

- Participate in broader community events — like Pride Parades — to enhance visibility and be engaged
- Participate in broader labour movement equity committees like the CLC and federations of labour

Education is another important way to advance equality issues in the union. Materials, programs and training for our members will:

- Encourage a greater appreciation and value of our diversity while facilitating a better understanding of the oppression and discrimination faced by equity seeking groups
- Build and develop the future leaders and activists among equity groups
- Support the creation of safe spaces to inform members and leadership on ongoing issues

This solidarity work benefits all workers. Equity is for everyone: let's get to work.

See CFNU's website to find out how you can get started: www.nursesunions.ca

Creating a safe environment is an essential first step to encourage equity caucus members to share their concerns within an accepting atmosphere. This is a very important first step for CFNU and its union members to better understand and learn more about equity and diversity.

Mabel Tung, RN, BCNU



CANADIAN
FEDERATION
OF NURSES
UNIONS

WHERE KNOWLEDGE
MEETS KNOW-HOW

www.nursesunions.ca

CMW 414
OTTAWA



CANADIAN
FEDERATION
OF NURSES
UNIONS

CANADIAN FEDERATION OF NURSES UNIONS

**BUILDING DIVERSITY AND
SUPPORTING EQUITY IN
OUR UNION**

Equality seeking groups have strengthened our movement, bringing new ideas and perspectives into the practice of unionism. The diversity that is now present in our unions has not divided the labour movement: on the contrary, it has energized us and brought many committed people into our activist cadre.

Confronting the Mean Society
CLC policy paper 1994

Over the last three decades, the changes in the ethnic and cultural composition of the Canadian population have challenged nurses daily to understand the importance of diversity — within our union and our workplaces.

We need to be sensitive of the impact of our comments and our actions, and speak out about hurtful stereotypes and prejudices.

Andy Summers, ONA

We recognize the importance of respect around difference and identity (“diversity”) and the need to democratic access to power and opportunity (“equity”); it is about taking down barriers to participation and promoting a more representative union.

CFNU recognizes the value of a diverse membership, and how a diverse membership strengthens our union and our ability to fight for equity, social justice and inclusiveness. Since 2003, our members have made equity a priority by recognizing the need to adopt anti-racist policies and language that acknowledges the struggles of our aboriginal members, carving out safe spaces through education and lobbying for our lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and trans-gendered members as well as taking on the challenges we face as an ever-changing workforce in terms of age and gender. Again at the 2009 convention we re-confirmed equity as a priority and committed to action.

Together we are making strides toward equity, but there is much work to be done, in our union and in society at large.

THE CALL TO ACTION

The advancement of equality and human rights issues within the union should be integrated into every aspect of our work. From examining all activities and events through an equity lens to advocacy work in the broader society, there is lots we can do to make our union stronger:

- Establish a National Nursing Human Rights and Diversity Committee, with representation and participation of all provincial affiliates
- Establish equity committees in every affiliate to represent the diversity of our union
- Ensure equity caucuses are part of every provincial and national convention, conference and educational session
- Organize annual meetings, workshops or summits on equity issues to unify our members and move the agenda forward
- Formalize a network to facilitate communication between affiliates and their equity groups