



## **The Ontario Employment Education and Research Centre**



**PROTECTING WORKERS' RIGHTS**

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**RAISING AWARENESS**

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**DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP**

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**BUILDING CAPACITY**

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**PARTICIPATING IN RESEARCH**

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# ANNUAL REPORT 2018

# Annual report 2018

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## WORKERS' ACTION CENTRE

### PROTECTING WORKERS' RIGHTS

- 2,553 workers attended Know your Rights workshops or support clinics
- 871 workers supported through Workers' Rights Information Phonenumber
- 96,000+ booklets, factsheets, posters and postcards distributed on workers' rights (and available online)
- Kept the public informed about important new legislative improvements for workers, including a \$14 minimum wage, 2 paid sick days, and equal pay for equal work for temporary, contract and part-time workers

### RAISING AWARENESS

- Promoted workers' rights issues through 286 events, forums and neighbourhood outreach opportunities
- 13,890 allies and community members attended decent work presentations
- Over 300 media hits, including mainstream and community media in six languages (English, Spanish, Tamil, Mandarin, Somali and Punjabi)
- Managed a variety of social media tools to inform and engage workers
- Supported workers to have 57 meetings with MPPs and government representatives about issues facing workers in low-wage and precarious jobs
- Worked with 70+ community organizations, unions and coalitions as networking partners in organizing for workers' rights
- Supported the coordination of a digital platform that facilitated engagement of over 25,000 allies and community members in the movement for decent work in Ontario

### DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP

- Hosted a provincial strategy meeting of over 230 union, community, and grassroots organizers to discuss issues affecting workers in low-income and precarious work
- Held monthly organizing meetings and a range of trainings, mentoring and internship programs to provide opportunities for growth and learning, as well as develop the capacity of our members as community leaders, educators and organizers
- Provided paid opportunities for grassroots organizers throughout the year including three intern organizer positions and four community leader positions

### BUILDING CAPACITY

- Offered 58 capacity building workshops for workers in low-wage and precarious jobs
- Connected with 498 frontline staff of community agencies to provide training on workplace rights
- Worked with 35 community agencies to host employment standards workshops for members of their communities
- Supported a number of networks and emerging organizations to develop their strategic direction and community organizing through feedback, support and participation in consultations

### PARTICIPATING IN RESEARCH

- Played a significant role as a resource to policy researchers on issues of precarious work, discrimination and poverty
- In partnership with Parkdale Community Legal Services, contributed to reviews of labour legislation and policy proposals for improvements to wages and working conditions for Ontario workers



## Caregivers Action Centre

### PROTECTING WORKERS' RIGHTS

- Organized 10 educational workshops for care workers to receive legal support and learn about their rights

### RAISING AWARENESS

- Participated in events, such as International Women's Day, to raise awareness about issues facing care workers
- Organized a Mother's Day event in Toronto highlighting separation of migrant care workers from their families, and coordinated with partners in Edmonton and Vancouver who held similar events on the same day
- Launched the *Care Worker Voices for Landed Status and Fairness* report produced by CAC in partnership with six other workers groups across Canada
- Released *Care Worker Voices* report at media events in five cities: Toronto, Vancouver, Edmonton, Montreal and Ottawa; in Toronto, over 40 care workers and allies joined the launch event and press conference

### DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP

- Supported care workers to provide leadership in advocating for their rights through training and development, public events and presentations, as well as media engagement and outreach
- Involved care worker leaders in participatory research that underpinned *Care Worker Voices* report, including training on how to approach and conduct surveys with other care workers

### BUILDING CAPACITY

- Hosted a meeting of over 60 care workers and organizations to build a united platform for change in response to federal government announcement that the Caregiver Program was ending in 2019
- Supported groups in Toronto and across the country to build a growing base of migrant care workers through grassroots outreach led by care workers, including development of outreach materials, outreach guide, backgrounder on the issues and recommendations, and online tools
- Coordinated a national call for the federal government to conduct a comprehensive review of the Caregiver Program



### PROTECTING WORKERS' RIGHTS

- Organized workshops for migrant workers about new labour rights
- Supported migrant workers' rights through referrals for case work support and training
- Educated migrant workers about potential for improving decent work conditions through renewal of federal-provincial immigration agreement in Ontario
- Contributed to the federal government's decision to create a limited Open Work Permit program
- Successfully supported migrants' voices to be heard in Employment and Social Development Canada's (ESDC) review of the *Temporary Foreign Worker Program Agricultural Stream* and consultations on a federally funded migrant worker support network

### RAISING AWARENESS

- Produced comprehensive policy brief highlighting need for open work permits in Ontario, supported by over 20 organizations across Canada
- Supported workers to raise concerns about lack of open work permits, a major impediment to rights enforcement
- Organized a meeting of migrant workers with Legal Aid Ontario to help devise greater access to justice for migrant workers

- Supported care worker groups across Canada to launch the report, *Care Worker Voices for Landed Status and Fairness*
- Promoted awareness of issues facing migrant workers through an active social media strategy

### DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP

- Facilitated the development of a network for migrant workers to share information and further their civic engagement
- Supported trainings for migrant and undocumented sex workers and holistic health practitioners to help them respond to the denial of business licences by municipal authorities and supported migrant sex worker leaders to meet with the Standing Committee on Justice

### BUILDING CAPACITY

- Brought together 35 organizations from across the country to launch the national Migrant Rights Network; meetings included specific caucuses for care workers and farmworkers
- Coordinated policy development and support for care worker groups to respond to the end of the Caregiver Program, including small research projects and supporting care workers to meet with decision makers
- Supported existing migrant worker led organizations to strengthen their relationships with workers and connections with referral resources

## The OEERC would like to thank our Funders for 2018

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- **The Atkinson Charitable Foundation**
- **The Catherine Donnelly Foundation**
- **The George Cedric Metcalf Charitable Foundation**
- **The Law Foundation of Ontario**
- **The Maytree Foundation**
- **United Way Greater Toronto**

Thanks to all of our community allies who made our 6th annual Workers' Bowl fundraising event such an incredible success! And, a special thanks to our private donors for their extraordinary personal commitment to furthering workers' rights awareness and supports.

The OEERC's audited financial statements are available upon request.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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### Chair

Sheila Wilmot

### Vice-Chair

Stacey Papernick

### Secretary/Treasurer

Anjula Gogia

### Members at Large

Tania Das Gupta

Lynn Spink

At the OEERC, we believe that the most effective public education and support happens at the community level. Thus we deliver our programming utilizing the expertise of organizations with a proven record of developing and delivering accessible public education on workplace rights, as well as a commitment to the development of peer networks and community leaders to extend the learning and support.



720 Spadina Avenue, Suite 223  
Toronto Ontario M5S 2T9

416-531-1226 | [www.oeerc.org](http://www.oeerc.org)

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