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**100ABCWomen spotlights  
and recognizes  
Accomplished Black  
Canadian Women. Please  
check our website for more  
information.  
[www.100ABCWomen.ca](http://www.100ABCWomen.ca)**

*Co-founders and co-authors - Hon. Dr. Jean  
Augustine, Dauna Jones-Simmonds & Dr. Denise  
O'Neil Green!*





**2026  
Honouree  
Announcements**

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**Wednesday, December 10, 2025**

HONOUREES & NOMINATORS WILL BE NOTIFIED

AWARD CEREMONY TICKETS WILL GO ON SALE IN  
FEBRUARY, 2026



### Congratulations to Dr. Evelyn Myrie

Activist Evelyn Myrie, received an honorary Doctorate degree on November 19 from McMaster University

— *Nominee* —  
2nd Annual Golden Horseshoe  
**DIVERSITY AWARDS**



Congratulations  
Rosemarie  
Powell

## Quote of the Month



*"Focus on the present rather than the past. As a Black immigrant woman, we often overcome generational barriers to do better for ourselves"*

**- Nimo Abdulkadir**

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## Black Women in the Skilled Trades Symposium Segment



**Featuring: Rosemarie Powell, Lavinia Latham and Lee-Anne Lyon-Bartley**

This segment highlighted the experiences, challenges, and leadership of Black women in Canada's skilled trades and infrastructure sectors. The speakers—each a prominent advocate and industry leader—shared insights on workforce diversity, barriers to entry, and the critical need for equitable pathways into trade professions. Rosemarie Powell emphasized systemic barriers faced by Black and racialized women, including limited access to apprenticeship opportunities, discrimination on job sites, and the need for stronger community- and employer-led supports. She underscored the importance of intentional hiring practices and partnerships that create real pathways to stable, well-paid careers.

Lavinia Latham spoke from the perspective of hands-on trade experience, highlighting the resilience and determination required for Black women to succeed in male-dominated environments. She discussed mentorship, confidence-building, and the responsibility of industry leaders to create safer, more inclusive workplaces where women feel valued and respected. Lee-Anne Lyon-Bartley focused on health, safety, and organizational culture. She stressed the importance of psychological safety, representation at leadership tables, and integrating equity into workplace policies and training. Her remarks reinforced that diversity in the trades is not only a moral imperative but also essential to workplace innovation and performance.

Together, the speakers called for:

- More targeted recruitment and outreach
- Stronger mentorship and sponsorship models
- Inclusive apprenticeships and training programs
- Accountability within unions, employers, and educational institutions
- Investment in community-driven workforce development initiatives

The segment celebrated the achievements of Black women in the trades while offering a forward-looking call to action to transform the sector into a more equitable, accessible, and welcoming space for future generations.

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**Black Women and Self Love**

**Submitted by: Nancy Simms, Ed.D.**



The theme for November's newsletter is Black women and self-love, and I am sure that for many of us, Audre Lorde's ubiquitous words immediately come to mind: "Caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare." Lorde reminds us that for Black women, self-care is far more than a day at the spa—though that, too, is welcome. It is the daily work of developing the skills, courage, and fortitude needed to respond to the systemic racism, sexism, ageism, and other forms of oppression that bear down on our bodies, minds, and spirits. And importantly, Black women are not a homogenous group. The literature makes clear that self-love is defined by each individual woman, shaped by her own social, historical, and political locations.

As I began writing this piece, I asked myself: What exactly is self-love? The definitions are many, and I found myself searching for one that speaks directly to me as a Black woman navigating all of my intersectional identities. I was drawn to Dr. Autumn Adia Griffin's definition: "The will to extend one's self for the purpose of nurturing, celebrating, preserving, or protecting one's own or another's physical, mental, emotional, or spiritual growth."

While I appreciate Dr. Griffin's offering, I felt that it still didn't capture the fullness of where I am in my life. So, I dug deeper and, finding no definition that entirely fit, I drew from different sources—and from my own lived experience—to shape one that feels like a beginning:

"Self-love is facing the challenges and fears accumulated over the years and making peace with them. It is cultivating a spiritual relationship that allows me to release, surrender, and depend on God fully. It is caring for myself physically, mentally, spiritually, and financially. It is trusting that I can set clear boundaries and knowing that those who truly love me will continue to do so even when I say 'no.' It is choosing to live my truth every day."

I must also acknowledge the privilege of age. My definition may not reflect that of a Black woman in her 40s or 50s—or even of another Black woman my own age. What I know with certainty is that each of us must define self-love for ourselves. Only then can we bring the words into practice.

