

## OPSEU and Human Rights; Our History

Human Rights are basic rights; rights that each of us have just for being who we are. Prejudice and discrimination often get in the way and many individuals in our society and our union are denied the right to be treated equitably and with respect and dignity.

As early as 1984, OPSEU's bargaining priorities included equity issues but it was not until 1990 that the union was able to obtain anti-discrimination language in the OPS collective agreement. Today all of our collective agreements have language that protects the human and union rights of our members.

In early 1986, OPSEU members, under the leadership of the late Rainford Jackson, were instrumental in designing and conducting the "I Count Census". That same year, the Race Relations and Minority Rights Committee was established to provide the President and the Executive Board with advice and direction on policy initiatives for the union.

In 1987, OPSEU developed a draft Employment Equity bill which became the catalyst for a dialogue within the labour movement and between labour and the community. During this period of debate on the merits of having employment equity legislation, OPSEU forged ahead and developed a training course on the topic and began educating the members. That draft bill led to the 1990 Private Member's bill 170, which was the forerunner to Ontario's first Employment Equity Act. OPSEU members and staff played a significant role in the development of the Employment Equity Act and the guidelines.

In 1989, OPSEU established the Rainford Jackson Education and Development Fund, from which \$5,000 is awarded annually to support organizations or projects which aim to reduce racism and improve the condition of minorities in our society.

In 1991, Convention approved the union's own policy on Employment Equity. For many years OPSEU has been in the forefront of the struggle for equity. Many of our members have contributed and continue to make their contributions without fanfare.

Much has been done over the years but much remains to be done. OPSEU is committed to fighting to make zero tolerance for discrimination and harassment a reality in our union, our workplaces, and our society.

## Outstanding Local

1. At each annual convention, an award is given to the local that has made the most significant contribution to the advancement of human rights issues and the principles of equity in the union.
2. The award will be decided by the Executive Board.
3. Nominations for consideration for the award must be received in the President's Office **no later than January 8, 2007**.
4. Nominations may be made by any local member, member of the Executive Board, staff, the PHRC, PWC, PYWC, Regional Human Rights Committees, Rainbow Alliance, Disability Caucus or Aboriginal Circle.
5. Nominations must include a brief statement indicating the nature of the significant contribution for which the award is warranted.
6. No Executive Board Member whose local is under consideration may vote on this award.

To arrange for nominations, contact one of your Executive Board members or your PHRC representative.

## Outstanding Individual Member

1. At each annual convention, an award is given to a member who has made the most significant contribution to the advancement of human rights issues and the principles of equity in the union.
2. The award will be determined by the Executive Board.
3. Nominations for consideration for the award must be received in the President's Office **no later than January 8, 2007**.
4. Nominations may be made by any local member, member of the Executive Board, staff, the PHRC, PWC, PYWC, Regional Human Rights Committees, Rainbow Alliance, Disability Caucus or Aboriginal Circle.
5. Nominations must include a brief statement indicating the nature of the significant contribution for which the award is warranted.
6. No Executive Board Member may vote on this award if he or she has nominated a candidate for the award, or if a candidate from his/her local has been nominated.

To arrange for nominations, contact one of your Executive Board members or your PHRC representative

## Previous OPSEU Human Rights Awards

Year	Outstanding Member	Outstanding Local
1999	Fred Upshaw, Local 331	Local 642
2000	John Rae, Local 580	Local 213
2001	Bear, Local 540	Local 540
2002	Tim Brown, Local 144	No nominees
2003	Glenna Caldwell, Local 302 Brian Chauvin, Local 135 Barry Scanlon, Local 230 Margaret Smoke, Local 337 Elaine Barnes, Local 229 Henri Dumont, Local 642 Lynn Jackson, Local 234	Local 216
2004	Mohar Budhram, Local 213	Local 274
2005	No nominees	No nominees
2006	Peggy MacDonald, Local 433	Local 506

# OPSEU Human Rights Awards

**Deadline for nominations:  
January 8, 2007**

