

News Release



Equitas celebrates 50 years of human rights education

Equitas hosts Montreal event for its 50th anniversary as Canada's oldest and most active human rights education organization

Thursday, March 23, 2016 – On March 29, 2017, Equitas will host its annual fundraising event in support of the organization's education and awareness programs for youth and human rights defenders in Canada and worldwide.

The event will take place at **Le Salon 1861, 550 Richmond Street in Montreal, from 6:30-10pm.**

This year, the event focuses on the themes of women's rights, inclusion and diversity, with guest speaker **Cathy Wong**, President of the Conseil des Montréalaises. The conversation will be moderated by *Le Devoir's* **Francine Pelletier**.

*"In preparing our event this year, we were inspired by the story of one of Equitas' co-founders in 1967, Quebec women's rights pioneer Thérèse Casgrain, who fought for the advancement of women's rights with courage and determination", says Equitas Executive Director **Ian Hamilton**. "It's 2017, yet women are still under-represented in leadership positions. We need to encourage diversity in our leadership models and promote equal opportunities today and tomorrow. From Thérèse Casgrain to our guests, Cathy Wong and Francine Pelletier, women are challenging inequality and are inspiring us to think about how to empower, support and engage young women."*

Some previous guest speakers who have supported Equitas events include Lt. Gen. **Romeo Dallaire**, the Rt. Hon. **Paul Martin**, former National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations **Phil Fontaine**, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Prof. **Muhammad Yunus**, and the Rt. Hon **Michaëlle Jean**.

Celebrated annually, proceeds and donations from the Equitas Fundraising Event go to support the organization's education and awareness programs in Canada for youth to build an environment free of discrimination and harassment. Proceeds from the event also go to support Equitas'

international human rights education work in communities in Africa, South Asia, Latin America and The Caribbean, the Middle East and Northern Africa.

Equitas thanks its amazing sponsors and donors for their generous support of the event and of our work all year round. We thank TD Bank Group, Lead Sponsor and longtime supporter of our *Play it Fair!* program nationally; Gold Sponsor CGI; Silver Sponsors Bell, Osler and Xerox; Bronze Sponsors Air Canada, A.Vogel, BDC, BMO, EY, Petro-Canada, Termaco and Transelec, as supporters of the evening.

We believe that education is a powerful tool for change. By providing unique human rights training in Canada and globally, we empower *changemakers* that make their communities better places to be.

About Equitas - Based in Montreal, Equitas is Canada's oldest and most active human rights education organization, working for the advancement of equality, social justice and respect for human rights. With real impact in Quebec, across Canada and in some of the world's most challenging places, Equitas has reached over 2 million people worldwide. 2017 marks the organization's 50th anniversary.

Over the past 50 years, Equitas and its many partners have had a positive and sustained impact on communities in Canada and all over the world. **Successes include :**

- **More than 1,000 trainings realized**, helping people and communities be empowered to come together and build peaceful environments free of discrimination.
- **More than 700,000 children and youth reached in 42 Canadian communities**, ensuring our schools and communities are more inclusive, more welcoming and safer.
- **More than 5,000 human rights defenders trained from over 140 countries**, making the Equitas network one of the largest global communities of human rights leaders.
- **Over 2 million people worldwide sensitized** about human rights norms and values, laying a foundation for building more equitable societies and ensuring more accountable governance.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND INITIATIVES:

- **April 26, 2017** – Launch of a new education tool for Canadian schools, day camps and youth organizations: *Welcoming refugee children and youth: an activity and action guide*.
- **June 4-23, 2017** – Equitas welcomes 100 human rights defenders from 50 countries in Montreal for the *International Human Rights Training Program*.
- **November 30-December 3, 2017** – Equitas hosts the *8th International Conference on Human Rights Education* in Montreal.
- **All year:** Equitas presents 50 stories of 50 human rights *changemakers*, changing lives through education in Canada and around the world.

Associated Links

Fundraising event tickets can be purchased at (only a few tickets left):
<https://equitas.org/en/events/50th-anniversary-fundraising-event-in-montreal-march-29-2017/>

Advancing Women’s Rights and Human Rights in Quebec: the story of Thérèse Casgrain: http://bit.ly/Equitas50_Casgrain

Interviews

Event guest Cathy Wong and Equitas Executive Director Ian Hamilton are available for interviews.

- 30 -

Information :

Annie Billington, Communications Manager
Equitas – International Centre for Human Rights Education

(514) 954-0382, ext. 247

abillington@equitas.org

@EquitasIntl