

REPORT OF THE PSAC DIRECTOR FOR WOMEN Mid-April 2016 to January 31, 2017

My term began on April 18, 2016. The first thing I did was set up the Facebook page for the PSAC-Quebec Status of Women Committee. Check it out at <https://www.facebook.com/conditionfeminineafpcquebec/>

I have compiled evaluations from the April 2016 Women's Conference and the results were excellent. Participants were delighted with the wide variety of topics covered by the speakers, the workshops, evening activities as well as location and meals. I noticed that women had enjoyed drawing up an action plan for their region. **It is important that members get involved in actions.** Indeed, several people mentioned that they had been very motivated by the discussion about actions they could take in their part of the province and they were very proud to participate.

During the very first weeks, I organized a conference call with all coordinators and we decided to adopt this way of doing things. We now have a conference call about every two months. We are constantly in touch. All coordinators receive the updates at the same time and we all know what is going on and what is coming up. I feel it is important for this great team to be kept motivated and on the same page.

In September, I attended the National Human Rights Committee meeting and in October, it was the CLC *Rise Up!* Conference on human rights. At the national level, I represent the Quebec region. I participated in some conference calls with our contact person in Ottawa. Upon my request, she made a presentation to the Quebec Council on the study dealing with domestic violence in the workplace. This study shows the impact of domestic violence, not only on the women affected but also on their workplace and their sisters and brothers. Further to the study, we submitted two resolutions for the next bargaining round to provide for leave and other protection against violence.

A workshop on developing critical thinking (Développer son esprit critique) was prepared in co-operation with Martine B. Côté and Monique Déry, alternate REVP. Sister Côté submitted a first draft to the national officers at their fall meeting. This workshop will be delivered over the coming year in several regions to women's committees and possibly other committees. All they have to do is submit a request and our contact person will tailor the workshop to their target audience.

Again last fall, we worked on the December 6 event for National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. Vigils were organized in every part of Quebec to break the silence on all types of violence. We must put a stop to it and particularly explain to women that, no matter what, we must continue to speak out. Much time and effort were put into organizing those vigils all over the province. A press conference was held in Montreal with Magali Picard to urge people to participate. I wrote to community groups, unions, ministers and MPs to request their support. Many of them responded to

say they support our cause. We also prepared a brief video which was posted on the PSAC Website. As well, I drafted a text which was printed in Le Soleil and La Tribune and posted on the PSAC Website. We sent an email and a poster to all Quebec local presidents asking them to post them on their union bulletin boards. Most vigils were held near universities to support Laval University women. We thank PSAC-Quebec staff (Patrick, Nathalie and Lyne) who gave a helping hand and coordinators in all regions who got involved and attended the vigils.

We did a post-mortem of that event and in the end, we concluded that it didn't draw the number of people expected given the time and energy put into it. We will not repeat the experience. We realize that vigils and demonstrations are only effective when we want to take a stand either for or against an event which has just occurred. When it is done later, the interest has waned and participation falls off.

We must speak out against the action or inaction of elected officials and anyone who does not support the cause of women. To this day, there are two articles posted on the PSAC Website that newspapers have yet to print.

During the reporting period, I attended every meeting of the Quebec Council, national officers and the FTQ General Council.

As an ex-officio member of the FTQ Status of Women Committee, I attended a meeting and participated in several conference calls. The FTQ Convention was held last December and I helped organize an event for the Status of Women Committee. I am also part of the committee for the FTQ Women's Conference to be held next fall. I feel that it is important to have a touch of PSAC at these various events.

Since January 2017, the Women's Committee has joined the Youth Committee to work on the regional childcare campaign. In late February, you will start seeing Facebook posts on the campaign. Several actions are planned for the upcoming year.

The Women's Committee will cooperate with PSAC in the development of a three-minute video on the positive impact of women in society. I hope you get to see it as it will be on the PSAC Facebook page and on ours for March 8. We are also planning an event to recognize inspiring women who have an impact on their community and their workplace. Stay tuned.

In conclusion, all these accomplishments are a result of teamwork and co-operation. Thank you to everyone from both regional offices, members of the Quebec Council and especially the coordinators who readily get involved in these great projects. Because of all of you, the Women's Committee is going strong. As Henry Ford would say: "Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success."

Have a good Convention!

Huguette Breton