



# Equal Employment Opportunity Program



# REFLECTIONS

Newsletter  
No. 26 Fall 2010

## Celebrating ALL of Who We Are

### Diversity Day

On June 24, 2010, the Equal Employment Opportunity Program hosted the 8th annual Diversity Day. Held every year in June, the day celebrates the wonderful diversity of experience of City Staff. Full of fun activities, refreshments and prizes, Diversity Day has been steadily gaining in popularity, with Councillors and City staff attending in large numbers to participate in various activities.



The Vancouver Firefighters Stand Up Band performed live music on Diversity Day

This year, the Firefighters Stand Up Band provided lively entertainment; the staff tackled some tough diversity questions, traced their roots on the world map, and enjoyed cake and social networking. The prizes included a recipe book titled “Variety is the Spice of Life”, gift baskets bursting with mouth-watering ethnic foods, and other prizes donated by local businesses and individuals.

### Pride Parade - Free To Be Me!

Pride Parade and Festival was a wonderful celebration of the LGBTQ community in Vancouver. It was the second consecutive year that the City of Vancouver formally participated as a consolidated entry, including: City staff, elected officials, advisory committee members, community centre association members, VPD, VF&RS, and VPL. Our participation also affirmed the City’s stand opposing bullying and violence against Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer citizens. With over 150 participants from various roles with the City, we saw a significant increase in City involvement in 2010. Let’s hope for even more next year!



The 2010 Pride Parade



## Workplace Bullying



**B**ullying is usually seen as acts or verbal comments that could psychologically hurt or isolate a person in the workplace. Sometimes, bullying can involve negative physical contact as well. Bullying usually involves repeated incidents or a pattern of behaviour that is intended to intimidate, offend, degrade or humiliate a particular person or group of people. It has also been described as the assertion of power through aggression. Bullying is far more prevalent than other destructive behaviors covered by legislation, such as sexual harassment and racial discrimination.

<http://safety-council.org/workplace-safety/bullying-in-the-workplace/>

### Questions to consider - True or False?

**?** *Bullying is deliberate.*

FALSE. Bullies rarely feel they are bullies. More commonly, their behaviour feels quite reasonable to them.

**?** *Others intervene very rarely in typical bullying incidents.*

TRUE. Authority figures rate themselves as responding 90% of the time, but in fact, respond only 4% of the time.

**?** *Most bullies are men and usually target other males.*

FALSE. Men bully women 69% of the time (and men 31% of the time). Women bully women 84% of the time (and men 16% of the time). 50% of bullies are men and 50% are women.

**?** *Bullying is usually reported.*

FALSE. Witnesses fear becoming more vulnerable and isolated. The average duration of bullying is 17 months! Do NOT wait. Bullying does not improve with time.

### Bully Prevention Tips

- ~ Actively create a workplace culture and environment where bullying is not welcome – communicate anti-bullying statements; and use clear procedures and processes that reduce potential for abuse of power;
- ~ Actively seek out opportunities for team building and developing interpersonal skills like effective communication, problem solving and conflict resolution;
- ~ Speak out when you see or experience bullying – seek help immediately and provide support for the target;
- ~ Be aware of your own behaviour and its impact on others – use your power/privilege carefully;
- ~ Know if/when you've been a bully – apologize and change your behaviour;
- ~ Practice stress management techniques to reduce bullying during a crisis or stress;
- ~ Practice patience – give people the benefit of the doubt – ask questions, don't make assumptions;
- ~ Keep open lines of communication to address and resolve issues quickly; and
- ~ Use a positive attitude – create a fun, productive workplace where thoughtfulness, teamwork and appreciation for each other are the norm.

SOURCE: adapted from:

[http://www.brocku.ca/webfm\\_send/8474](http://www.brocku.ca/webfm_send/8474)



## The City of Vancouver Participates in a Mentorship Project Unique To BC's Public Sector ...

**T**he City of Vancouver is embarking on a pilot mentorship project in partnership with Immigrant Services Society of B.C. (ISS of BC), MOSAIC, S.U.C.C.E.S.S. and the Immigrant Employment Council of BC. Through this project, the City aspires to provide mentorship opportunities to professional immigrants who are having difficulty finding employment commensurate with their qualifications.

