



NEW BRUNSWICK COALITION FOR PAY EQUITY NEWSLETTER May 2018

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1. Joining forces for pay equity

It's time to act! The efforts of workers in predominantly female fields have long been undervalued and even forgotten.

About sixty members of the Coalition, including a dozen organizations and unions, were present at our pay equity forum and AGM on June 2nd in an effort to mobilize for the upcoming provincial elections. The Coalition urges of all political parties, pay equity legislation for the private sector and investments in the wages and working conditions of community care workers. Thank you to all those who participated!

The following members were elected to serve on the Board of Directors:

Secretary-Treasurer: Monique Levesque

First Nation Representative: Wenona Labillois

Northeast Representative: Katleen Leclair-Doucet

Upper River Valley Representative: Lise Hitchcock

Thank you to departing members Éleine Roussel, Tanna Pirie-Wilson et Monica Thériault for your excellent work at the Coalition and your devotion to pay equity.

You can find out what we accomplished during the year in our Annual Report [here!](#)

2. When working leads to poverty

In partnership with the **School of Social Work** at the **Université de Moncton**, we held a Lunch & Learn event to raise public awareness about low wages and poor working conditions in the community caregiving sector in New Brunswick. Johanne Perron gave an overview of inequity in the community caregiving sector and professors **Hélène Albert** and **Lise Savoie** of the Université de Moncton presented previously unpublished results of a research they conducted with **Isabel Lanteigne and Elda Savoie** about home support workers in the Restigouche, Kent and Acadian Peninsula regions. Two workers also shared their experience: Carrie Randal, from a transition house, and Marie-Josée LeBlanc, from a youth community residence.

3. Pay Equity & Politics

On May 16, our Johanne Perron and Northeast Representative Monica Thériault met with **Isabelle Thériault**, the **Liberal** candidate in Caraquet, to discuss her party's electoral platform ahead of the next provincial election.

On May 23, the Coalition met with **Blaine Higgs**, the Leader of the **Progressive Conservative Party of New Brunswick**. Mr. Higgs supports strategic investments in the community caregiving sector. We are hopeful that the Party platform will include such investments, notably in higher wages for workers.

On May 28, ED Johanne Perron met with **Jennifer McKenzie**, the Leader of the **New Democratic Party of New Brunswick** and had a discussion about the NDP's platform on childcare. We all know that childcare educators deserve pay equity!

On May 30, Johanne also met **Roger Melanson**, President of **Treasury Board**, on the community care sector. We agreed that wages in the sector do not reflect the value of the work. Now what will the **Liberal Party** do about it?

Summer... and political candidates are at our doors! Let them know that you'll be watching for their party's stance on pay equity legislation for the private sector in the coming election.

4. Let's talk equity

Our past North Representative, Monica Thériault, organized an information session in Caraquet on May 17th. Thank you to the committed people from the Acadian Peninsula for a fruitful discussion on pay equity, the community care sector and the importance of the public sector!

Our ED, Johanne Perron, gave a presentation on **Pay Equity in New Brunswick**, on May 10th at a conference organized by the **Chartered Professionals in Human Resources of New Brunswick**. After all, human resource managers are major actors in implementing pay equity!

On May 16, Johanne also made a presentation on pay equity at the **New Brunswick Special Care Home Association's** AGM and on June 1, at the **Unifor Atlantic Regional Council** in Moncton. Rachel Richard, the Public Engagement Officer, also presented the Pay Equity Now! at the **Unifor Young Workers** Conference.

5. Advancing pay equity and gender equality in Canada

The Coalition is strengthening its links with organizations across the country to promote pay equity and gender equality.

It is actively involved with a group of Canadian organizations who are closely following the federal government's steps towards the adoption of pay equity legislation so it will meet their standards. *Educational and lobbying materials are in the works.*

The Coalition is among more than 60 organizations who signed a letter to the **Standing Committee on Finance** to make women's voices a priority during the federal pre-budget consultations. The letter calls on the committee to:

- » Identify 'advancing gender equality' as a topic in the call for submissions;
- » Ensure at least 15% of witnesses in the pre-budget consultation hearings are feminist or women's rights organizations.

The Coalition's ED is also promoting pay equity within the **Gender Equality Network Canada** to advance gender equality in Canada. The second meeting was held in Halifax on April 30 and May 1. Our participation to this committee is funded by **Status of Women Canada**.

6. Pay equity decisions

Victory! Along with the **Equal Pay Coalition** and **LEAF**, we had intervenor status at the **Supreme Court of Canada** on case **37002** and **37347** stemming from Quebec. The Court recognized that pay inequity represents systemic discrimination. It also recognized that workers without a male comparator are doubly discriminated against and that limiting their pay equity rights is discrimination on the basis of sex. The Court also stated that any pay discrimination that is identified under pay equity maintenance processes must be remedied from the date the wage gap emerged.

"Leaving wage inequities in place makes women the economy's ordained shock absorbers."

Congratulations to **CUPW** who just earned a pay equity victory for Rural and Suburban Mail Carriers! After hearings, an arbitrator ruled they do work of equal value to urban letter carriers and that there is a wage gap between the two groups.

"Nearly two-thirds of RMSCs are women. They make about 25 percent less per hour than letter carriers, the majority of whom are male. They also receive fewer benefits."