



JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2022, ISSUE 23



For 2022, Canada's theme for Black History Month is: *February and Forever: Celebrating Black History today and every day*.

"This year's theme...reminds us to recognize the tremendous contributions of Black Canadians, like Lincoln Alexander, and their communities, all year long," said Canadian Heritage.

If you want to learn more about the trailblazer who "challenged us to build a better Canada," you can learn more online.

# **Black History Month**

The theme was announced on Friday, January 21, 2022, which is also Lincoln Alexander Day in Canada.

The day celebrates the leader who fought for racial equity as Canada's first Black Member of Parliament, Cabinet minister, and Lieutenant Governor of Ontario.

"Throughout his life, the Honourable Lincoln MacCauley Alexander exemplified what it meant to be of service to others, becoming a passionate advocate for the equality of Black Canadians and the advancement of education, race relations, and youth issues," said Canadian Heritage in a release.





# Incredible Black Canadian women you should know

Here are a few to start you off!

For more reading about these incredible, strong, definitively trailblazing Black Queens, please see the full story

Excerpted from Kathleen Newman-Bremang @ Refinery29.com



## **Mary Ann Shadd Cary**

Black pain has been used for entertainment, as the only depiction of Black history, for too long. I get it. But the reality in this country is that not enough people know the history. Slavery wasn't just an American problem. The Underground Railroad reached its peak in the 1850s after *The Fugitive Slave Act* of 1850 was passed, and that's when Mary Ann Shadd Cary moved to Windsor, ON. She sought refuge in Canada like so many other free Blacks and escaped slaves, opened a school, and established a newspaper with the still-relevant motto, "Self-Reliance is the True Road to Independence." Shadd Cary went on to become an antislavery feminist activist and Canada's first Black newspaper publisher.



## Jennifer Hodge de Silva

The Ontario Human Rights Commission released a report in 2018 that proved something many Black people in this country already knew: Black people are more likely than white people to be injured or killed by Toronto Police officers. The tensions between the Black community and the police in Toronto is nothing new, but police brutality is still often seen as an American problem. In 1983, Jennifer Hodge de Silva shed light on what is definitely a Canadian problem with her documentary *Home Feeling: A Struggle for Community*, about the tension between law enforcement and the predominately African-Canadian Jane and Finch neighbourhood. The film features raw and revealing interviews with police and members of the community. Thirty-five years later, the film is still being taught in schools and universities and Black people are still suffering at the hands of the police. The relevance of Hodge de Silva's work lives on in the stories she chose to tell through her films.

Hodge de Silva was raised by a family of social activists (her mom was another woman featured on this list, Mairuth Sarsfield) and it showed in her work. Her filmmaking explored complex social issues and gave voices to marginalized communities in Canada. She was the first Black filmmaker to work regularly with the National Film Board and the CBC. She was a pioneer in Canadian film, who influenced future activists before she died of cancer at 38. In her short life, Hodge de Silva made a timeless impact, and even though the problems she tackled in her documentaries persist today, she broke barriers and started vital conversations in this country.





## **Beverly Mascoll**

"Buy Black" isn't just a catchy alliteration or a hashtag. It's also nothing new. Encouraging Black people to build wealth in their community by contributing to Black businesses is what elders have been preaching for years. Black entrepreneurs, such as Beverly Mascoll, deserve to be celebrated and supported. In 1970, Mascoll started her business with a problem: She couldn't find hair products for Black women. She saw a hole in the hair industry so, naturally, she invested \$700 into incorporating her own company called Mascoll Beauty Supply Ltd. As we know now, the Black hair industry is a multi-billion-dollar business, and for too long (and still today), it's an industry built on the buying power of Black women by white-owned companies.

