

# Activities Update

## PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women

Fall/Winter 2015

### Chairperson's Message



This has been a year of challenges, accomplishments, hope, and sorrow. All of us were deeply saddened when Chairperson Diane Kays died suddenly in March. We are so grateful for the time she shared with us and for her considerable contributions to the PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women and to our Island community.

I was honoured to be appointed Chairperson in July and look forward to working in this role until the end of my tenure in March 2016. During the past year, Council said good-bye to Eileen Brown of West Cape and welcomed Diana Lariviere of Argyle Shore. We have members with great dedication, passion, and humour on Council, and the Council is incredibly lucky to have committed, compassionate staff. I specifically want to thank them for providing comfort, caring, and support to Diane's sisters this year. I am proud to work with and to know you, Jane, Michelle, and Becky.

In June, we launched the 2015 Equality Report Card. The Report Card assessed the PEI government's progress towards women's equality goals during their last mandate, ending in May 2015. The Council awarded government an overall grade of "C," which shows that small steps continue to be taken.

In July, the Island was shaken by the murder of Traci Lynch. Council and staff send our sympathies to her son Owen and all her loved ones. No life should end in violence, and yet, since 1989, ten Island women have been murdered. In each case, men they knew or loved were implicated, charged, or convicted in their deaths. Much remains to be done to make PEI safer for women and girls.



Aboriginal Women's Association President Judy Clark, Kelly, and Sarah Jackson, Sisters in Spirit Vigil 2015.

In October, I had the honour of speaking during the Sisters in Spirit Vigil for missing and murdered Indigenous women in Canada. Council also co-hosted a lovely Women's History Month event with the PEI Interministerial Women's Secretariat. Participants got to share stories and mementos of inspiring women who have come before.

This year was unusual in that we had both a provincial and a federal election. During both elections, the Advisory Council on the Status of Women helped to raise awareness of women's rights and women's equality. Following the provincial election, we offered our sincere thanks to outgoing Minister Responsible Valerie Docherty for her public service and excellent collaboration with the Advisory Council.

We were pleased to welcome and are delighted to be working with Hon. Paula Biggar as the new Minister Responsible for the Status of Women on PEI.

She brings a grounded, practical, and sincere approach to her work and it has been a pleasure getting to know her.



Each fall, the Advisory Council coordinates the Purple Ribbon Campaign. The ribbon is an important symbol of ending violence and addressing male violence against women and children that is rooted in power, control, and gender inequality. This year, our Purple Ribbon Campaign theme is "healthy relationships and right relations do not include violence," and the campaign continues a focus on murdered and missing Indigenous women in Canada.

Please wear your purple ribbon from November 25 (International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women) through to December 6 (National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women) and save it to wear during PEI Family Violence Prevention Week, February 14 to 20, 2016. Or wear your ribbon any day you want to show solidarity with victims of violence.

We hope to see you at noon on December 4 in Memorial Hall at the Confederation Centre of the Arts for our annual Charlottetown Montreal Massacre Memorial Service to remember murdered women in Canada.

All of us on Council wish you and your loved ones a safe and peaceful holiday season and a Happy New Year! Bonne annee! Pusu'l Pana'ne!

– Kelly Robinson,  
ACSW Chairperson

## Memorial Services for Victims of Violence

### *First mourn, then work for change*

December 6 is the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. On and around December 6, candle-lighting services remember 14 young women who in 1989 were murdered because they were women in what became known as the Montreal Massacre. We remember ten women since 1989 murdered on Prince Edward Island by men who knew them. Join others in your community to light a candle of remembrance, to remember, to reflect, and to act so these murders end. **Please note dates and times of services.**



#### **Charlottetown Memorial Service**

12:00 noon, Friday, December 4  
 Guest Speaker: Sharon O'Brien  
 Memorial Hall, Confederation Centre  
 of the Arts, Charlottetown  
 More info: 902-368-4510  
 PEI Adv. Council on the Status of Women

#### **Summerside Memorial Service**

12:00 noon, Friday, December 4  
 Guest speaker: Ann Sherman  
 St. Paul's Church, corner of Notre Dame  
 and Central Street (directly across from  
 the court house), Summerside  
 More info: 902-436-9856  
 East Prince Women's Information Centre

***We remember 1989  
 26 years  
 since the  
 Montreal Massacre***

## Healthy relationships and right relations do not include violence.

In 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada released its devastating report on Canada's residential schools and their painful legacy. The Commission heard the stories of residential school survivors and their families from coast to coast to coast.

The 2015–2016 Purple Ribbon Campaign Against Violence links healthy relationships, right relations, and missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. Why?

