

District 17 Status of Women Committee 2010-2011 Year-End Report

Monthly meetings occurred although three were cancelled due to inclement weather.

Workshops: By year-end, the committee will have successfully hosted both a fall and spring free workshop for District 17 members “*Maternity/Paternity/Parental/EI Benefits*”. This workshop is consistently in high demand and included member attendees from all Bargaining Units (Fall – 50+ members, Spring – TBD). Presenters are booked from Provincial Office at no cost to the membership. Both workshops were held offsite due to lack of space and scheduling/room conflicts at the District Office. Feedback and suggestions for the future include having the Benefit Officers or an Executive Member from each Bargaining Unit attend to address specific questions and/or concerns.

Conferences: November 19-20th, 2010 *A Women’s Place is in her Union* (triennial conference of the provincial Status of Women Committee). Overwhelming interest in attending the conference occurred, but due to limited funds and the number of delegates as assigned by the province, we only had three members of the District committee attend. The committee was pleased to see support and interest from local Bargaining Unit Executives surrounding equality and women’s issues as TBU Chief Negotiator Jennifer Campbell attended the conference as well. Workshops focused on bargaining, lobbying, social media, organizing for women, and speaking out.

Website: The D17 Status of Women Committee has continued to develop a local website to explain further details regarding the benefits and Employment Insurance process surrounding taking maternity/paternity/family leaves. The website will also serve as an information forum surrounding women and family issues. Technical difficulties have slowed the committee in finalizing details to providing the link on the District 17 webpage. The committee hopes to release the website by year-end. There has been a strong interest from members in this website and the committee plans to continue its release. A great deal of work and time-release occurred in the previous year to create documents and organize this service for members.

Community: An ongoing focus for the committee is to support local initiatives affecting women. This year we assisted the Barrie Women’s Shelter with their Spring Showers Drive to provide women leaving the shelter with articles in their new homes. The committee requested members donate items on behalf of D17. There was a positive response at many work locations to the initiative. The committee would like to continue to assist women’s shelters within our geographic area with other events in the future. During our June meeting, a motion is being proposed to make a monetary donation to the women’s shelters assisting our members.

Events: The committee is interested in engaging members in a social event for women and supporters to create positivity, promote the committee, and focus our strengths. The decrease in meetings due to inclement weather prevented further planning of the event.

The Status of Women Committee will continue to encourage members to join the committee. The committee would like to see participation and liaisons from all District 17 Bargaining Units. We currently have representation from the Teacher BU and the EA BU.

Respectfully submitted in solidarity.
Jessica Burnie, Committee Chairperson