



December 10, 2019

On This Human Rights Day, Let's Empower our Youth

Tuesday December 10 is International Human Rights Day.

The UN's theme for International Human Rights Day 2019 is "Youth Standing Up for Human Rights," reminding us "you're never too young to change the world."

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/human-rights-day>

It Starts at Home

It's easier to think of human rights abuses as something that happen elsewhere in the world. It takes more effort and attention to be critical of our own communities. Members in communities that experience discrimination are well aware of the systems of oppression that divide all of us.

Consider some of the ongoing injustices we still have to address in our schools, workplaces, justice system, cultural institutions, and in our behaviour:

- Only 59% of Canadians with disabilities aged 25 to 64 have jobs. 80% of Canadians without disabilities have jobs.
- Black Canadians, 3.5% of the Canadian population, make up 26% of the prison population. Indigenous women, just over 2% of the Canadian population, make up 35% of the female prison population in Canada.
- The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls acknowledged a *genocide*, with thousands of victims.
- Canada practiced slavery for 200 years. Nonetheless, people of African descent have been building Canada and shaping its heritage and identity since the 1600s.
- Human rights abuses based on sexual orientation and gender identity still occur all too often in Canada and include stigmatization, censorship, discrimination in health care, jobs and housing, domestic violence, bullying against children/youth, and the denial of family rights and recognition.

The injustices are plain to see, and the underlying oppression continues to unfold even today.

Our youth can see it just as well as we can, and the UN reminds us that one of the ways we can act today is to listen to the young people who see the wrongs and empower them to make change.

Our NHRC

CUPW's National Human Rights Committee is a group of members who are elected by the membership at regional conferences to be a part of the change. The committee (pictured here) just had its first semi-annual meeting of the mandate, and brought their report and recommendations yesterday to the National Executive Board.

If you're committed to making the labour movement and our society more inclusive and just, ask your local or one of your regional Human Rights Committee reps how to become a part of this work.



Learn more at <https://www.cupw.ca/en/about-us/committees/national-human-rights-committee>

In solidarity,

Jan Simpson
National President

Bev Collins
National Secretary-Treasurer

Dave Bleakney
2nd National Vice-President

2019-2023 / Bulletin # 063

/bk cope 225