Canadians cannot begin to understand or to act on the terrible numbers of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls without confronting the truth of Canada's past and present relationship with First Nations, Inuit, and Metis peoples.



Volunteers at the 2015 Purple Ribbon Pinning Bee at Beanz, from Council, from the Walking the Red Road program, and from the community.



In the words of one non-Aboriginal Canadian who came to bear witness at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission hearings:

*"By listening to your story, my story can change. By listening to your story, I can change."*

We are grateful to the Aboriginal Women's Association for its friendship, guidance, and partnership in developing this year's Purple Ribbon resources.

## Purple Ribbon Guide for Teachers

Again this year, the Purple Ribbon Campaign has produced a resource guide for PEI teachers. The guide includes bilingual handouts on how to be an ally with Aboriginal peoples, resources on healthy relationships, information about this year's Purple Ribbon Campaign theme, and education-related calls to action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. The resource guides provide teachers clear links to the curriculum outcomes for Grades 7–9 Social Studies, Grade 9 Health, and high-school Family Life. Resources from the teachers' guide are available on request or can be downloaded from the PEIACSW website, [www.gov.pe.ca/acsw](http://www.gov.pe.ca/acsw).

## "Still Dancing" Multilingual Posters

This year's multilingual 11"x17" poster features "Still Dancing," a powerful piece of art honouring missing and murdered Indigenous women by Jonathan Labilloy, a member of the Ljonpaintistuguj Migmaq First Nation Band in Gaspé, Quebec. The poster highlights the Purple Ribbon Campaign theme in Arabic, English, Farsi, French, Korean, Mandarin, Mi'kmaq, Nepali, and Spanish. These represent the founding languages and some of the most commonly spoken languages of our province. Posters are available by request, or at our website, [www.gov.pe.ca/acsw](http://www.gov.pe.ca/acsw).



## Advisory Council Meetings 2015: Highlights

The PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women meets six times each fiscal year in communities across Prince Edward Island. At meetings, members focus attention on issues important to the status of Island women. They plan actions to advise the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women and her government. They organize events and publications to raise awareness of issues among members of the general PEI public.

### January 21, 2015, Charlottetown, PEI Consultation on Rape and Sexual Assault

Council members welcomed Michelle MacCallum of Women's Network to lead a consultation on preventing rape and sexual assault, serving as a focus group for the Respect project. Sexual violence was a primary focus of discussion during much of the meeting.

### March 25, 2015, Summerside, PEI Meeting with Min. Valerie Docherty

Council members gathered in Summerside, where they had the opportunity to meet with Hon. Valerie Docherty, Minister Responsible for the Status of Women, and present their top priorities for 2015.

### May 13, 2015, Charlottetown, PEI – Equality Report Card Workshop

Council remembered Diane Kays in our first meeting following her death and spent the day in an intensive collaborative workshop to draft assessments for the 2015 Equality Report Card. Assessments then went back to government and community representatives.

### June 24, 2015, Cornwall, PEI – Launch of the Equality Report Card



Council launched the 2015 Equality Report Card with a well-attended news conference at the June 2015 Council meeting. The Report Card awarded a grade of "C" for actions towards women's equality goals. Michelle Jay led Council members in a discussion of the Purple Ribbon Campaign goals and actions.



Council member Yvonne Deagle, ED Jane Ledwell, and Chairperson Kelly Robinson at the 2015 Equality Report Card launch in June.



New Council member Diana Lariviere of Argyle Shore was appointed in July. Diana is a marriage commissioner, writer, and arbitrator with a background in human resources policy. She is an active member of the Argyle Shore Women's Institute. Welcome!

### September 16, 2015, Orwell, PEI – Strategic Planning

"Diversity" and "inclusion" were themes for the day as Council members participated in a strategic planning workshop in the morning with facilitator Jill Lightwood and welcomed Suna Houghton from the PEI Association for Newcomers to Canada in the afternoon for a presentation on the ANC's multicultural education program.

### October 28, 2015, Summerside, PEI – Strategic Planning Follow-up

At the beautiful Centre Belle-Alliance in Summerside, Council members made plans and decisions to follow up from the September strategic planning. Council members made input into Council's upcoming November presentation in favour of proportional representation to the Special Committee on Democratic Renewal.

**Next meeting:** December 4, 2015, in Charlottetown, PEI. Council members will help to coordinate the annual Montreal Massacre Memorial Service.

## Canada-wide Perspectives: National Coalition of Advisory Councils Meets in Halifax



Some members of the National Coalition of Advisory Councils on the Status of Women.

The National Coalition of Provincial and Territorial Advisory Councils on the Status of Women held its annual meeting in Halifax on September 17th and 18th, 2015. It was hosted by the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women and was again an opportunity to reinforce the work being done, while also sharing resources and best practices.

