

Toronto & York Region Labour Council

LINKING OUR STRUGGLES FOR EQUITY – *A Million Reasons to Organize*

Summary of Workshop Recommendations

Workshop 1 - WORKERS/ HUMAN RIGHTS - THEN AND NOW

1. Survey local affiliates to find out which unions have a human rights committee, and offer assistance for those that want to set one up.
2. Compile a directory of some of the best Human Rights language in Collective Agreements and make it available on the website
3. Advocate to unions that they incorporate anti-racism training for all leaders and staff, and offer courses through Labour Community Services or Labour Education Centre

Workshop 2 - HEALTH, EDUCATION AND SOCIAL PROGRAMS

1. Develop an ongoing fight-back against the tide of privatization, particularly in healthcare
2. Work to restore and strengthen a full equity agenda in all school boards in Toronto and York Region
3. Through the Million Reasons campaign, strengthen the understanding and commitment to restoring the “social wage” – key social programs which were won by past generations through political bargaining and organizing

Workshop 3 - ETHNIC MEDIA AND ITS ROLE IN EQUITY

1. Establish a Labour Council communications working group for education and building links to community and language media
2. Assist local unions in communicating their issues to ethnic media

Workshop 4 - CHANGING THE FACE OF CITY COUNCILS AND SCHOOL BOARDS

1. Labour Council embark on a series of voter and political education workshops; and link to a community mobilization effort to increase voter turnout for progressive, labour supportive candidates.
2. Labour Council recruit, train, endorse and support equity candidates who have a track record in supporting progressive, labour values.

Workshop 5 - BARGAINING TO RAISE STANDARDS

1. Employment equity – need provincial legislation
2. Need more education/awareness about the role of unions bargaining to raise standards
 - In the school system
 - About linking struggles
 - About Labour Council
 - About our successes

Workshop 6 – GLOBAL DISASTER AND LABOUR RESPONSE

1. Endorse the Statement of Principles from the Tsunami Justice Group
2. Request the CLC to urge the Canadian government to follow through on aid money promised as well as promises of fast-tracking immigration from tsunami-affected countries.
3. Request the CLC to urge affiliates to engage in awareness of the world HIV/AIDS pandemic
4. Urge unions that have funds for humanitarian/social justice/disaster relief to be flexible in their disbursement by including smaller NGOs "on the ground"

Workshop 7 - STRENGTHENING OUR UNIONS AND COMMUNITIES

1. Develop our outreach to community through Labour Community Services
2. Political Action. Encourage members to run for government and our unions, especially workers of colour

Workshop 8 – CHINESE LANGUAGE – OUR RIGHTS AT WORK

1. Public Education campaign on workers rights, WSIB, and Employment Standards in a variety of languages
2. Support efforts to gain recognition of international qualifications for trades and professions.

