

ADVOCACY IN CFUW

VISION: A world where women and girls are educated and empowered to make transformational change in the world.

MISSION: Achieve educational and economic equality, and social justice through continuous learning and empowerment

Web Site

The **Advocacy Handbook** is built for use by the public now, who can learn from us, and get started with their activism guided by our best practices.

Fall Advocacy Package

September saw more archiving of resolutions as well as three new resolutions adopted about: Immigrant Detention; Maternal Death Prevention; International Trade Agreements. Template Letters - did you cc National Office?

16 Days of Activism

A comprehensive package of terms to know, actions to take and resources on GBV was provided to all Clubs.

International Women's Day

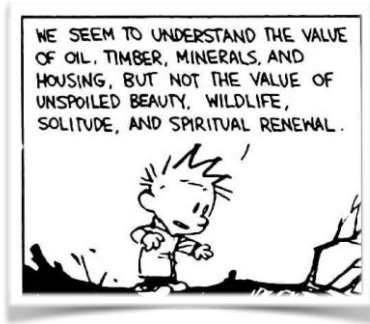
What are YOU planning for IWD at your Club? March 8 is coming quickly. Bring awareness to your community of the roles women play and their importance. Let National Office know what you did - send them photos.



Shining a Light Everywhere

THANK YOU to all members who enjoy the benefits and privileges of being a member of the book groups, hiking groups, lunch or supper groups, social bridge or singing groups in your Clubs. The pure enjoyment you share with other members and potential members gives everyone the opportunity to know what we do and who we are. The money raised by Clubs in unique fundraising drives for scholarships and bursaries at universities, colleges and secondary schools are precious resources that launch the next generation of women into professions that will transform the world. And isn't that our mission? By paying your annual dues, your support becomes invaluable. With your membership, you support Advocacy in your community - outreach projects to shelters, feminine hygiene donations or food banks. And so many other projects that make difference. Well Done all.

Sub Committees



Environment and Climate Change:

This subcommittee is busy with several projects. They presented a webinar on Everyday Actions in October. They monitored COP28 in Dubai and prepared a report. They are busy with a Plastics project cooperating with India's NFA and plan to publish an Earth Day Newsletter. Stay tuned for even more!

Policy Book

Margaret and Teri are busy with archiving some resolutions and compiling some other existing resolutions. Watch for their resolutions at the AGM.

Status of Women and Human Rights

This committee meets when it can and has its eyes on issues related to Intimate Partner Violence, CEDAW and cyber security. Ontario Council with Sandra Shaw just published a toolkit about IPV, which is available nation-wide.

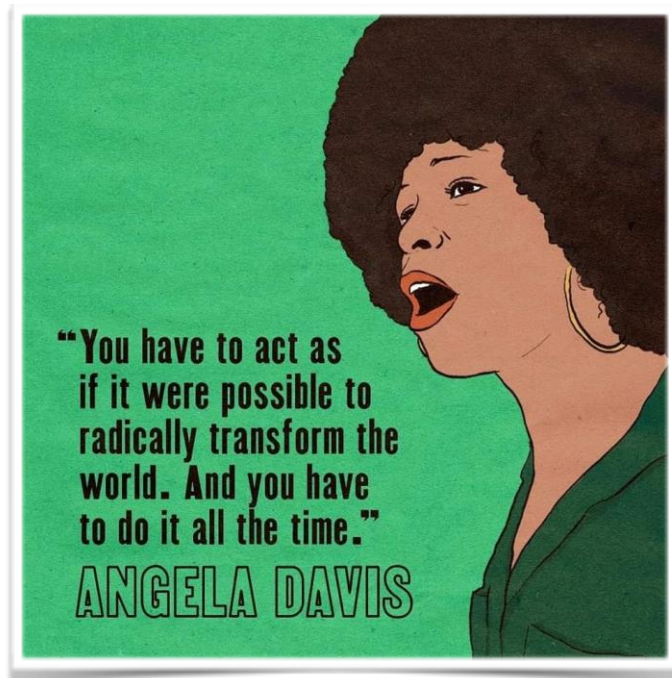
What does Advocacy mean?

