

COMMITTEE PURPOSE:

- Provide a means to identify economic, social and career-related issues impacting LGBTQ2 members in the workplace and incorporate these issues into Society Policies, recommendations for collective agreement language and other activities;
- Encourage the participation of LGBTQ2 members at all levels of Society activities;
- Recommend to Society Council/Executive Board/Executive Committee the elimination of specifically identified systemic barriers to full participation of LGBTQ2 members in the Society;
- Provide a means for the Society to participate and/or support other groups and organizations on matters of importance to LGBTQ2 members in the community and the broader labour movement;
- Promote, through the Education, Activism and Communication, and other Society Committees, the continuing education of our members on areas of equity and rights within the Society;
- Plan, support and recommend educational programs and resources which address the needs of LGBTQ2 members;

MEMBERS OF THE PRIDE & SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE:

- Stephen Celestial, Inergi
- Monica Correa-Builes, Hydro One
- Gail Filicant, IESO
- Renée Fuchs, LAO
- Morgan Koch, LAO
- Laurie Reid, OEB
- Cindy Roks, IESO
- Garrett Zehr, LAO

COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

MAY 17, 2018 - GALA FOR INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST HOMOPHOBIA

May 17th 2018 was the International Day Against Homophobia & Transphobia. To commemorate the day, ten Society members attended the International Day Against Homophobia & Transphobia Gala put on by the Canadian Centre for Gender & Sexual Diversity.

We celebrated several individuals whose work has advanced LGBTQ2 rights, such as Christopher Karas who submitted a complaint against his high school to the Human Rights Tribunal when he claimed the school denied requests for a Gay-Straight Alliance as well as other homophobic discrimination.

Fred Hahn, president of CUPE Ontario, and the first openly gay president of a major union in Ontario, was presented with an award for his activism within the LGBTQ2 community. Martine Roy was presented an award for her role as a lead plaintiff in a class action lawsuit against the federal government who “purged” homosexuals from the military and public service for their sexual orientation.



JUNE 23-24, 2018 - KINCARDINE AND TORONTO PRIDE PARADES

June is Pride month, a time to recognize the progress made toward human rights for people who identify as LGBTQ2. The Pride & Solidarity Committee coordinated the Society's participation in two pride marches: the Kincardine Pride March on June 23rd, and the Toronto Pride March on June 24th.



JUNE 27, 2018 - CO-HOSTED PRIDE FUNDRAISER

Our Pride & Solidarity Committee co-hosted a movie night fundraiser with the Canadian Labour International Film Festival (CLiFF). We screened the movie *Pride*, a 2014 comedy based on a true story of allyship between lesbian and gay activists and labour unions. We raised over \$1500 that will support and be split between the Canadian Labour International Film Festival and LGBT Youthline.

LGBT Youth Line is a Queer, Trans, Two-Spirit* youth-led organization that affirms and supports the experiences of youth (29 and under) across Ontario by providing anonymous peer support and referrals, training youth to provide support to other youth, and providing resources so youth can make informed decisions.



AUGUST 2018 - SOCIETY ENDORSEMENT OF COMMUNITY CONSENSUS STATEMENT

The Pride and Solidarity committee brought forward the Community Consensus Statement to End the Unjust Criminalization of HIV to the Society Executive Board to consider endorsement. Committee member and Legal Aid Ontario Lawyer, Garrett Zehr presented on behalf of the Pride and Solidarity Committee. The Statement outlines a shared critique of why Canada's approach to HIV criminalization is wrong and calls for specific actions that federal, provincial, and territorial governments should take to end unjust criminal prosecutions against people living with HIV. It represents a consensus of groups seeking to lessen the stigma for Canadians living with HIV. The statement includes asks of Attorneys-General and governments to have all Canadian legal frameworks recognize advances in scientific knowledge on HIV transmission. The Society Executive Board members voted to endorse the Community Consensus Statement to end the unjust criminalization of HIV at the August 2018 board meeting.

Securing the Society's endorsement for the statement was an important initiative for the Pride and Solidarity Committee. The support of the individuals of the Committee and the Board was heartfelt and sincere. We are very proud the Society is lending its voice to those calling for justice.

OCTOBER 20, 2018 - ALLYSHIP TRAINING WORKSHOP

The Sisters in Society, Pride & Solidarity Committee, Aboriginal Relations Committee, and Young Professionals Network hosted an allyship training workshop for members of these committees to support their continued work on inclusivity.

The workshop was led by Whitney Parnell, a rising black millennial activist, singer, and the Co-Founder and CEO of Service Never Sleeps (SNS), a non-profit organization that mobilizes communities to promote "Allyship". The workshop included the importance of allyship using an equity lens to provide insight for improving our union work and the fight for social justice. The workshop taught about the causes of social injustice, how to be effective allies for marginalized communities, and how to actively influence and educate others.



NOVEMBER 16, 2018 - MOVIE NIGHT SOCIAL

It is really important to the committee that members have opportunities to meet other members and union activists who care about the issue of LGBTQ2 inclusion in our workplaces.

The Solidarity & Pride committee is hosting our first movie night social on Friday, 16 Nov at the Society office. It is a free event and open to Society members who identify as members of the LGBTQ2 community or as an ally. We're also inviting members from other labour unions who are doing work with their unions on LGBTQ2 issues. We will be screening the major motion picture movie *Milk*, based on the true story of Harvey Milk the first openly gay man to be voted into major public office in America.