Mascoll wanted to change that. So, with no connections and no family ties in the business, she did her own thing. By selling products out of her car at first, she convinced Johnson products (just one of the biggest manufacturers in the world, no big deal) to give her the rights to be the sole Canadian distributor, making her one of the biggest contenders in the beauty industry. She distributed products across the country and also opened retail outlets that are said to have been provided a sense of community and identity for many Black Canadian immigrants. I can confirm that getting lost in a Black beauty supply aisle is the best form of self-care. Mascoll didn't just uplift her community through her entrepreneurial spirit, she invested in its education. She organized trade events and seminars for her customers and founded multiple scholarships.

If that wasn't enough, at 55, Mascoll went back to school and received a Bachelor in Arts from York University. Beverly Mascoll is what happens when you buy black, and she's also what happens when you refuse to accept the paths that are supposedly prescribed for you.

# **OSSTF/FEESO Resource coming soon**

Canadian Black Lives: History and Accomplishments

This curriculum support document was developed in an effort to provide OSSTF/FEESO members with guidance and information to support the ongoing work of learning about the heritages, histories, cultures, and contributions of the African Diaspora in Canada. The intent is for this resource to illustrate how this knowledge can be highlighted in various subject areas.





Do you seek out Black-owned businesses to support?

# You should! AfroBiz.ca can help you find them!

## Why support AfroBiz.ca?

Our story begins at the very end of 2017. We noticed a huge gap in opportunities available to Black owned businesses on the Internet compared to other businesses. We wanted to give back to our community and use our talent to help reduce the racial gap and help introduce local businesses to their respective communities. It all started in Toronto, but due to so many requests and demands we are now building a global platform for Black owned businesses. We believe that we can make a seriously powerful impact for Black owned businesses, which will in turn make their communities better and stronger.

afrobiz.ca

## **ARTICLES AND VIDEOS OF INTEREST**

Violence against women—it's a men's issue: Jackson Katz at TEDxFiDiWomen—YouTube video

- Women's shelters facing staff shortages amid COVID, high rates of gendered violence
- ---. Amplifying The Voice of Women In Leadership In 2022
- ••• The Badass 50—Badass Women
- A question for women in 2022
- •••• Top 25 Women of Influence
- Canada Women all set to make Olympic history in China
- ..... The Canadian books we're most excited about in 2022



# Status of Momen Officer Resource Google Drive



Are you a Status of Women Officer in your district or chair of your District/Bargaining Unit Status of Women committee?

The provincial Status of Women committee has put together a resource on Google Drive for all Status of Women Officers/Status of Women committee Chairpersons.

It contains helpful pamphlets, newsletters, articles, and videos of interest as well as a place for you to share your committee work and ideas with us and other Status of Women Officers. We hope you find it useful and that you start sharing!

# **NOMEN'S ADVOCATE PROGRAM**

### WOMEN'S ADVOCATES PLAY A FRONTLINE ROLE. WHAT DOES THE OSSTF/FEESO WOMEN'S ADVOCATE DO?

Women's Advocates are not counsellors. They are specially trained volunteers who can provide support for women who may need assistance accessing workplace supports and community services or resources.

The Women's Advocate can:

- provide members with information/resources to support them in dealing with domestic violence/harassment;
- connect with the local Bargaining Unit to support members who need necessary workplace supports;
- assist members in connecting with local community agencies that can assist them;
- provide additional advocacy to members as required;
- act as a resource to the district and bargaining unit local leaders on issues around gender/ sexual violence and/or abuse; and
- provide information/training to district/bargaining unit members on issues around gender/ sexual violence and/or abuse.



### WHY DO WE NEED A WOMEN'S ADVOCATE PROGRAM?

OSSTF/FEESO believes that the union has a role to play in assisting members who are experiencing workplace sexual harassment, intimate violence, and abuse. Research has shown that 1 in 3 workers have experienced domestic violence in their lifetime and 82 per cent of those workers reported that domestic violence had negatively affected their work performance. This violence does not occur just at home. 53 per cent of those workers said they had experienced violence at or near the workplace. 37 per cent said that it negatively impacted their co-workers and 5 per cent lost their job as a result of the domestic violence.

The Women's Advocate program is running in most of the districts across the province. If you are not sure if your district has a women's advocate program, contact your Bargaining Unit President to confirm.