In the context of CFUW, Advocacy means:

- Taking action to create change;
- shaping the public discourse on important social issues; ensuring that the underserved communities have a voice in forming policies that affect them;
- talking to politicians to ensure that the public interest issues are on their agenda;
- representing and helping people understand personal opinions and needs of another group;
- engaging others, exercising your voice and mobilizing evidence to influence policy and practice;
- speaking out against inequity and inequality; and
- participating directly and indirectly in political processes and acknowledging the importance of evidence, power and politics in advancing policy options.

Advocacy is responsible for many things we now take for granted such as universal medicare in Canada, women's voting rights, matrimonial property rights and paid maternity leave.

Advocacy is a core function of CFUW and it is at the heart of the mission and vision of CFUW. Sharing our mission is fundamental to our success.



What does the National Advocacy and Policy Specialist do?

I (Kenzie) was thrilled to join CFUW as National Advocacy and Policy Specialist in September 2023. The past few months have been full of learning, reading, writing, and of course, advocating! Here's a glimpse of what we're up to at National Office with respect to advocacy...

Working on the Hill

We participate in consultations and submit briefs to House and Senate Committees to ensure that CFUW's policy perspectives (as outlined in our Adopted Resolutions) are voiced and heard. For example, in October, we submitted a [written brief](#) to the Senate Committee studying Bill C-35 on Early Learning and Child Care. We also contributed to a [consultation](#) as a part of Canada's Universal Periodic Review (UPR) process: we reviewed the recommendations that other countries made regarding Canada's human rights record and advised on which ones we thought were priorities to address, and how.



Writing and sending letters

We create template letters for Clubs to send to their local representatives, such as the [letter](#) urging MPs to vote in favour of Bill C-219 (on an Environmental Bill of Rights). We also produced a [template letter](#) to send to Mayors on declaring gender-based violence an epidemic, as a part of the 16 Days of Activism campaign. In addition to writing template letters for Clubs (and individual members of the public), we also regularly prepare letters for National President Joy Hurst to send on behalf of CFUW on topics of national importance to our organization. This included a [letter](#) to the Canadian delegation at COP28, which garnered a [response](#) from Environment Minister Steven Guilbeault.

Monitoring political and social justice/non-profit spaces

To keep a finger on the pulse of current events relating to our national priorities, I closely monitor federal and provincial politics, including the progress of bills, policies, and programs. This entails tracking bills that CFUW supports and celebrating their passing—two recent wins have been the passing of [Bill C-48](#) on bail reform and [Bill C-21](#) on gun control!

Here are a few of the bills that are currently on my radar:

- Bill C-226, An Act respecting the development of a national strategy to assess, prevent and address environmental racism and to advance environmental justice
- Bill C-61, An Act respecting water, source water, drinking water, wastewater and related infrastructure on First Nation lands
- Bill C-20, An Act establishing the Public Complaints and Review Commission and amending certain Acts and statutory instruments (this one concerns oversight of the Canada Border Services Agency and was referenced in CFUW's 2023 Resolution on immigration detention)

I also follow other non-governmental organizations' advocacy work and support their campaigns. For example, we recently endorsed the '[Intersectional Feminist Housing Agenda](#)' from the Women's National Housing & Homelessness Network, and promoted the agenda on social media.

Some other recent campaigns: the Canadian Council of Muslim Women's [#DeleteDigitalHate project](#), Amnesty International's [campaign on Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence](#), and Aura Freedom's [The Body Bag For Her](#) campaign on femicide.

Advocacy's Priorities

Advocacy is managed under three Clusters: Education; Equity and Social Justice; and Safe and Healthy Communities.

Education: SDG 4 // includes life long learning, member education; Goals include Increasing organizational and members' knowledge about issues related to advocacy priorities ; increasing access to issue related research; providing opportunities for learning from experts, and each other.

Equity and Social Justice: SDG 1, 5, 8, 10, //includes Gender based violence, Intimate partner violence, family violence, poverty, gender equality, basic income, safe and secure institutions,; Goals include identifying and connecting with allies who can contribute to equity/equality and social justice in these areas.; Empowering VPs Regionally to work at provincial level to identify and connect with allies to make a difference in these areas; Working with coalitions to reduce violence against women, reducing poverty in communities, achieving gender equity, improving the health of women and children.

