



Julie Nanquil

*Women's Representative,
Ontario Regional Council*

As a woman who prides herself on having grown up under the wings of the Ontario Regional Women's Committee since 2017, it was with absolute excitement and eagerness that, after having been elected in May of this year, I accepted the role of Women's Representative on Ontario Regional Council (ORC). Thank you, Ontario for putting your trust in me!

Since assuming my position with ORC, I am pleased to report that my collaboration and work with the Women's Committee remains strong, which as many know, was very important to me. In January of this year, we launched Women's Wellness Wednesdays; a monthly member engagement, on the first pay Wednesday of every month, each designed to focus on specific topics that our members can come together as a community to discuss, uplift, and empower one another, no matter how light or heavy the topics of discussion may be.

Previous months have touched on themes such as: pushing through depression, celebrating Black History Month, mindfulness and meditative art, resilience and thriving in the face of uncertainty, encouraging members to attend PSAC event centered on Asian Heritage Month, and art facilitation in honour of Indigenous History Month. For October, I will be leading Wellness Wednesday and have asked a representative from the PAIL Network from Sunnybrook Hospital to present and commemorate October 15th as Pregnancy and Infant Loss Remembrance Day, a topic many of our members have been affected by. The goal for our Wellness Wednesdays is to always provide a safe space where women can come together to encourage healing, learning, and empowerment.

At the end of this month, we will also be hosting our annual Women's Training Weekend – a much anticipated event where we welcome back our delegates to in-person training at the beautiful Bayview Wildwood Resort. This year, our theme is "She Believed She Could, So She Did!"

I have been instrumental in keeping the committee's social media thriving. Holding a passion for graphic design, I continue to create graphics and posters for the committee, and other committees when needed, in order to spread awareness and nurture the brand that we have been proudly building. In February, May, and June, the committee's Instagram page ([@ceiu.on.women](https://www.instagram.com/ceiu.on.women)) launched daily posts to highlight influential Canadian women in honour of Black History Month, Asian Heritage Month, and Indigenous History Month.

As for Ontario Regional Council, I am thrilled to be able to work with our Ontario NVPs and a Council of admirable union leaders that put the needs and best interests of our members at the forefront. One of my first events as the Women's Representative was in June, where I attended the National Women's Committee meeting in Halifax as a guest/observer. It was eye-opening to be able to hear from my regional counterparts what issues they face and have been prioritizing in their regions. We also took part in a rally in front of one of the Service Canadas close to the PSAC office; this was extra special for me because it was my eight-month old daughter's first rally.

The weekend was well organized with great ideas and events forecasted for the upcoming CEIU National Women's Conference. As great of an experience as it was, because of the current Ontario by-law that prevents ORC members from being part of any standing committee, it did leave me a little frustrated to know that, unlike all my other counterparts who represent women in their respective regions, my position as the Women's Representative is not given the opportunity to have a vote or voice on the National Women's Committee, despite our membership who identify as women, being as large as it is.

Not only that, but as it stands, in order to participate in the events of the National Women's Committee, my budget would be left at a deficit and I would have to rely on requesting additional funding to be an active participant. Another unnecessary challenge women face when trying to have a voice. I am really hoping Ontario can work together to change this!

Within ORC, I am also part of the Structure and Orientation Committee, the By-laws Committee, and the Education Committee. As you can imagine, the Structure Committee has been hard at work with our NVPs in making sure this Presidents' Conference is impactful and enjoyable for all of us. The By-laws Committee has also been hard at work in reviewing Resolutions of Record and bringing current by-laws up to date. As for the Education Committee, we look forward to organizing several training opportunities in the upcoming year.

Most recently, I also attended the CEIU National HRRR Conference in Vancouver, British Columbia at the end of September. I attended as an observer and also as the ORC Women's Representative looking to engage and network face-to-face with our Ontario members in attendance and leadership from other regions, to learn and share experiences and ideas.

As the ORC Women's Representative, there are goals I want to accomplish in the near future. With my ORC colleagues having expressed their eagerness to be allies in our fight for women's rights and equity, I am hoping to organize a women's training opportunity to engage our union leadership on allyship, in a region where the membership itself is predominantly women. I will also be focusing my efforts to gather a more accurate list of members who identify as women in our region so that I can better correspond with them and vice-versa.

On a personal note, this last year has been challenging, rewarding, and eye-opening, even more so while doing it all with a newborn in tow! Thank you for giving my daughter the unique experience of being raised in a union community and being able to learn from many of you. I have voiced many times how I owe a lot to the Women's Committee for allowing me to grow into the woman that I am and I cannot express enough how excited I am to continue my growth within ORC as I learn and collaborate with all of you. I look forward to another year of unlearning, learning, growing, and bettering. Let's continue to do better, together!

In solidarity,



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