

## **Prepare to be inspired at the CUPE Ontario Women's conference**

**Suze Morrison** – Survivor, activist and now Member of Provincial Parliament

Suze has overcome significant adversity to get to where she is today. Poverty, precarious housing, violence, and learning how to understand her identity as a woman with both settler and Indigenous heritage are all critical parts of how she approaches developing policy that works to improve lives and communities.

Her career has focused on amplifying people's voices and creating more equitable communities. Up until her election as the new NDP MPP for the riding of Toronto Centre, Suze worked in the Indigenous non-profit sector to improve the lives of urban Indigenous people.

In her new role as the Official Opposition Critic for Housing & Women's Issues, she hopes to continue to make her city and province safer, more inclusive places to live with a focus on affordability, health, precarious work, and equity.

**Yasmin Rajabi** – Advocate, facilitator and leader with the Young Women's Leadership Network

Yasmin leads the work of Young Women's Leadership Network, a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to fostering young women's civic and political leadership at all levels.

She is also a fourth-year Public Policy & City Studies student at the University of Toronto and works as a facilitator bringing together local communities, private interests and clients to create innovative policy solutions. She has been an advocate for the rights of girls and young women through partnerships with various non-profits organizations, and engaging youth in policy making. She has spoken at several forums on the importance of an anti-colonial and intersectional lens in doing feminist work.

**Sarah Jama** – Community organizer, disability rights activist and anti-racism consultant

Sarah is the co-founder of the Disability Justice Network of Ontario. She currently works at the Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion as an Outreach Coordinator and is a Community Engagement Liaison to City Councillor Matthew Green.

In her spare time, Sarah acts as a consultant, and is currently working with the Hamilton Wentworth District School Board to create anti-racism training and peer-support based curriculum for students at the school board.

**Lyra Evans** – Trans rights activist and newly elected Trustee with the Ottawa District School Board

Lyra is Canada's first openly transgendered school trustee – elected this past October in Ottawa.

Coming out in high-school was not easy – with no visible role models in her life Lyra didn't even have the language at the time to explain who she was. At first she struggled. Lyra became homeless, couch surfing and living on the street for several years. Finding her way to transitional housing set her on a path to volunteering and all that has come since.

At the age of 26, Lyra has already made a mark as a housing activist, community organizer and LGBTQ activist, and in her new role as School Trustee she can be counted on to be a fierce advocate for students.

**Judy Rebick** – Lifelong leader in Canada's feminist movement, writer, journalist, political activist, and co-founder of Rabble.ca

Rebick first came to prominence in the fight to legalize abortion in the 1980, she was the president of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women in the 1990's and is a high-profile journalist and media commentator.

Her latest book is a riveting memoir that tells the story of the eleven personalities she developed in order to help her cope with, and survive, childhood sexual abuse. The book chronicles her struggles with depression; meeting the eleven personalities; uncovering her repressed memories of childhood sexual abuse; and her journey through therapy - all while leading high-profile national struggles against a Conservative government.

**Niki Ashton** – Member of Parliament and founder of Our Movement campaign school for women, femmes and non-binary progressive political candidates and organizers

Niki has been a key member of the federal NDP caucus since 2008, representing the riding of Churchill—Keewatinook Aski in northern Manitoba. She has twice run for the leadership of the party with campaigns focused on engaging more youth in the Party. She has served as NDP critic for Aboriginal Affairs, Status of Women, Post-Secondary Education and Youth, and is currently the critic for Jobs, Employment and Workforce Development.