

## **Status of Women Committee Annual Committee Report**

**Committee Members:** Veronica Tuzi, Francis Libermann CHS, Executive Liaison  
Mirela Llupo, Brebeuf College School  
Joyce Moriana, Bishop Allen Academy  
Rachel Nazareth, Jean Vanier CSS  
Jennie Valentim, Bishop Allen Academy, Chair

### **Terms of Reference:**

- A. To advise the executive on ways to enhance the status of women in society
- B. To educate members about women's issues
- C. To make recommendations to the executive for possible action related to the status of women
- D. To make recommendations to the executive on outreach to community-based women's organizations
- E. To inform members of the current trends, issues, and problems as they pertain to the status of women.

### **Activities:**

1. The Status of Women Committee sponsored three Maternity/Parental Leave workshops this past year (October 16, 2019, April 21, 2020 (virtual), and May 11, 2020 (virtual)). The Committee does this by providing prayer cards to all participants and by providing all refreshments and meals. All workshops were well attended by members (the first virtual presentation had over 40 members in attendance), and these workshops will continue to be held into the future, especially in light of changes at the federal level (EI). Executive Liaison, Veronica Tuzi, led the workshops, with the support of 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, Angela Tersigni. Members who attend are always appreciative of the help they receive, when planning for this milestone in their lives. Executive Liaison Veronica Tuzi is the point person at TSU for Maternity Leave/Parental Leave, and is in communication with the TCDSB HR Department and with OECTA Member Services whenever there are changes to legislation or benefits.
2. Unfortunately, due to administrative job action earlier in the school year, the Committee was unable to hold its annual LOYOL workshop. The Committee looks forward to planning LOYOL workshops for February 2021.
3. Due to the current pandemic situation, the Committee was unable to host the Annual Exceptional Teacher Awards. Five submissions were received, and the Committee has decided to hold a double ceremony for April/May 2021, for recipients of this year and next year's award. This recognition and ceremony are built upon a partnership with OSSTF District 19, which originated from a roundtable of women from various unions, begun in 2015. Members Veronica Tuzi and Linda Witney were part of this roundtable.
4. The Committee put together prayer services, in conjunction with the Religious Affairs Committee, for two important remembrances: the Montreal Massacre (December 6, 2019) and International Women's Day (March 8, 2020). These prayer services were sent to the Teacher Chaplains, to use in their schools as they saw appropriate. The Committee intends to also work on a prayer service for MMIWG (Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls).
5. The Chair of the Committee, Jennie Valentim, attended a workshop at the Mary Ward Centre on November 20, 2019, centered around Women in the Bible. Executive Liaison Veronica Tuzi attended (virtually) the Dynamic Women of Faith Conference on March 28, 2020. Jennie Valentim, Veronica Tuzi, and Mirela Llupo, along with members of the Executive, attended the annual Women's

Day March in downtown Toronto on Sunday March 8, 2020.

6. The Committee, in conjunction with the Moon Sisters of Ontario, prepared a feminine hygiene product drive for women in Indigenous communities, to take place amongst staff, from February-April, 2020. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic situation, the committee is unable to collect the items from the schools, but hopes that when schools are reopened, that they can collect the items and send them to the Moon Sisters of Ontario.

5. The Committee met together on October 28, 2019, on a release day, in order to work on objectives and activities for the 2019-2020 year. Work was done on the above-mentioned activities, but work was also started on an initiative which we hope will be built upon for years to come. In order to help our members, and by extension our students, become more cognizant of women's issues and history, we have started work on a series of PowerPoint presentations. Our initial work was for the commemoration of the Montreal Massacre (December 6), and International Women's Day (March 8). Even though the work was not completed in time to be sent out this year, the groundwork has been laid, and we will continue to build upon it. We hope to provide a different focus every year (women in science/STEM, education, arts, etc), so that the achievements of our female colleagues can be celebrated and taught to our students. The PowerPoint files, when sent out, will be writeable, so that teachers can adapt the presentation as they see fit to their own classrooms.

**Recommendations for 2020-2021:**

1. Suggestions for PD sessions: self defense; mindfulness/stress relief/meditative breathing; female empowerment.
2. Complete two PowerPoint presentations, as mentioned above, which will be sent to members.
3. Guest speakers about women's issues.
4. Create and send out a survey to the membership in order to determine what members would like to see done.
5. Continue to host the Annual SOWC Exceptional Teacher Awards Dinner.
6. If OECTA holds another Fempower conference, that other members of the committee can attend, so that the experience can be brought back the committee, and by extension, other members of the association.
7. To do outreach and work with women's organizations, in order to create further PD and learning opportunities for members.
8. To plan another workshop for LOYOL 2021. The focus of that would be up to the committee of 2020-2021.

**Additional Considerations:**

The Committee feels that initiatives have been fulfilled, and will continue to keep building upon an already firmly established foundation.

The Committee welcomes suggestions, information, and new members.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennie Valentim