Black women of my generation—and those older—have so much wisdom to share with younger Black women about self-love. This reflection barely touches the surface. I will say, however, that cultivating self-love in our daughters begins long before adulthood: during pregnancy, throughout childhood, and across adolescence. Our children will do what we do, not what we say. Living a life grounded in valuing ourselves as Black women—and holding ourselves accountable for our own care and nurturing—is essential.

I agree wholeheartedly with Toni Morrison's reminder: "You, [me], are your own best thing." I am a seeker of knowledge, and I now feel called to explore how middle-aged Black women practice self-love. The literature is sparse on how we learn to love ourselves—and that absence tells its own story. I feel the call. And I will answer it. Stay tuned...What is self love?

## Call for Submission: Refugees, Peacebuilding and Security

by *Dr. Yabome Gilpin-Jackson*  
SFU's first Vice-President, People, Equity and  
Inclusion



If you google 'African refugees', you will not find leaders or change makers in anything the search produces. Instead, you will get stories about the reality of the hardships and traumas facing millions of African refugees, the plight of those seeking asylum only to face cross-border and international systemic challenges and the hardships of poverty, exclusions, and oppressions faced even by those who are successful in making it into a place of refuge.

But what about all of those leading change, for refugees and by refugees...

**Do we know their stories?**

**What can we learn from their leadership, agency, and advocacy?**

**How are they leading in Africa and for Africans/peoples of African descent on the continent and/or in the diaspora?**

**How are everyday African leaders promoting peacebuilding and security on the continent?**

We want to hear and share your stories to amplify refugees' voices as leaders and not victims. We want your stories to teach, heal and inspire others...

If you are, or have been an African refugee, or if you work with and for African refugees, and are leading peace building and security efforts, this is a call for you... it is a call to raise our voices, to share African refugees' leadership stories and solution-finding, for us, by us... and a call for a world of peace and security.

You are in action, working towards the prosperity of the continent.

You are an everyday leader, working in the public, for profit or civil society for the betterment of African refugees and for peacebuilding and security in Africa...

You are interested in sharing your story with:

- 1. Emerging African leaders**—especially refugees and former refugees—who can be inspired by relatable, authentic stories of leadership and impact to focus on finding solutions for Africa and African refugees.
- 2. Policymakers, civil society organisations, and governments**, who can learn from transformational African leaders what is required to create more effective and humane refugee and peace building policies.
- 3. Advocates, educators, and global partners** who can use the book and its accompanying policy briefs as a platform for change.

This call, this opportunity, is for you.

We believe that storytelling, an inherent part of African cultures, is a powerful tool for imagining, sparking and driving progress. And as a way to inspire more change and shape the futures we want. We want peace and security and a liberated and prospering Africa for all.

**Join #WeWillLeadAfrica.** Tell your story of action, change, and transformation!



## UNHCR Philanthropy Conference “Beyond Borders” Spotlight on Education for Peace

On Wednesday, November 19, 2025, I was honoured to represent our community as a panelist at the UNHCR Philanthropy Conference Beyond Borders. The session, “Education for Peace,” explored how access to education fosters stability, resilience, and long-term self-reliance for refugees—highlighting UNHCR’s innovative Digital Higher Education (DHE) initiative.

The discussion was moderated by **Kimberley Blease** (Blakely Inc.) and featured fellow panelists **Nimi Nanji Simard** of the Nanji Family Foundation and **Mahmuda Khan** of Human Concern International. Together, we examined how philanthropic leadership and community advocacy can close educational gaps for displaced youth and help build pathways to opportunity and hope.



A powerful highlight of the conference was the presence of **Annie Kashamura Zawadi**, who shared her remarkable refugee journey.

Fleeing conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo in 1991, Annie sought refuge in South Africa, where she faced domestic violence and ultimately became stateless. Demonstrating extraordinary courage, she sought assistance from the Canadian Embassy and was connected to UNHCR. In 1999, Annie and her five children were resettled in Canada—marking the beginning of a new chapter.

Since then, Annie has become a respected leader and advocate. She earned a Gender Specialist Degree with Honours and a Political Science Degree from the University of Toronto, founded an organization supporting women fleeing abuse, and played a key role in advancing justice and housing reforms for survivors and newcomers. In 2008, she was recognized by the Government of Ontario as one of its Women Leaders Building Communities. Today, her advocacy extends globally—across Canada, Ghana, Togo, Tanzania, eSwatini, and the DRC.