Safe and Healthy Communities SDG 13, 16 // includes aging in place,, senior's rights, long term care and environment and climate change; Goals include Working towards ensuring funding for community care; supporting aging in place; a senior's advocate in each province and a declaration of senior's rights for Canada; Making Canada's Health Care system more effective; Promoting a green economy; promoting anti-pollution policy; reducing plastics policy; an environmental conservation policy.

From VP Education

My work is focussed on addressing current issues in education and supporting lifelong learning with and for our members.

Currently the Education committee is focussing on:

Learning and Technology: Challenges & Benefit, including Artificial Intelligence

- UN Sustainable Development Goal “Quality Education” (SDG 4), Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.
- Mental Health Concerns in the Education Sector, support for Students and Staff

With the emphasis on education, together with the V.P. International Relations, we “Unite to ACT” on SDG 4, Target 4.4— Increase the number of people with relevant skills for financial success.

- The Indigenous Issues Sub-committee is on a learning journey and undertakes advocating on matters related to the health, education and well being of Indigenous people across the country.

Currently the Indigenous Issues sub-committee is focussing on:

- Challenges and supports for and by Indigenous people in urban areas
- Supports and programs in post-secondary institutions for indigenous students

Webinars with invited speakers are prepared for fall and spring/summer presentations.

I participate in a number of committees:

- I chair both the Education committee and Indigenous Issues sub committee.
- I participate in the Advocacy and International Relations committees
- I am a member of the Advocacy working group along with the President and VP

Advocacy, VP International Relations and the National Advocacy and Policy Specialist

- I am a member of the CFUW Charitable Trust Board of Directors, as VP Education a representative from the CFUW Board
- I am a member of the Communications Committee and Human Resources Committee
- With the VP Advocacy I support the Long-Term Care/Seniors Rights Study Group; preparing for May 1st Elder Action Day
- Together with the VP Advocacy I coach the Health Care Study group
- Together with the VP Advocacy I organize Think Tanks on issues of concern to members—currently Housing
- I am a member of the CAMEUS (Canada/US/Mexico) committee, specifically the subcommittee planning the virtual presentation at CSW 68, focussed on women successfully immigrating or coming as refugees to each of our countries

I prepare resources or statements for:

- The Advocacy “Toolbox” review sections for MMIWG
- Updated resources and information for the new CFUW website
- Newsletter submission for International Day of Education January 24th
- Newsletter submission for Red Dress Day May 1st
- Newsletter submission for National Indigenous Peoples Day June 21st

After four years in this role (two terms), we are seeking a successor to take on the position of VP Education on the National Board.

From VP International Relations

- My work encompasses all aspects of International Relations including interacting with and monitoring organizations of which we are members. This includes reporting to CFUW members about GWI, IAW, the WPS Network, NCWC and more. It also includes monitoring the work of the Canadian government, its feminist foreign policy and its trade agreements.

I participate in several committees:

- I chair the International Relations committee
- I participate in both the Advocacy and Education committees
- I am a member of the Board Advocacy Working Group along with the President and VP Advocacy, VP Education and the National Advocacy and Policy Specialist
- I am Past President of BC Council and sit on its board
- I am the advocacy contact for my club for the BC Council advocacy group
- I am a member of the Branding committee
- I coordinate with the VP Advocacy on issues such as COP which is a UN body but is monitored by the Advocacy sub-committee on the Environment (one member is from the IR committee)
- I work with the VP of Education on our "Unite to ACT" campaign with the focus on SDG 4.4 – relevant education, which includes digital education and AI.
- IR is responsible for CAMEUS, a collaboration of Canada, CFUW, Mexico, FEMU and the US, WG-USA. The focus is on issues relevant to the three countries primarily migration and refugees. Grace Hollett (IR com member) chairs the meetings on behalf of CFUW. At the current moment we are planning the CSW68 virtual parallel session to be held on Tuesday March 19 at 2:30 ET.