The City of Vancouver will invite and support employees of the City to participate as mentors to skilled immigrants in fields such as: Engineering, Finance, Accounting and Information Technology. The mentors and mentees will meet primarily through face-to-face contact, complemented by telephone and e-mail communication.

In a mutually beneficial relationship, both mentors and mentees will gain invaluable experience: mentees will gain an understanding of local labour market, knowledge of local occupational requirements and viable entry points, as well as an understanding of Canadian work culture. The mentors benefit by broadening their horizons, acquiring knowledge of other cultures, and experiencing the pride of sharing their knowledge and expertise with new Canadians.

***This pilot project is among the first of its kind for the public sector in Western Canada, and City of Vancouver is excited to provide a leadership role by participating in the pilot project and providing a successful model to be followed by other municipalities.***

## Gender Identity



The City of Vancouver is committed to excellence, diversity and inclusion; we respect the dignity and worth of staff and the community we serve. Also, the BC Human Rights

Code prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, which includes transgender persons. The following material is a resource to support all of us in creating and maintaining an excellent and welcoming workplace and City.

**What is gender Identity?** The way a person sees themselves – one’s sense of self – may include the sense of being female or male. This is often a part of how we define ‘selfhood.’ The internal sense of one’s self as being male or female is referred to as ‘gender identity.’

Most often, a person’s sense of self, or gender identity, matches their physical body or ‘sex’ – but not always. For some people, although they have been identified at birth as being one gender based on their physical body, internally (psychologically, emotionally, spiritually) they experience themselves as being a different gender than their physical body (‘transsexual’). Other individuals’ life experience includes existing in more than one gender, or being on a continuum outside the gender categories of ‘male’ and ‘female’ (‘transgender’). People who live these experiences are sometimes referred to as ‘Trans people.’

Trans people may seek to make their bodies match their internal gender identity – who they are – through surgery or hormone treatment. However, not all Trans people choose surgery or hormone treatments – each person charts their own path.

Confusion and misunderstanding may happen in society about Trans people, and Trans people have experienced discrimination. We need to understand gender as a continuum, and look beyond our assumptions about male and female. Transgenderism and transsexuality are protected under the BC Human Rights Code, and the City’s Policy on Human Rights and Harassment includes that protection.

**Who are Trans People?** Trans people are from all walks of life, and have every ethnicity, nationality, religion, class, culture, and sexual orientation. People as young as three years of age, people well into their 80s and 90s, have identified themselves as Trans people.

**Is Gender Identity the Same as Sexual Orientation?** No. **Gender identity** refers to a person’s internal sense of self as being male or female (“who I am”). **Sexual orientation** refers to a pattern of emotional, romantic, or sexual attraction to men, women, both genders, neither gender, or another gender. Trans people may be straight, lesbian, gay, or bi (among other sexual orientations), just as there are a range of sexual orientations found among non-Trans people.

**What can I do to become more aware and inclusive?** Consider the following tips, to become more aware and inclusive about gender identity, transsexualism and transgender:

1. Do be respectful and supportive of a person who is questioning their gender identity.
2. Do be careful and respectful about confidentiality, disclosure and “outing.”
3. Do ask if you don’t know what pronoun to use.
4. Do listen to Trans voices.
5. Do seek out more information, if you have questions.
6. Do remember and respect that Trans people will use the washroom which matches their presentation.
7. Don’t assume you can tell if someone is transgender.
8. Don’t make assumptions about a Trans person’s sexual orientation.
9. Don’t tolerate anti-Trans remarks or humour.
10. Don’t try to tell a person what “category” or “identity” they fit into.

