

## FACT SHEET

# ORGANIZED WORKING WOMEN

### WHAT IS IT?

ORGANIZED WORKING WOMEN (O.W.W.) is a membership organization which is open to all working women who are covered by a bona fide collective bargaining unit. O.W.W.'s Constitution reads: "Organized Working Women was founded in Toronto in March 1976 as a first step towards the establishment of an Ontario and eventually a Canada-wide organization of organized working women." O.W.W. is endorsed by the Ontario Federation of Labour.

### TO WHICH UNIONS DO THE MEMBERS BELONG?

The following unions are represented by O.W.W. members: United Auto Workers; Canadian Union of Public Employees; Ontario Public Service Employees; United Steelworkers; Communication Workers of Canada; Service Employees Int'l. Union; Canadian Brotherhood of Carpenters & Joiners; Southern Ontario Newspaper Guild; Assoc. of Commercial & Technical Employees; Canadian Union of Postal Workers; Office & Professional Employees; United Electrical Workers; Cdn. Union of Educational Workers; Fed. of Women Teachers, Ont.; Public Service Alliance of Canada; Canadian Brotherhood of Union Workers; Ontario Nurses Assoc.; Canadian Food & Commercial Services; Ontario Secondary School Teachers Fed.; Graphic Arts Int'l; Toronto Typographical Union; Cdn. Airline Employees Assoc.; Brotherhood of Railway, Airline & Steamship Clerks; Amalgamated Clothing & Textile Workers; Faculty Assoc. U. of T.; United Rubber Workers; Letter Carriers Union; Int'l Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, and others.

### HOW AND WHEN WAS O.W.W. FOUNDED?

- 1975 International Year of Women. A conference, 'Women In The Workforce, It's About Time' elected a steering committee to initiate an organization of women unionists.
- 1976 March. A delegated convention of union women founded Organized Working Women. The purpose of Organized Working Women is to unite women in the organized labour movement, as women and as unionists, to work within our unions to pursue a policy of positive actions in solidarity with our brothers to improve our conditions and to strengthen our individual unions.

### HOW IS O.W.W. FUNDED?

In 1976 the Labour Council of Metro Toronto donated \$1,000. to O.W.W. The Secretary of State awarded O.W.W. special project grants of \$19,000. in 1977; \$25,000. in 1978; \$1,500. in '79; \$5,000. - '80; \$13,000. - '81 & \$15,000. - '82. Government grants and our membership dues will not in themselves support our program so we launched our first annual fund raising campaign within the labour movement in 1981, in order to finance our membership's directives. We acknowledge with gratitude the donations we have received in the past from union locals and our loyal supporters

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## WHAT DOES O.W.W. DO?

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Encourages the formation of women's committees at all levels of the union movement. At the 1978 O.F.L. Convention, O.W.W. spearheaded the struggle for the formation of the OFL Women's Committee. O.W.W. also encourages and assists the founding of O.W.W. chapters. O.W.W. facilitates the participation of women through its: Regular Membership Meetings, Educationals on union issues; Skills Workshops, Newspaper, UNION WOMAN and conferences.

- Skills Workshops are held annually on such topics as parliamentary procedure, public speaking and stewards' training in Toronto. Skills Workshops were held in '81 in Sudbury and Ottawa; in '82 in Peterborough, on similar topics.
- Newspaper Our first publication was a newsletter, Sept. 1976. Since the fall of 1977 the O.W.W. newspaper UNION WOMAN has been published four times a year. This is the only union women's newspaper in Canada. UNION WOMAN is mailed to members and subscribers in Canada from coast to coast and to most of the major cities in the U.S. Subscriptions are purchased by various individuals, organizations and government bodies. UNION WOMAN is distributed in bulk lots to supporting unions.
- Conferences O.W.W. organized in Dec. 1978, the "Women's Work, Women's Health" Conference; in March 1980, "Daycare and the Union Movement"; in Feb. 1981, "Women and Employment"; in Feb. 1982, "Technology and the Working Woman"; in Feb. 1983, "Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value"
- Solidarity Actions With our sisters and brothers, O.W.W. supported: Ottawa Banknote workers; York University Support Staff; C.U.P.E. '79 Nurses' struggle for equal pay; women's solidarity pickets at: Fleck, Blue Cross, Purtex, Radio Shack, Community Colleges, Bell, PSAC Cr's, Hospital Workers, Tel Air, Fotomat, CALFA, Postal Workers, Stelco, Irwin Toys, Brinks, ONASU. O.W.W. held the Toronto Benefit supporting INCO.
- Union & Community Actions O.W.W.'s members participate in many actions such as: Oct. 18 "Ontario Can Work" demonstration; "Cutbacks Hurt Ontario Children" demonstration; Oct. 14 "Day of Protest" demonstration; OFL Forum on "Unemployment"; OFL Daycare Forums and Coalition; Nov. 21 "Protest on High Interest Rates" demonstration; International Women's Celebrations and the annual Labour Day Parades.
- O.W.W.'s Annual Meetings At the O.W.W. Annual Meeting, its membership adopts policies and programs and elects its 12 person Executive Council for the following year.

### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

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