

MEMBER UPDATE

COVID can't divide us

AUPE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE APPLAUDS MEMBERS STANDING UNITED DURING PANDEMIC

Times of crisis call for community support, and right now, that's what we need more than ever: all Albertans and all people from every corner of the globe pulling together, even in self-isolation, to support one another.

Unfortunately, powerful people will use crisis to do the opposite and try to turn us against one another. COVID-19 has been no exception. In all its unprecedented destruction, the new virus has shone a harsh light on very old problems.

This past weekend (March 21) marked the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. This year's theme is "fighting

racism and xenophobia during and after COVID-19." In the spirit of solidarity, battling this pandemic together, and building a better world after, AUPE's Human Rights Committee members are committed to this fight.

While some leaders and hate groups are using the coronavirus as a tool for dividing and pointing fingers at immigrants and racialized communities, we're using it as a call for solidarity. AUPE's Human Rights Committee stands with all Albertans, from all backgrounds today and everyday.

As part of their commitment, the Committee issued the following statement:

We call on AUPE members to continue to model strength, solidarity and unity during this time by reflecting on the ways we can include an anti-racism lens in how we look at the current pandemic crisis, including the experiences of Albertans who are of Chinese, East Asian and Middle Eastern heritage experiencing heightened xenophobia.

Some of the most low-paid, underserved working people are doing the most essential work – many of them are racialized people. COVID-19 has not changed this, and right now they continue to be called to the frontlines to keep Alberta functioning. Laundry workers, Nurses, Cleaning staff, grocery clerks, health-care aides and general support services in health: are just some of the Albertans of every background who are playing a key role in helping stop the spread of COVID-19 and keeping our province healthy. If COVID-19 is showing us anything, it's that they need and deserve better workplace protections now as much as ever. Let us reflect on these realities while we work to respond and support each other through the coronavirus pandemic. Let us continue our work to eliminate racism during the pandemic response and not let fear and uncertainty divide us.

We know solidarity and support works because we see people from around the globe come together stronger in the face of this challenging pandemic.

**Share your stories of solidarity in the time of COVID-19. Who do you want to thank and share your support for?
Tell us and include hashtag #COVIDcantdivideus**