

# *Black History Month*



## Black Women's Organizations in Canada

The Congress of Black Women of Canada is a voluntary, non-profit organization which is dedicated to improving the welfare of Black Women and their families in their local communities and nationally. (We are Black women from the continent of Africa and the diaspora which includes indigenous African Canadians, African Americans, the Caribbean, South America and other locations on this planet. We include financially disadvantaged women, working class women, professional women, students, women of various abilities, ages and sexual identities). The Congress aims to clarify and bring due recognition to the role of Black women in Canadian society. The Congress also seeks through a program of education and service to motivate Black women to participate in the life of the communities in which they live.

(from <https://riseupfeministarchive.ca/activism/organizations/congress-of-black-women-of-canada-cbwc/> )

*Congress  
of Black  
Women*

## Black Women's Organizations in Canada continued...

### *Black Women in Motion*

Black Women in Motion is a Toronto-based, survivor-led, grassroots organization that empowers and supports the advancement of Black women, girls, nonbinary and gender-non-conforming survivors of gender-based violence. We work within an anti-racist, intersectional feminist, trauma-informed and survivor-centred framework to create culturally-relevant resources, healing spaces, educational and economic opportunities for survivors.

(from <https://blackwomeninmotion.org/our-story> )

### *Black Women Film*

Black Women Film! Canada is both a not for profit dedicated to forwarding the careers, networks and skills of Black women identified people of the Canadian African diaspora who are working in film and media across all levels of experience.

(from <http://www.blackwomenfilm.ca/> )

### *Federation of Black Canadians*

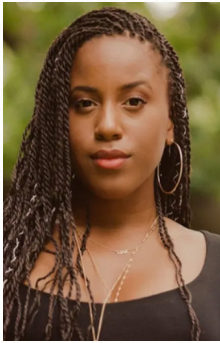
As a Pan-Canadian body, the FBC seeks to discuss the opportunities, contributions, and challenges that exist for people of African descent nationally. Black communities across Canada are diverse, resilient, creative, and multifaceted. For the first time in Canada's history, there are over 1,000,000 Black Canadians who call Canada home. With that number projected to double by 2036, the Federation of Black Canadians is working hard to partner with individuals and organizations across Canada to advance the interests of Black Canadians. We want to ensure that as our communities grow, we unlock the opportunities that will help build a promising future, building on and celebrating our diverse heritages, histories, cultures, and contributions to Canada.

(from <https://fbcfcn.ca/> )



The [Jean Augustine Centre](#) is hosting their annual History Celebration and Fundraiser February 11 where they will be screening Dr. Jean Augustine's Documentary "Steadfast."

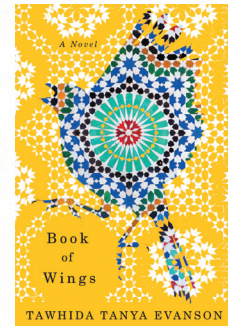
# Black Canadian Women Authors



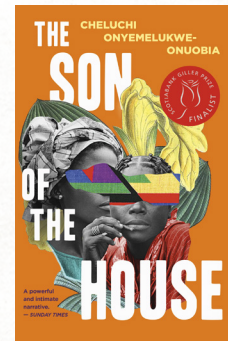
Asha Bromfield's YA novel, *Hurricane Summer*, is a coming-of-age story that embraces womanhood and sexuality.



Tawhida Tanya Evanson explores the power of emotion in the Canada Reads long-listed novel *Book of Wings*.



Cheluchi Onyemelukwe-Onubia's debut novel *The Son of the House* is a story about gender, trauma and patriarchy.



Liselle Sambury's YA novel, *Blood Like Magic*, is a fantasy/sci fi mashup about Black Canadian witches in Toronto.



# *What is the Provincial Status of Women Committee discussing now?*

## Women's Legal Education and Action Fund – LEAF Women Reproductive Justice Report

Excerpt from <https://www.leaf.ca/project/reproductive-justice-project/>

After the repeal of Roe v. Wade in the United States, Canadian legal education and action funds lawyers have been actively assessing the possibility of tighter legislation reforms in Canada to make accessing reproductive healthcare more difficult for Canadian women. While abortion healthcare is currently legal in Canada, Conservative MLA's have put at least 47 anti-choice private member's bills into the legislature to try and overturn abortion laws and/or restrict reproductive healthcare across Canada since 1987. The list does not include government bills of which there has been just one: Bill C-43, introduced in November 1989 by the Mulroney Conservative government to re-criminalize abortion except where the doctor deems an abortion necessary to preserve the woman's life or health. That bill was defeated in the Senate by a tie vote on January 31, 1991. (Statistic from Abortion Rights Coalition of Canada)



