

**A n n u a l R e p o r t  
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**National Association  
of Women and the Law**

*Equality Now!*

nawl | anfd

2339 Ogilvie Road, P.O. Box 46008, Gloucester, ON K1J 9M7



## MANDATE

The National Association of Women and the Law (NAWL), founded in 1974, is a not-for-profit feminist organization that promotes the equality rights of women through legal education, research, and law reform advocacy.

We recognize that each woman's experience of inequality is unique due to systemic discrimination related to race, class, sexual orientation, disability, age, language, and other factors. In our view, a just and equal society is one that values diversity, and is inclusive of it. We are committed to working collectively and in coalition with other groups to dismantle barriers to all women's equality. To this end, the general objectives of NAWL are to:

- Achieve equality before and within the legal system
- Eliminate violence against women
- Ensure a decent standard of living for all women through legislative reform
- Guarantee employment and pay equity
- Remove barriers that limit access to equality for all groups of women
- Establish a fairer deal for women and children in the event of divorce
- Ensure reproductive choice and monitor new reproductive technologies

NAWL's activities include but are not limited to the following:

- Lobbying for changes to federal and provincial laws and regulations
- Producing publications on legal issues affecting all aspects of women's lives
- Consulting with government officials on legal issues of concern to women
- Providing legal expertise in the service of the Canadian women's movement
- Advocating for gender equality in the courts and the legal profession
- Sponsoring national biennial conferences that formulate policy positions on such critical issues as the feminization of poverty, international perspectives on women and the law, and family law matters
- Hosting workshops and consultations on gender bias in the criminal justice system, family law and in the legal profession
- Promoting feminist scholarship through our Charitable Trust for Research and Education
- Organizing public education activities through our regional caucuses on legal issues affecting women
- Promoting feminist perspectives on current legal issues through the media

For the last 40 years, NAWL has focused its efforts on women's equality rights in Canada. Since that time, in coalition with other women's and equality-seeking organizations, we have achieved many victories including:

- Adoption of sections 15 and 28 in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms
- Amendments to the Criminal Code regarding sexual assault laws, rape shield legislation and criminal harassment legislation
- Positive changes to family law and to the Divorce Act
- Advancement of equality rights for lesbians



## GOVERNANCE, DEMOCRACY & PARTICIPATION

NAWL is an incorporated non-profit corporation that is governed by a National Steering Committee made up of a maximum of 12 volunteers.

NAWL has a nationwide membership of lawyers, law students, academics and other individuals who share a commitment to gender equality.

NAWL briefs and papers are developed by working groups, with membership open to any equality-seeking individual who has demonstrated knowledge and skills on the topic that is being addressed. Every effort is made to include diverse community perspectives within all working groups and to include both French-speaking and English-speaking members.



## NATIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE

Jane Bailey  
Lisa Cirillo  
Martha Jackman

Anne Levesque  
Leslie Robertson  
Amy Salyzyn



## NAWL CONTRACT STAFF

**Executive Consultant**  
Julie Shugarman

**Intern**  
Angela Mooney

**Administrative Consultant**  
Pam Mayhew



## MESSAGE FROM THE NATIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE

In 2013-2014, NAWL operated with a skeletal structure. While committed to remaining administratively sound, the National Steering Committee made a decision to spend as few resources as possible given an inability, without state funding, to do the research and advocacy work the organization was designed to do. For this reason, and because the organization was forced to abandon the university associated Law Reform Clinic project it developed in 2011-2012, NAWL ceased all fundraising activities, including its annual letter campaign in the fall.

Despite an extremely reduced structure, NAWL continued to work toward its vision of providing feminist law students with the skills necessary for advancing systemic law reform remedies at the federal level.

After the Women and Law Reform Clinic project was denied funding by the University of Ottawa in May, 2013, NAWL explored alternative models for offering clinical law reform experiences to feminist law students with another Faculty of Law. When it was ultimately decided that the experiential learning model developed for the University of Ottawa could not be launched elsewhere, a decision was nonetheless made to teach the bilingual seminar course originally developed by Martha Jackman to be offered as the clinic course. In early 2014, Martha Jackman and Julie Shugarman co-instructed the seminar course at the University of Ottawa's Faculty of Law, French Common Law Section. A number of high-profile feminist lawyers, two Members of Parliament, and several equality advocates offered guest lectures for the seminar course.