For more information on the Women's Advocate program or to contact a Women's Advocate in your area, ask your Workplace Representative or Bargaining Unit President for more information.

# Moose Hide Campaign Day

# May 12, 2022

Moose Hide Campaign Day is a day of ceremony. It is a day where all Canadians are called to join together to take a stand against violence towards women and children and to take practical steps for our collective journey of reconciliation.



What started 11 years ago with a small gathering of men and boys intent on raising awareness of the crisis of violence against Indigenous woman and children, has now become a national ceremony inviting all Canadians to join together to end violence against all women and children.

On Moose Hide Campaign Day we challenge men and boys--and we invite all Canadians--to fast together from sunrise to sunset to deepen our experience and resolve to create safe families, communities and a safe country for all women and children.

Fasters will be supported on their fasting journey throughout the day— Learn more about fasting <u>here</u>.

moosehidecampaign.ca

## To learn more about the Moose Hide Campaign visit:

COSSTF/FEESO

Educators

Does bias affect women's finances? Yes. Is there something we can do? Yes.



"Money is essential to meeting your day-to-day needs, as well as to plan for the future," says Karen Hubbard, Vice-President, Client Advisory Services, Educators Financial Group. "That's why bias that affects women's finances is so important."

As a professional in the financial industry, and as a woman, it's clear to me that gender bias has affected women's finances for a long time, and that it continues to do so today.

What evidence do we have that gender affects women financially? One of the most obvious signs is the gender pay gap. Canadian women working full time make less than men: an average of 76.8 cents for every dollar men make, to be precise. The gap is wider for Indigenous or racialized women, newcomers, or those living with a disability<sup>1</sup>. It's evident across income levels, too. One year after graduating from post-secondary education, women earn an average of \$5,700, or 12%, less than men. Five years later, they make 25% less than men across all disciplines<sup>2</sup>. In almost all Canadian universities, male professors earn more than their female counterparts<sup>3</sup>.

When it comes to wealth management, bias can be seen both in the assumptions that others make about women and in the way women perceive themselves.

A Merrill Lynch study of financial professionals' attitudes towards women showed that financial advisors assumed men were the decision makers. Advisors made much more eye contact with a man and generally "assumed the man was the decision maker, assumed the woman wanted direction, assumed the couple's finances were merged, assumed that the woman was more risk-averse, and assumed women are less knowledgeable than men about investing"4. Furthermore, many of these biased assumptions went unnoticed by the clients.

Bias can also be exhibited by women themselves. Studies show that some Canadian women consider themselves to be less confident in making investing decisions and less knowledgeable about financial terminology than men. 68% of Canadian women rate their financial knowledge as fair or poor, as compared to 57% of men. They see themselves as more risk-averse and less likely to use DIY or self-knowledge channels to invest<sup>5</sup>.

Whether deliberate or unconscious, bias impacts every aspect of a woman's finances - from the amount she earns to how she invests. At Educators Financial Group, we have a unique understanding of the financial challenges that women may face for two reasons. First, women have always represented a large percentage of the education community that we serve, so we are more aware of their needs. And second, our management team is 57% female. This is a benefit to our female clients as, according to Merrill Lynch, women are willing to take on more investment risk,

and take more control of their finances, when working with females<sup>4</sup>.

There are many suggestions on how to stop bias that affects women, ranging from enforced equality in pay to bias training for financial advisors. One of the most commonly suggested ways to deal with the bias women have of themselves is through programs that increase a woman's financial literacy. Our upcoming webinar, Independent Women: Financial Fundamentals for the Female Educator, does just that. Participants will learn how to take control of their money and get insights and tips on other subjects such as the financial effects of divorce and remarriage. Sign up today at

www.educatorsfinancialgroup.ca/ webinars/independent-women/.

I invite you to be part of this important webinar and to visit our Learning Centre, where you'll find a number of resources to help improve your financial literacy. If you have questions about how to achieve your financial goals as a woman, you can reach me, or any of our female financial planners, at any time at 1.800.963.9541.



