

CONGRESS OF BLACK WOMEN TORONTO CHAPTER

Annual General Meeting

April 28, 1990.

President's Report

During the 1989 - 1990 year, I was granted the honour of serving as the President of the Toronto Chapter. This position has proven to become increasingly challenging as the year progressed.

Development of the Executive Committee

In keeping with our desire for a uniformity of vision for the Toronto Chapter, and our ideal of effective leadership, the executive participated in a board development workshop on June 13, 1989.

The theme for the workshop was 'Effectiveness'. This practical workshop was delivered by Yvonne Smith. The areas covered were: problem identification; how to build effectiveness; personal action plan; a case study in which participants devised a time and goal plan; wrap up and closure.

This was a very 'hands on', worthwhile, workshop. We recommend it unreservedly.

Toronto Chapter Objectives for 1989-1990

1. To forge links with the following organizations: Ujaama; Organization for Parents of Black Children (OPBC); The Coalition of Visible Minority Women; The Black Secretariat and a community group that needs boosting for example the Ontario Sickle cell association.
2. To have a bank balance of at least \$2000 by the end of the fiscal year.
3. To organize at least 5 educational programs.
4. To host three social events.
5. To increase membership by 40 and maintain membership

Toronto Chapter Programs and Activities

National Congress Involvement

The Toronto Chapter began this year by attending the National Biennial Conference held in Halifax Nova Scotia. Six Toronto Chapter delegates and several non-delegate members attended this conference from May 6, to May 8, 1989.

After the national conference, the Toronto Chapter was called upon to submit our issues and suggestions for programs which the new national executive could consider when setting goals for 1989-1991. These were to be submitted through the regional representative Sybil Garrick.

The Toronto Chapter identified the following issues for consideration by the national executive: the Federal Immigration Ministry and undocumented Black women; employment equity; the national constitution; organizing the national conference and the membership of the national body in mainstream national organizations.

The program suggested by the Toronto Chapter was a women's health program to be instituted nationally.

Regional Congress Involvement

At the regional level, Toronto Chapter sat on the committee to plan the Kay Livingstone Luncheon and on two subcommittees for the luncheon. The Toronto chapter is also represented on the issues committee and attends the all presidents' committee meetings.

Community Involvement

This year, the Toronto Chapter responded to many issues locally. The responses varied from letter writing to personal representation. The following are some of those issues: unfair hiring practices of the Ontario Human Rights Commission; the increasing numbers of Caribbean deportees; discrimination against Black social assistance recipients; and the treatment of Caribbean clients and staff workers by Intercede.

The Toronto Chapter also: participated a vigil at City Hall in support of the students who were massacred in China and delivered a speech at the February 14, street celebration honouring Nelson Mandela's release.

~~Toronto Chapter Activities 1989-1990~~

- June - August - A reading/discussion series featuring an appointed discussant and books by Caribbean, African and African-American authors.
- July - A forum on immigration
- Annual family picnic
- September - Discussion with Dr. Bernard Moitt from OPBC and Mr Lloyd McKell from the Toronto Board of Education, on the Education of Black Students in Toronto Schools
- October - Fundraising Brunch
- Film: "Are You a Racist".
- November - Film: "Hair Piece"
- December - A Family Christmas Dinner for members and their families
- A slide show of the architect's drawing of the Barsha Kelly/Cari-Can Co-op building and Lakeshore Village
- January Discussions with the following international visitors: Bell Hooks-USA; Byllye Avery - USA and Augustin Sambola - Nicaragua.
- February Co-sponsorships - with the National Film Board Studio D, the launching of the films: 'Older, Stronger, Wiser'; and 'Black Mother, Black Daughter'; and with Ujaama, the African History Month lecture by Dr. Maulana Karenga.
- March Official Launching of our Anti-Racist Childcare Film Project and viewing of the films: 'Older, Stronger, Wiser'; and 'Black Mother, Black Daughter' .

Toronto Chapter Projects

The following are ongoing initiatives of the Toronto Chapter: the Barsha Kelly/Cari Can Co-op Housing Project and the Anti-Racist Childcare Film Project.

The Barsha Kelly/Cari-Can Co-op Housing Project

The Barsha Kelly/Cari-Can Co-op Housing project is a joint initiative with the Coalition of Visible Minority Women. This project is moving towards the final stages of planning. The following committees meet regularly: the Board of Directors, the Bylaw and Policy Review Committee; the Design and Construction committee. The Barsha Kelly /Cari-Can Co-op Housing Project has representation on the the Environmental committee which consists of members from all the sites at Lakeshore Village the site for our Co-op.

A committee which needs members is the member selection committee.

The Anti-Racist Childcare Strategies Film Project

The Anti-racist Childcare Film Project is in progress. A co-ordinator and a researcher were hired and research and grant applications are in progress. The office for the project and for the Toronto Chapter is at 394A Euclid Avenue.

Other Project

The Toronto Chapter made many unsuccessful attempts to meet with Intercede to discuss its service delivery to Caribbean domestics. So, due to the gravity of the situation which faces Caribbean domestics in Toronto, the Toronto Chapter has decided to support the Caribbean domestics by helping them to establish an agency to administer to their needs. This is in progress.

In the meanwhile, the Toronto Chapter has received funding from the Ontario Women's Directorate to educate Caribbean domestics on the issue of sexual assault.

The 1989-1990 Executive

The Toronto Chapter started the year with a full slate of executive members. However, due to a series of personal occurrences in the lives of executive members, by January, 1990, we were operating with only four out of ten members of the executive.

Conclusion

The Toronto Chapter has met all of its objectives this year except for objective five.

The retention of active membership has been an ongoing problem for this chapter, but this year is most serious because our executive members can no longer spare the long hours that are necessary to sustain this very demanding chapter. Our chapter, in this time of exciting projects, needs reliable and consistent woman power.

Recommendations

1. That the Toronto Chapter pursue core funding so that a co-ordinator could be hired to supervise the various projects.
2. That the chapter consider an alternative method of membership recruitment. For example, through aggressive recruitment at youth organizations.

Respectfully submitted,

Charis A. Newton.
President
Toronto Chapter