

# 2009-2011 REPORT OF THE AFL WORKERS OF COLOUR AND ABORIGINAL WORKERS COMMITTEE

This report will try to capture the highlights of the past two years.

The Committee started the two-year term by having planned dates for committee meetings. There had been great difficulties getting members to meetings and achieving quorum, despite numerous follow-up e-mails. This problem with attendance made it quite difficult to always address the issues on the agenda.

The Committee did not have an AFL resource person as of December 2009 and although this made life a little difficult, we soldiered on and managed to meet most of our goals, with the exception of a facilitator training session for members of the workers of colour and aboriginal workers communities. Although we had requested a list of AFL/CLC-training workers of colour and aboriginal workers facilitators, such a list was not available as that specific facilitator group was not identified. This should have been a simple process – the certificate from the JPL School and the accompanying union affiliation documentation is part of the process at the school.

There is a process through which mentorship of experienced facilitators with new trainees is another option that could be used in order to have a current list of facilitators. We need to be proactive for growth to be achieved. February is Black History month. The agenda is posted through all social justice website and committee members have attended various functions and participated

in activities associated with this celebration. This is a great time for all people to get together and network. We do have a diverse membership within the Alberta Federation of Labour and need to show support, however minimal it may be.

The Chair of the Workers of Colour and Aboriginal Workers Committee attended the initial field trip to the Lubicon in April 2010 and again at the opening of the rink at Little Buffalo in February 2011. These two visits were a humbling experience and kudos to everyone for making this happen. The Chair also attended the June 21<sup>st</sup> celebration for Aboriginal Day in 2009 and in 2010, as well as the service at City Hall. A member of the Committee has been working with the Somaliland youth groups, through community outreach. Some progress has been made but only baby steps. This will be a goal that will need more support with the incoming members.

There was representation by the Committee at the CRC Harmony Brunch celebrated in March of each year. This celebration is meant for everyone who believes in social justice and in fostering a good working relationship with all groups.

Members have been present at the City Hall for Racism Free Edmonton. More work is needed on this issue.

The Chair of the Workers of Colour and Aboriginal Workers Committee has been active with the Centre for Race and Culture. Please check their website – all workshops are free and open to everyone.

The Committee has a sister member sitting on the Working Group for Workers of Colour at the CLC. The information from those meetings will be shared with all affiliates.

The 2011 Equity Conference was held in Calgary on February 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>. A verbal report on the event will be given at the Convention. The objective of this conference is to debunk some myths and share an understanding of what equity is all about.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all committee members for working together to prepare for the conference. Many thanks to the administrative staff of the AFL for giving help as needed – without you, it would have placed more pressure on the conference planning committee. And thank you to the affiliates for items donated for the silent auction at the conference.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Committee,

**AFL WORKERS OF COLOUR AND ABORIGINAL WORKERS  
COMMITTEE,  
2009 – 2011**

Beryl Scott, Chair	UNA
Roseline Richardson, Secretary	UFCW 401
Larry Dionne	CUPW-Edmonton
Joyce Pui-Porretta	UNA
Raj Sharma	CUPW-Edm.
Joann Wiebe	HSAA
Sue Wilson	CUPW-Edm.
Asma Burney, Alternate	CUPW-Edm.
Nancy Furlong (information)	AFL
Gil McGowan (information)	AFL

**Committee Members who served a partial term:**

Gloria McFarlane	UNA
Tom Fuller	AFL Resource
Shannon Phillips	AFL Resource

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## **ABORIGINAL WORKERS REPRESENTATIVES**

### ***TERMS OF REFERENCE***

Two Aboriginal representatives and two alternate representatives are elected at the AFL convention. The two representatives sit on the AFL Executive Council. One representative shall be male and one female, for gender parity. Alternates fill vacancies as they arise. Aboriginals holding these positions are elected at the Aboriginal caucus at Convention.

These Aboriginal representatives represent the voices of all organized and unorganized Aboriginals in Alberta, to be brought to the Executive Council of the AFL so the Council can decide on how to raise awareness of and advance the interests of Aboriginal workers within and outside unions.

The Aboriginals who hold these positions will:

- a) Represent the voices of rank and file union members in presenting Aboriginal issues to the Executive Council.
- b) Distribute information from the Executive Council to union members, through pamphlets, fact sheets and other publications.
- c) Educate union members at all levels about those issues which are commonly called Aboriginal issues but which, in reality, are workers' rights and human rights issues.
- d) Work with the AFL Human Rights and International Solidarity committee and Workers of Colour and Aboriginal Workers working group in accordance with their terms of reference.

- e) Initiate and maintain a relationship with workers of colour and other equity-seeking groups of workers.
- f) Address the issue of systemic discrimination against Aboriginal persons and work with all levels of unions to identify systemic barriers against all equity-seeking groups.
- g) Encourage levels of participation by Aboriginal workers in the AFL and its affiliates and raise awareness of where work needs to be done and allow Aboriginal workers access to all levels of responsibility.
- h) Address issues of under-employment for Aboriginal workers.
- i) Liaise with all equity-seeking committees.
- j) Provides caucus opportunities to all AFL events.
- k) Other issues or concerns regarding Aboriginal workers.

## **WORKERS OF COLOUR REPRESENTATIVES**

### ***TERMS OF REFERENCE***

Two Workers of Colour representatives and two alternate representatives are elected at the AFL convention. The two representatives sit on the AFL Executive Council. One representative shall be male and one female, for gender parity. Alternates fill vacancies as they arise. Workers of Colour holding these positions are elected at the Workers of Colour caucus at Convention.

These Workers of Colour representatives represent the voices of all organized and

unorganized Workers of Colour in Alberta, to be brought to the Executive Council of the AFL so the Council can decide on how to raise awareness of and advance the interests of Workers of Colour within and outside unions.

The Workers of Colour who hold these positions will:

- a) Represent the voices of rank and file union members in presenting Workers of Colour issues to the Executive Council.
- b) Distribute information from the Executive Council to union members, through pamphlets, fact sheets and other publications.
- c) Educate union members at all levels about those issues which are commonly called Workers of Colour issues but which, in reality, are workers' rights and human rights issues.
- d) Work with the AFL Human Rights and International Solidarity committee and Workers of Colour and Aboriginal

Workers working group in accordance with their terms of reference.

- e) Initiate and maintain a relationship with aboriginal workers and other equity-seeking groups of workers.
- f) Address the issue of systemic discrimination against people of colour and work with all levels of unions to identify systemic barriers against all equity-seeking groups.
- g) Encourage levels of participation by Workers of Colour in the AFL and its affiliates and raise awareness of where work needs to be done and allow Workers of Colour access to all levels of responsibility.
- h) Address issues of under-employment for Workers of Colour.
- i) Liaise with all Equity-seeking committees.
- j) Provides caucus opportunities to all AFL events.
- k) Other issues or concerns regarding Workers of Colour.

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