



OSSTF/FEESO Statement

Black History Month

February 1, 2021—Today, we celebrate the start of Black History Month. Twenty-five years ago, the Honourable Jean Augustine, the first African-Canadian woman elected to Canada’s House of Commons, championed legislation to recognize February as Black History Month in Canada. February is the month designated to acknowledge the contributions and experiences of Black Canadians.

OSSTF/FEESO recognizes that Black History is a part of everyday life for individuals who identify as members of the Black diaspora who have contributed to our communities and country. Black History Month is an important entry point to start larger conversations relating to anti-Black racism, systemic racism, and oppression. “OSSTF/FEESO will collectively embrace opportunities to celebrate the contributions of Black individuals while examining, challenging, and deconstructing systemic racism within its structure,” states President Harvey Bischof. “We will move forward from spaces of conversation into reformative practice and action,” concluded Bischof.

Before we can free ourselves from racism, we must acknowledge and recognize its existence. We have an opportunity to learn about ourselves and each other and where we wish to stand personally and collectively on the journey of anti-racism. From recognition to action, the celebration of Black History Month is an important part of the grander work of anti-oppression.