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February 1, 2012

## Black History Month

On behalf of CUPE Ontario's 240,000 members, we are very pleased to extend greetings and solidarity to all members of the Racial Justice Committee, all of our Equality Committees, and to all racialized workers across Ontario at the beginning of Black History Month.

CUPE Ontario is proud to participate in Black History Month. Many CUPE members attended the month's kick-off hosted by the Ontario Black History Society (OBHS) on Sunday, January 29. The theme of the event was "a celebration of firsts", so it was fitting that Zanana Akande spoke as keynote speaker, the first African Canadian woman elected as a representative to the legislative assembly of Ontario.

Zanana recounted the history of black people in the creation of Canada, a rich and harsh history not widely known. She inspired her listeners, after recalling the hardships our ancestors faced, to "correct the story now."

History unfolds every day in our society. So it is important that we all understand and acknowledge the role African Canadians have played in the development of Canada as a country. It is a time for celebration, but also a time for sober reflection on the reality that there is still not a level playing field for racialized people in Ontario.

CUPE Ontario will be posting Black History Month Events at [www.cupe.on.ca](http://www.cupe.on.ca). We encourage all members to check often. And send us any information about events in your community so we can spread the word as well.

We must continually renew our commitment to racial equality and justice inside and outside our union. For CUPE Ontario, this means re-committing ourselves to the work our activists do to foster racial justice, and to building a better society with all of our equality committees.

We know that our entire union looks forward to the events of this month as an opportunity for just such renewal, both personally and collectively for our entire Union.

On behalf of the CUPE Ontario Executive Board and CUPE Ontario staff, we extend warmest best wishes for a Black History Month that celebrates every success and renews our energy to continue the struggle for equality in the future.

In Solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fred Hahn".

Fred Hahn  
President

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Candace Rennick".

Candace Rennick  
Secretary Treasurer

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**Fred Hahn**  
President

**ONE STRONG VOICE**

**Candace Rennick**  
Secretary-Treasurer