**Annie’s story is a profound reminder that refugees are not defined by displacement, but by courage, resilience, and leadership.**

We are grateful to UNHCR for convening this important conversation and for its continued work ensuring that refugees worldwide have access to the educational opportunities they deserve. The days discussion reminded us that welcoming refugees isn’t just about safety, it’s about investing in leaders, innovators and changemakers but the incredible work done by the Rotary Club of Toronto to support Refugees.

*Dauna Jones-Simmonds,*  
Co-Founder/Co-Author—100ABCWomen



## How to Respond to the Hidden Human Rights Issues Inside Everyday Workplaces

December 10, 2025, marks the annual global observance of Human Rights Day. First proclaimed by the United Nations in 1948 through the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, this day serves as a powerful reminder of our shared responsibility to promote and protect the fundamental rights and freedoms owed to every human being.

To properly commemorate Human Rights Day, this edition shines a light on the human rights concerns that emerge in everyday workplaces and how to address them in a meaningful and legally informed way. Many work environments will, at some point, encounter issues involving microaggressions, discrimination, and retaliation. These behaviours often go unnoticed, yet they quietly undermine human dignity, erode psychological safety, and create profound harm that extends far beyond the workplace.

In this article, I will outline key considerations for individuals who believe they may be experiencing human rights violations at work. More specifically, the following are three critical steps to take if you feel your rights have been compromised in a workplace setting.

### **Step One: Document everything**

Keep a detailed record of every incident, including the facts, dates, times, individuals involved, and the specific behaviour that occurred.

In human rights and employment law, credibility refers to whether a witness is telling the truth, and reliability refers to the accuracy of the witness's evidence. When you keep clear documentation, you strengthen your credibility and reliability, which includes your ability to establish your version of events. Photos, videos, emails, and notes can make a significant difference in proving your experience.

### **Step Two: Report the issue to your manager as soon as possible**

Raise the concern in writing. Even though the law in Ontario provides strong protections for employees, including employees who are disadvantaged or marginalized, there is still a positive obligation on employees to bring the issue to their employer's attention. Even if you fear consequences, which in law is called reprisal, you still have a responsibility to make your employer aware of the issue. Reporting a potential human rights violation establishes a clear record and triggers the employer's legal duty to investigate your human rights concern.

### **Step Three: Seek independent legal advice immediately**

If you believe you are experiencing a human rights violation, speak with a lawyer expertised in human rights and employment law. Sound legal advice can help you understand your rights, assess the situation clearly, and develop a strategic plan for your next steps. It can also help protect you against retaliation and provide insight into the human rights litigation process, as well as any additional remedies and legal strategies available to you.

As an employment lawyer and workplace investigator, I cannot stress enough how important it is to document everything, promptly report concerns to your employer, and seek legal advice before the situation escalates. These recommended steps are designed to support you during a time when you may feel overwhelmed or unsure of what to do next, particularly since many individuals do not always recognize that what they are experiencing is discrimination or a human rights violation. In those moments, it becomes even more important to take the steps outlined above to protect not only your legal rights but also your overall well-being.

**Lavinia Latham B.A.(Hons.), J.D. | Partner & Workplace Investigator | Employment Law, Corporate Training, Workplace Investigations**



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- MissTaniaLou – Award-winning Entertainer
- SandraWhiting – Storyteller
- Presentation of ACJAM's 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary
- Scholarship Awards
- Music – Psycho Soul