### WHAT IS REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE?

Reproductive justice means that every person:

- Gets to make their own choices about having or not having children
- Can access sexual and reproductive health services, like:
  - Birth control
  - Abortion
  - Assisted reproductive technologies
  - Sex education
  - Proper care during pregnancy, during childbirth, and after childbirth
  - Prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases (STIs)
- Can raise their children in safe and healthy environments
- Has the resources and supports they need to parent with dignity
- You can learn more about the history of reproductive justice here.

## What is LEAF?

LEAF is a well-established and dedicated advocate for gender equality, demonstrating tangible results, year after year.

LEAF focuses on litigation, law reform, and public education. In particular, we seek to advance gender equality by challenging laws, policies, and practices that discriminate against equality guarantees enshrined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, most notably sections 15 and 28.

Since 1985, LEAF has intervened in over 100 cases that have advanced equality in Canada. Our cases have resulted in landmark victories preventing violence against women and gender diverse people, eliminating discrimination in the workplace, allowing access to reproductive freedoms, and providing better maternity benefits, better spousal support, and the right to pay equity. Charter rights, in general, and section 15, in particular, have been tested, and strengthened, through the advocacy work of LEAF.

OSSTF/FEESO is proud to regularly donate to LEAF.

LEAF's Reproductive Justice Project looks to advance reproductive justice in Canada through law reform advocacy at the provincial and territorial levels.

## HOW WILL THIS PROJECT HELP ADVANCE REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE?

Working closely with LEAF branches from across the country, LEAF will:

- 1. Identify areas in need of law reform**
- 2. Put together law reform proposals targeted at these areas**
- 3. Advocate for changes to achieve reproductive justice for women, girls, and people facing gender discrimination across Canada**

As part of this work, LEAF released two publications looking at reproductive justice issues in Canada:

*Beyond Complacency: Challenges (and Opportunities) for Reproductive Justice in Canada*

*A Long Way To Go: Collective Struggles & Dreams of Reproductive Justice in Canada*



## HOW CAN I LEARN MORE?

To learn more about LEAF and reproductive justice, take a look at the following resources:

- LEAF's National Abortion Access Framework
- LEAF's past reproductive justice cases and submissions

## Applying for Standing Committees and Councils

Applications are out to apply for OSSTF/FEESO standing committees and councils. Why not [apply?](#)

Helpful tips when applying to committees and councils

- Indicate what work you've done locally, provincially or in your community
- Link what you've done to how those skills will benefit the committee(s) that you are applying for
- Ensure the application is complete
- Get your application in before the deadline date of March 1
- Ask your Provincial Councilor for help
- Check out the 'Terms of Reference' and/or committee 'Statement of Needs' for the committee(s) you are interested in to determine if that committee is a good fit for your skills

## Status of Women "Pushing Back, Standing Strong, Marching Forward" Conference 2023

Keynote Address by Farrah Khan – the Office of Sexual Violence Support and Education, Toronto Metropolitan University as well as CEO of Possibility Seeds  
Panel Discussion with Susan Ussel from UPFH Law, Frederique Chabot from Action Canada, and Debbie Owusu-Akyeeah from Centre for Gender and Sexual Diversity – moderated by Jennifer Seif, OSSTF/FEESO  
Workshops from White Ribbon, OSSTF/FEESO, Liz Akiwenzie, OSSTF/FEESO Provincial Human Rights Committee, Covenant House, and SACHA  
Watch for more information about this incredible conference opportunity.

## The Liz Barkley Status of Women Award – Nomination Deadline January 31

The Liz Barkley Status of Women Award, named in recognition of a former OSSTF/FEESO President, is presented annually at AMPA, to recognize activism and leadership by an OSSTF/FEESO member in advocating and building awareness of women's economic and equality issues.

For more information about all OSSTF/FEESO Member Awards visit our [website!](#)

## ARTICLES OF INTEREST

[Systemic Racism Blunts the Genetic Diversity of Urban Wildlife](#)

[Black Women in Canada](#)

[The Legacy and Impact of Black Canadian Women Organizations in Canada](#)

[Schooling the System: A History of Black Women Teachers](#)

[7 Books by Black Canadian Authors that Deserve a Permanent Spot on your Bookshelf](#)