

Report of the Ottawa Regional Women's Committee

The Ottawa Regional Women's Committee has had a busy start to the 2018 year. Even before our first meeting in January, many of us participated in the Women's March, which is beginning to transform into a solidarity event for many disenfranchised and oppressed people. We were pleased to see a very robust turnout at the Ottawa event and at other events across Canada and around the world. We held our annual potluck meeting, at which we explored ways to encourage and support women's participation in leadership positions across all spheres with a focus on political positions.

We invited the Joel Harden (NDP) campaign to address our sisters to talk about grassroots democracy within the political sphere, including women's roles and participation in this type of movement. We continue to encourage women to participate at all levels, and we set an example by participating in the Canadian Labour Congress lobbying day. Of course, we took the opportunity to focus on Pay Equity, and are pleased to see that the government has since tabled Pay Equity legislation, but we know there is much more work to do with respect to Pharmacare, Child Care, Pensions, etc. Many of these issues disproportionately affect women and members of other equity groups.

We sponsored members of our committee and other sisters to participate in the March 8 International Women's Day events throughout the National Capital Region, and we implemented a new practice of inviting those sisters to return to our committee and share their experiences. It was a powerful and moving reminder of the importance of our work, and will hopefully become a standard for the ORWC. Learning from this success, we decided to sponsor up to 4 women and 4 girls to attend the Women's Strength "One Woman" and "One Girl" conferences in Ottawa in April. Already, we have invited each of them to report back about their experiences.

We are looking forward to participating in the pilot training program about domestic violence, helping with the development of women's leadership training, and continuing to nurture existing and new partnerships with other committees within the PSAC and the community.

In solidarity,
Jennifer Keays
Chair, Ottawa Regional Women's Committee