**Saturday, December 6, 2025 2-4p.m.**

Consulate General of Jamaica

303 Eglinton Avenue East, Toronto

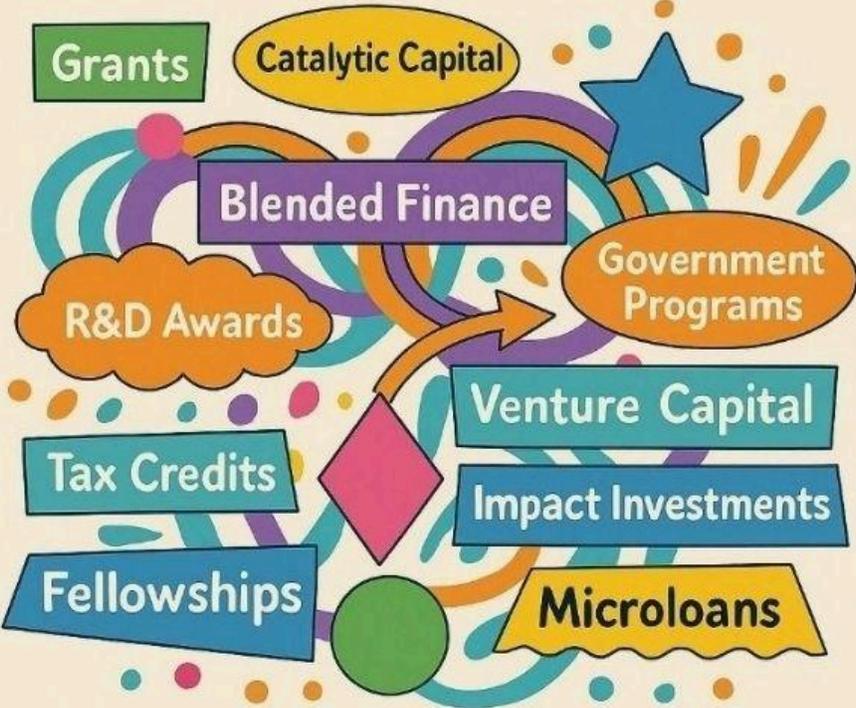
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## NOVEMBER DEADLINES



Brought to you by Brenda 😊

## The Passing of a 100ABC Icon



# Norma Wilson

February 19, 1933 – November 21, 2025



*It is with profound sadness that we announce the peaceful passing of Norma Wilson on Friday, November 21, 2025. Born on February 19, 1933, in Kingston, Jamaica, Norma lived a life defined by service, intellect, compassion, and a deep commitment to her community.*

*A librarian at heart and a seasoned Human Resources professional, Norma's career spanned decades across academia and institutional leadership. She devoted her*

*professional life to the University of the West Indies, York University, and the University of Toronto, representing each institution with distinction throughout North America and Europe, and with exceptional mastery of her field. Norma possessed the extraordinary ability to distill complex information into simple and accessible insights, a gift that made her both a treasured colleague and a beloved mentor.*

*Norma was widely admired for her warmth, generosity, and her remarkable way with the English language. A true "people person," she had a rare ability to uplift others, offering wisdom with kindness and never offence. As a result, she journeyed through life with many friends and virtually no enemies—a testament to her character and her heart.*

*Norma's contributions extended far beyond the walls of academia. As a Vanguard Honouree of the 100 Accomplished Black Canadian Women project, she served as Chief Editor, Honouree Coach, fundraiser, and an invaluable contributor to the publication's development and impact. Her dedication, insight, and unwavering support played a significant role in shaping and elevating the project.*

*Norma leaves to mourn her devoted husband, Roger Wilson, and her beloved son, Roger Lewis. She is predeceased by her cherished daughter, Shelley Lewis, with whom she is now lovingly reunited. She also leaves to mourn several close friends in Florida, Georgia, son-in-law Scott in Seattle, Vancouver and Toronto.*

*Norma's life was a beacon of intellect, generosity, and purpose. She will be remembered not only for her professional achievements but also for the kindness, humility, and humanity she shared so freely with all who had the privilege of knowing her.*

*May her soul rest in eternal peace, and may her legacy continue to inspire generations to come.*





Register: [carleton.ca/polisci/events](https://carleton.ca/polisci/events)

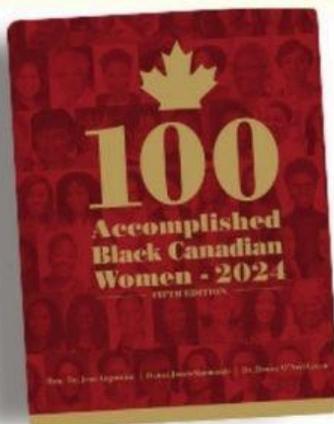


## Fireside Chat is Coming Back!

Get ready for powerful conversations, fresh insights, and inspiring voices you won't want to miss. Stay tuned — details coming soon!



<p>Thank you to our 2025 <b>Black Women in the Skilled Trades Symposium Sponsors</b> on Friday, October 3, 2025!!</p>	 <b>TD READY COMMITMENT</b>	 UNIFOR theUnion   leSyndicat
		
	<b>CUPE·SCFP</b>	ETFO  FEEO



100 Accomplished Black Canadian Women isn't just a book — it's a front-row seat to stories that move the country forward. Bold voices, game-changers, and visionaries, all in one volume. Get your copy and step into a legacy in motion

Thank You For Your Support!



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