



January 31, 2017

BLACK HISTORY MONTH 2017: ROOTS AND RESISTANCE

Every February is a chance for us to reflect on the connections between Black history and our engagement with the living present. It's not just a month to reflect, and to educate, but also a time to consider the history we are now making, and make sure we take pride in our work for a better future.

2017 POSTER

This year's Black History Month poster honours Judge Juanita Westmoreland-Traoré, Québec's first black judge and the first black Dean of a law school in Canada. She is a pioneer and an inspiration, and the Université du Québec à Montréal recently began awarding a scholarship in her honour, supporting students who are dedicated to human rights and social justice.

VIOLA DESMOND

Desmond, whose struggle we honoured in our 2013 Black History Month poster, will appear on the new \$10 bill in 2018. The long road, from her arrest – for disobeying segregation in a movie theatre in 1946 – to society-wide admiration for her actions today, shows us how far-reaching our work for equity and justice can be.

CONNECTING THE PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

All our struggles exist in context. The Black Lives Matter movement builds on, and continues the work of past struggles for equity. Black Lives Matter is a platform to support campaigns against anti-Black oppression, violence, and brutality across Canada. There is always room to get involved: blacklivesmatter.ca

As we consider Viola Desmond's resistance to oppression, and Justice Westmoreland-Traoré's work to advance human rights in the legal system, we see where we are today. We must always push back against oppression until our positive values and practices become part of the fabric of our society and culture. CUPW actively works for equity and justice for all workers, and we depend on our fellow workers to support this effort.

In solidarity,

Jan Simpson
1st National Vice-President

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