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> https://canadianwomen.org/the-facts/womens-poverty/ <sup>2</sup> https://www.cbc.ca/news/business/university-college-wages-pay-gap-1.5426250

<sup>1.5426260</sup> <sup>a</sup>https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/gender-pay-gap-persists-at-canadian-universities-1.5739466 <sup>a</sup>https://www.forbec.orm/sites/kimelsesser/2020/08/27/financial-advisors-unconscious-bias-works-against-women?/sh-5ef2597/b3f76 <sup>b</sup>https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/canada/financial-consumer-agency/ migration/eng/financialiteracy/2014-finalreport.pdf



International Women's Day is a global day celebrating the social, economic and political achievements of women. This day also marks a call to action for achieving equality and raising awareness about the inequalities of women around the world through intersectionality. This day is an opportunity to reflect on progress made together and to take further action to achieve a more equal world.

The concept of intersectionality compliments this year's theme of "*Break the Bias*". Social biases refer to being tolerant or against individuals or groups based on their social identities.

Despite the growing awareness of the importance of considering intersectionality in understanding gender equality, the concept can be elusive to some people. Intersectional feminism gives insight into how women experience oppression and discrimination, and the impact class, race, ethnicity, religion, and sexual orientation has on all women. It's about breaking the bias that feminism is focused on women of privilege.

The impact of discrimination is greater for marginalized groups. For example, a white woman is discriminated against due to her gender but has the advantage of race. Conversely, a woman of colour is disadvantaged due to her her gender and race and an Indigenous lesbian woman experiences discrimination because of her gender, race, and her sexual orientation. Racialized women are disproportionately affected by gender-based violence, access to equal education and employment, reproductive health and gender equality.

As a white woman of privilege, despite facing ongoing gender discrimination, I am more protected by my ability to obtain education opportunities, employment, access to union protection, equal pay, support resources for mental health, medical insurance, and pension contributions. Most importantly, I have the knowledge and confidence to self-advocate for my rights. Racialized groups face inequality, vulnerability and less opportunity and resources. Oppressed women are still fighting and will continue until we dismantle gender and racial inequalities.

"Breaking the Bias" must start with acknowledging our own biases, modelling healthy behaviour and teaching tolerance to our children. Families help establish social norms and rules of behavior that create social biases. This generalizes how we behave and respond to racism and discrimination. Our own biases toward intersectionality set the stage for further change and advancement for all women; however, equality will only be achieved when we view progress and experiences through an intersectionality lens.

We need to create a foundation for change. Together we can "*Break the Bias*" by being responsible for our own thoughts, behaviours, and actions.

#### -Lisa Pilato, Vice Chair—OSSTF/FEESO Provincial Status of Women Committee



STATUS OF WOMEN, JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2022, ISSUE 23

Have you heard of parry

# How does Parry work?

With the simple click of a button, a pre-recorded, delayed phone call gives you an excuse to avoid or exit any situation.

### ACTIVATE A PRE-RECORDED CALL

When Parry is activated, you will receive a pre-recorded phone call giving you an easy excuse to avoid or leave any situation.



## **ALERT YOUR EMERGENCY CONTACTS**

Parry can also text your designated emergency contacts with your location for an added layer of safety. Parry provides a subtle way to get out of or avoid uncomfortable situations.

### SECURITY

We understand that women are constantly put in uncomfortable and even potentially dangerous situations, which is why we are committed to helping them get out of those situations and feel secure before they escalate.

## SUPPORT

We are passionate about supporting and empowering women in finding ways to help them feel safer and more comfortable in their daily life. We believe the best way to establish safety is through the support of others, which is why we are a community-driven brand.

## BOUNDARIES

We believe in order to protect ourselves, boundaries must be kept—which is why we do not take any BS from those invading or taking advantage of the boundaries we set.

## Currently only for iPhone but coming soon to Google Play. For more information visit:



getparry.co