### **For further information:**

[http://www.heretohelp.bc.ca/sites/default/files/visions\\_lesbian\\_gay\\_bt.pdf](http://www.heretohelp.bc.ca/sites/default/files/visions_lesbian_gay_bt.pdf)

[http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/issues/gender\\_identity](http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/issues/gender_identity)

## Coalition of Canadian Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination



On March 23, 2010, City Council unanimously endorsed that the City of Vancouver become a member of the Coalition of Canadian

Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination (CMARD). The City of Vancouver joins 40 member municipalities across Canada to participate in the initiative which is being coordinated by the Canadian Commission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in collaboration with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) to combat racism, discrimination and xenophobia.

Under CMARD, municipalities work on ten broad commitments covering the City’s role as guardian of public interest, and its fulfillment of human rights protections. The City of Vancouver is evaluating current activities and developing new actions related to CMARD.

The City of Vancouver signed a formal declaration to join CMARD at a ceremony hosted during the City Council meeting on Tuesday, October 5, 2010.

### **For further information:**

<http://www.unesco.ca/en/commission/resources/documents/CallCoalitionEng.pdf>

<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/human-rights/fight-against-discrimination/coalition-of-cities/north-america/>

# EEO - Building Better Workplaces for everyone...

## Training Programs

For information or to register, please contact the Equal Employment Opportunity office by phone @ 604.873.7786 or e-mail to [eeo@vancouver.ca](mailto:eeo@vancouver.ca). Registration is not thru City Learn.

### Workplace Harassment: Prevention Module 1 (ALL STAFF)

Wednesday, December 8, 2010  
8:30 am - 12:30 pm

Module 1 is an overview on Workplace Harassment Prevention.

Objectives include:

- **Developing** an understanding of Human Rights legislation and the City's policy;
- **Identifying** behaviour of situations that could be considered harassment;
- **Learning** about employer-employee responsibilities and legal obligations;
- **Recognizing** resources available for assistance;
- **Determining** responses to inappropriate situations.

### Workplace Harassment: Intervention Skills Module 2

(SUPERVISORS & MANAGERS)  
(Prerequisite: Module 1)

Wednesday, December 8, 2010  
12:30 - 4:30 pm

Module 2 provides specific focus on Workplace Harassment Intervention Skills for supervisors and managers.

Objectives Include:

- **Recognizing** the responsibility placed on supervisory personnel to promote and maintain a harassment-free workplace;
- **Building** communication skills to give clear direction to employees about behaviours that are inappropriate;
- **Enhancing** conflict resolution skills;
- **Practising** ways of intervening in difficult situations, thereby preventing problems from escalating.

### Urban Aboriginal Issues

Additional workshops  
coming soon

**Call to be  
waitlisted**

Held at the Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre, these one-and-a-half day workshops will be of interest to staff who have or will have direct contact with urban Aboriginal residents, businesses or agencies.

Objectives:

- **Obtaining** a better understanding of the Urban Aboriginal population, its current make up, its background and its current realities - so that better service can be provided;
- **Setting** objectives for work with Urban Aboriginal organizations and individuals;
- **Encouraging** the recruitment of more Urban Aboriginal people to work at the City and the Vancouver Police Department;
- **Strengthening** the networks of City staff, Police, Aboriginal leaders, associated agencies and emerging professionals.

### EEO – Who We Are ...

The Equal Employment Opportunity Program (EEO) is a division of the City Manager's Office. Our mandate is to work with City departments and staff to create a workplace that is respectful and welcoming of diversity, and to integrate principles of fairness, diversity and inclusiveness in all City policies and practices.

Our program is guided by two Council policies, one on equal employment opportunity and the other on harassment prevention. EEO is an independent and confidential resource for all City staff, where you can get information on issues related to building and sustaining respectful & inclusive workplaces.

Drop by our office on the Main Floor of City Hall or call us at 604.873.7786 (TTY: 604.873.7001) or visit us on the web at [vancouver.ca/eeo](http://vancouver.ca/eeo)

From left:  
Susan Ma  
Rajpal Kohli  
Daisy Lee  
Monica Kay  
Parker Johnson  
Anne Nickerson



Photo at 2010  
National Aboriginal Day event