Webinars:

- I hosted the webinar on the International Service Project (ISP) (Sept 26th – She Belongs in School)
- I speak at Clubs on International Relations
- I will chair the CFUW CSW68 in-person parallel event at New York on Tuesday March 12.
- I co-chaired the town hall with the VP finance on GWI dues and GWI Updates

I prepare or supervise the development of resources or statements for:

- The ISP project
- Unite to Act Campaign
- The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)
 - The CFUW written statement
 - CFUW parallel event planning, poster, handout
 - CFUW Delegate selection, briefings-pre and post CSW
- International Development Week (IDW) February 5-11
- CFUW communication re: GWI notices
- Chair (and report on) the subcommittee for adjudicating IR projects and awards:
 - the ISP project applications
 - the International Women's Day (IWD) Award

- the International Relations Award
- Relevant International Days to be recognized in newsletters:
 - International Day of the Girl Child
 - International Day to Eradicate Poverty

I prepare two major International Relations Reports – one in the fall and the other post CSW (vol 1 and vol 2).

I prepare two GWI Eblasts (fall issue here) to inform GWI supporting clubs of relevant GWI concerns and initiatives.

As this is my last year as VP of International Relations, we are seeking someone with in interest in international affairs to take on the role.

What does the VP Advocacy do?

My work plan is described by this singular goal: **Advance the Status of Women.**

The President is an integral part of the Advocacy Team. She advises on issues and signs all letters to Ministers.

I participate in a number of committees:

- I chair the Advocacy Standing Committee which meets once a month and discusses current issues in advocacy provincial and national;
- I chair the Board Advocacy Working Group, which consists of the President, the VP Education, the VP International Relations and the National Advocacy and Policy Specialist with the Executive Director. We discuss common issues like work load and concerns related to national priorities we share.
- These Subcommittees come under my direction: Environment & Climate Change; Status of Women & Human Rights; and Policy Book.
- I am a guest at the International Relations Committee and the Education Committee where I listen and take note of any impacts and connections that Advocacy and the sub committees might have in those areas;
- I am actively engaged in the AGM/Conference planning Committee, mostly focused on the conference portion of the events, drafted the Sponsorship policy and working with the team to find speakers. The Executive Director chairs the committee.
- I coach the Long Term Care/Seniors' Rights and Health Care study groups with the VP Education.
- I work with CAMEUS, the Resolutions Committee, Communications Committee and of course, the National Board.
- I prepare and deliver/host webinars on various topics, such as The Advocacy ToolBox in October, the Women in Skilled Trades webinar in January, and the recent Housing Think Tank on February 6.

Coming up in the next months:

Virtual Gathering February 29, 3pm ET - for anyone interested in discussing the future of Advocacy in CFUW with the Board Advocacy Working Group. **Club Presidents and Advocacy Committee Chairs, Club Liaison Officers** are especially invited, but **anyone** can join us as we discuss what issues Advocacy could be influencing and affecting over the next few years. With the biennium wrapping up in July, now is the time to pass the baton to the next team looking after advocacy, education and international relations. *Come prepared to share YOUR Club's advocacy success(es) in a brief highlight.*

Resolution Review by Clubs : **From March 12 to April 24**, draft Resolutions will be circulating for review by Clubs. The topics this year are varied from: Preserving Peatlands to Deep Sea Ecology; from National Database for documenting the impact of drinking water quality on Indigenous Communities to Federal Resources to enable equity for all to age in place; Federal incentives to implement the HSO 2023 standards for LTC to Archiving select resolutions and combining adopted resolutions.

Earth Day April 22 : The **Theme is Planet v Plastics** and its very fitting this year. Our national capital is hosting the fourth international Plastics treaty negotiations from April 23-27.

Award Nominations: If you want to nominate your Club's Advocacy Committee for a project that you felt was top-notch, please do so before May 1.

AGM and Conference 2024 From July 22 (Monday) to July 24 (Wednesday) the AGM and Conference promises to be packed with choice information and opportunities to network and learn from colleagues and allies. Come for the Meetings; Stay for the learning AND the Fun!

Sometimes Maggie Smith needs to remind me to take action and kick up my heels in the rainstorm, rather than lay about whining about the world!



What rainstorm are you willing to dance in these days?