"The Coalition is a national voice for women," said Linda Ross, President/CEO of Newfoundland and Labrador's Advisory Council and current Chairperson for the Coalition. "Together, we can work to increase equality between women and men, and increase governments' awareness about women's issues. While all the Coalition members are effective in their jurisdictions, collectively we can address the national dimensions of the work we do towards advancing gender equality."

The Coalition of Provincial and Territorial Advisory Councils on the Status of Women consists of provincial and territorial advisory bodies from across the country dedicated to advancing women's issues within their individual regions but who come together in the interest of women on a national level. Jane Ledwell and Michelle Jay represented the PEI Council.

During the meeting, the Coalition launched a Voter Card with pertinent questions regarding the status of women that could be used to kick-start conversations when talking to candidates before the 2015 Federal Election. The questions covered issues such as inaccessible housing, uneven availability of affordable child care and the growing economic inequality and income gap between genders. The Voter Card attracted some very good national attention during the federal election.

You can follow the National Coalition on Twitter: @CPTACW.





Left: Eliza Starchild Knockwood sings at the International Women's Day Coffeehouse, March 8, 2015. Top right: Kelly Robinson, Hon. Paula Biggar, and Doreen Kays at the Women's History Month event to honour feminist forebears. Bottom right: The annual Chairs Circle consultation with past and present Chairpersons of the Advisory Council.



## Council Members

Kelly Robinson, Chairperson, Stratford  
 Catherine Rankin, Vice-Chair, Summerside  
 Melissa Mullen, Treasurer, Lewes  
 Louise MacLeod, Uigg  
 Diana Lariviere, Argyle Shore  
 Yvonne Deagle, Miminegash  
 Mari Basiletti, Canoe Cove  
 Patti Wheatley, Charlottetown

## Staff

Jane Ledwell, Executive Director  
 Michelle Jay, Program Coordinator  
 Becky Tramley, Office Manager (p/t)

## Contact

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Sherwood Business Centre  
 161 St. Peter's Road

## On-line

Subscribe: [newsletters@peistatusofwomen.ca](mailto:newsletters@peistatusofwomen.ca)  
 Website: [www.gov.pe.ca/acsw](http://www.gov.pe.ca/acsw)  
 Videos: [vimeo.com/peistatusofwomen](https://vimeo.com/peistatusofwomen)  
 Facebook: [facebook.com/peistatusofwomen](https://facebook.com/peistatusofwomen)  
 Blog: [peiacsw.wordpress.com](http://peiacsw.wordpress.com)  
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Got a PSA? The deadline to submit notices is Wednesdays at 4:00 P.M. to [newsletters@peistatusofwomen.ca](mailto:newsletters@peistatusofwomen.ca). Notices will ordinarily be sent out Thursday afternoon.



### Upcoming Vacancies on the Council

The PEI government appoints Council members from among people who apply through Engage Prince Edward Island. Visit <http://www.gov.pe.ca/>

[engagepei](http://engagepei) for more details or to apply. Please apply by November 30, 2015 to ensure your name will be considered for March openings.

### Our 2015 Publications Available On-line

**2015 Publications**, available at [www.gov.pe.ca/acsw](http://www.gov.pe.ca/acsw)

- 2015 Equality Report Card / Fiche de rendement sur l'égalité des femmes 2015 (June 2015)
- Submission to the Special Committee on Democratic Renewal (Nov. 4)

**2015 News Releases and Opinion Pieces**, available at [www.gov.pe.ca/acsw](http://www.gov.pe.ca/acsw)

- Celebrate Women, Activism and Advocacy / Celebrons les femmes, l'activisme et la revendication (March 1)
- Advocacy, Activism and Agitation Still Required / La revendication, l'activisme et l'agitation sont toujours nécessaires (March 6)
- Cherished Chairperson Dies: In Memoriam, Diane Kays (March 29)
- Election Promises to Support the Most Vulnerable / Promesses électorales pour venir en aide aux plus vulnérables (April 22)
- PEI Provincial Government Earns a "C" for Work on Women's Equality / Le gouvernement de l'Î.-P.-É. obtient un C pour le progrès dans son travail en matière d'égalité des femmes (June 24)
- Ending Violence Against Women: There Is Help (July 30)
- New Member and New Roles / Nouveau membre and de nouveaux rôles (August 25)
- Niqab in Question: Letter to the Editor (October 9)
- Women's History Month Celebrates Inspiring Forebears (October 22)

**2015 Videos**, available at [vimeo.com/peistatusofwomen](https://vimeo.com/peistatusofwomen)

- 2015 Walk in Silence for Victims of Family Violence (February 2015)
- What Does Proportional Representation Mean to You? (November 2015)