

Academic Women for Justice applies for Intervenor Status

Academic Women for Justice believes it is crucial for women and members of other equity-seeking groups to bring their concerns forward to Human Rights Tribunals, if we are to move forward towards a more equitable workplace.

Professor Emily Carasco's complaint to the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario against the University of Windsor for discrimination against her on the basis of gender and colour raises important issues that need urgently to be addressed within the Canadian academic community.

In spite of lip service paid to equity issues by Canadian universities, "Persistent concerns remain within Canadian colleges and universities about the nature and extent of the barriers facing academic staff who are members of equity-seeking groups – women, visible minorities, Aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered" (Caut Equity Review 1, November 2007).

Academic Women for Justice has applied to the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario for intervenor status in Professor Carasco's case because we share a common goal in advancing the interests of women and persons of colour within the Canadian academic community and society as a whole.

Academic Women for Justice, particularly concerned by failures in the implementation of equity legislation and measures, seeks to address the following issues:

- (a) What factors are responsible for the general failure of universities to make meaningful progress in advancing women, women of colour and other equity seeking groups to senior positions in university administrations in Ontario and in the wider national academic community?
- (b) What is the obligation of Canadian university administrations to maintain fair hiring processes to ensure that equity seeking groups like women and visible minorities are not discriminated against?
- (c) What are the concrete mechanisms that Canadian university administrations should use and can be called accountable for to ensure that equity seeking groups like women and visible minorities are not discriminated against?
- (d) What is the obligation of Canadian university administrations to ensure that members of equity seeking groups such as women and visible minorities who engage in activities aimed at increasing the access of equity-seeking groups to positions within the university do not meet with reprisals as a result of their activities in favour of equity improvements? And
- (e) What are the obligations of Canadian Faculty Associations with respect to ensuring fair treatment for equity-seeking groups and how can Faculty Associations be held accountable for these obligations.