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News release

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For publication

Moncton- *World Day of Social Justice: Let's Celebrate our Victories!*

The New Brunswick Common Front for Social Justice is highlighting *the World Day of Social Justice* by celebrating victories obtained by organizations of civil society in the last years.

As the 2019 United Nations declaration states: *We advance social justice when we remove barriers that people face because of gender, age, race, ethnicity, religion, culture or disability.*

We invited a number of organizations that are fighting against obstacles link to gender, workers' rights, students' rights, citizens in poverty and the protection of the environment. They will share with us their struggles and gains, explains Maxime Dubé, Provincial Secretary of the New Brunswick Common Front for Social Justice.

Johanne Perron, Executive Director of the New Brunswick Coalition for Pay Equity :

*Pay equity has made great strides over the past year. Although there is no date set for its implementation, proactive federal pay equity legislation has been adopted for federally regulated sectors. In New Brunswick, there has been significant progress with regards to implementing the Pay Equity Act, 2009 in the public sector. During the last provincial election campaign, three out of five parties promised to pass pay equity legislation for the private sector—the Liberal Party, the Green Party and the New Democratic Party. In addition, an **Advisory Committee on Living Wage and Pay Equity** from the **Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation (ESIS)** calls for the adoption of comprehensive pay equity legislation for the private sector in its final report. Lastly, the provincial government's 2018-2019 budget included \$11.6 million to increase the salaries of special care home employees and home support workers—far from pay equity, but a recognition that the government is responsible for providing adequate salaries in the care-giving sector.*

Nelly Dennene, Executive Director of the Regroupement féministe du Nouveau-Brunswick. We are proud to see positive change in gender equality. *The increase in*

the representation of women in provincial politics, new employment standard policies for those who have experienced gender-based violence, and the availability of the free abortion pill all show progress and encourage us to continue the work that has to be done.

Patrick Colford, President of the New Brunswick Federation of Labour: *Unions provide the best, if not the only advocate for workers on the job site, but newly formed unions will not survive long without a collective bargaining agreement—no matter how many employees voted for representation. Failure to get their first contract signed by an employer in a timely manner is arguably the greatest impediment to the success of a bargaining unit and to workers' interests being represented in the workplace. Consequently, many feel that the first contract arbitration provision, adopted in 2018, is the most important provision in the right to organize. The first contract arbitration provision gives both the union and the employer the option of entering binding arbitration after 120 days of inconclusive bargaining, including 30 days with help from the mediation and conciliation service*

Alexandre Cédric Doucet, President of the Fédération des étudiantes et étudiants de l'Université de Moncton. *Over the last decade, FÉÉCUM has been successful in advancing many issues, both on-campus and outside, and standing out as a key player on the provincial political scene. Every year (except one) since 2009, it has presented the government with a set of pre-budget recommendations that have led to advances such as increased funding to universities, a more equitable calculation of student loan amounts, more financial accountability of publicly-funded universities, free tuition for low-income families, tuition relief for middle-income students, access to provincial health insurance for international students, the remuneration of trainees in public services, Francophone immigration and many others. FÉÉCUM is also strong in its capacity to enhance the student experience through its internal campaigns on tenant rights, environmental and social issues, community involvement and democratic participation, support to interest groups such as River of Pride or the Common Front, managing a student food bank on campus and a student mental health Peer support centre, not to mention the creation of an independent commissioner position and a Code of Conduct for members of the university community.*

Auréa Cormier of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul : *When we do home visits, members of the Society of Saint-Vincent de Paul defend the rights of people living in poverty for housing, food, medication, etc. .*

Denise Melanson : *The anti-share gas movement grew from village to village as the companies involved informed the public that their communities were included in the leased areas for shale gas development. The residents soon realized that their*

Quality of Life, Social, Physical Welfare and Environment would be degraded by this development. The factors that allowed this movement to succeed in influencing Government's Policy regarding shale gas were: Public Education using Community meetings, public conferences by experts in the field, media events and meetings with politicians. Cooperation and collaboration of all the ethnic groups in the province. Mobilization of citizens involving protests and political pressure, the arts, and a legal challenge and finally, tenacity.

For information

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