The NAWL Charitable Trust for Research and Education, with support from Shirley Greenberg, has since been working on putting a version of this Feminist Law Reform Course online for broad access through the NAWL website. To this end, 77 edited video clips have been developed for various modules of the online course; and these are accompanied by suggested readings, discussion questions and assignments. Course modules cover a broad range of topics, such as:

- Foundational concepts in equality law and policy
- Funding the law reform process
- The federal law reform process
- Lobbying
- Members of Parliament
- Parliamentary Committees
- Writing Opinion Editorials
- Filing Access to Information Requests
- Media Relations
- Working in Coalition

When it is launched, it is our hope that this free and highly practical course in law reform advocacy will assist students, law professors and equality activists in advancing women's equality in Canada.

In October 2013, NAWL suffered an enormous loss when our dear friend and colleague Alison Dewar died. Alison was an ardent defender of social justice on all fronts, as a union-side labour lawyer, human rights advocate and activist community member. Alison joined NAWL's National Steering Committee in 2005, providing insightful direction and support to us all, particularly during her many years as Co-Chair. Her powerful lesbian feminist voice and wisdom are deeply missed not only by her friends at NAWL, but by the social justice community at large. Our sympathies go out to Alison's social justice partner and soul mate, Diana Majury.

Having received a significant number of donations in memory of Alison through the NAWL Charitable Trust for Research and Education, NAWL worked in collaboration with Alison's law firm, Raven Cameron Ballantyne and Yazbeck (RCBY) LLP, to fund the Alison Dewar Scholarship in Equality, Labour and Human Rights law at the University of Ottawa. The

scholarship will provide financial support for a female student enrolled in the Common Law faculty who is interested in pursuing a career in some combination of women's equality and union-side labour, workers' rights, or human rights law.

In October, 2013, NAWL filed the amended Bylaws and Articles of Continuance approved at the 2012 AGM with the Federal Government. This was done in order to ensure the organization was compliant with the new Canada Not For Profit Corporations Act. The necessary governance review process was led by National Steering Committee co-Chairs Amy Salyzyn and Anne Levesque and was reviewed by NAWL's not for profit and charity law legal counsel, Karen Cooper. We are pleased to report that as a result of this process, NAWL's not-for-profit status remains in tact.

Finally, last spring, Pamela Cross and Julie Shugarman attended Gendered Dissent, Democracy and the Law: A workshop on the gendered face of Canada's crackdown on dissent, at Osgoode Hall Law School in Toronto. NAWL coordinated a joint proposal for the workshop with FAFIA and the Schlifer Clinic in Toronto, and presented together with Amanda Dale and Shelagh Day at a panel entitled Strategic Silencing: A case study on how federal government action has shut down feminist law reform advocacy work and on measures taken to fill the critical void.

Thank-yous:

NAWL's work in 2013/2014 was made possible by the ongoing generous support of unions, law faculties, individual donors and volunteers. We would not have been able to continue our work without the commitment of these groups and individuals.

We would also like to thank:

Andrew Chisholm for continuing to provide us with much needed consulting support on our website and Derek Hogue from Amphibian Design for masterfully rebuilding our site with greater usability, structural integrity and longevity. The incredible creative team at the Public Design studio for working with us on the Feminist Law Reform course website. Tamir Israel, the staff lawyer at CIPPIC, for continuing to provide us with stellar probono legal advice on intellectual property issues. Karen Cooper, our non-profit and charity lawyer, for her ongoing patience and advice regarding the activities of the non-profit as well as the Charitable Trust.

Angela Mooney for her continued outstanding commitment as our NSC intern and website problem solver.

Pam Mayhew, for her invaluable work to help ensure NAWL's administrative viability and, finally, the member's of NAWL's National Steering Committee who continue to dedicate themselves to ensure that NAWL has every opportunity to survive as an organization.



## CHARITABLE TRUST FOR RESEARCH AND EDUCATION

NAWL established the NAWL Charitable Trust for Research and Education in 1983 with the purpose of promoting and understanding the status and role of women in Canadian society among the general public. The Trust prepares and disseminates research and education regarding legal issues in all aspects of the social, economic and political life of Canadian women. It assists in the protection of women's civil rights and liberties by charitable means, as well as in the relief of poverty. Unlike NAWL, the Trust is a registered charity and all donations are tax creditable.

The Charitable Trust is composed of five members appointed by NAWL's National Steering Committee. The Trustees are responsible for decisions regarding the allocation of funds.



**THANK YOU!**

**THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANIZATIONS FOR THEIR  
INVALUABLE SUPPORT:**

Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions  
NAWL Members and Donors