

ASIAN WOMEN COALITION ENDING PROSTITUTION NEWSLETTER | FALL 2013

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The Asian Women Coalition Ending Prostitution (AWCEP) challenges the normalization of human trafficking and prostitution of Asian women in Canada and around the world.



Photo: (left) AWCEP members Alice Lee and Suzanne Jay with Gwendoline Allison after making intervener presentation to the Supreme Court of Canada in Bedford case. (right) Cherry Smiley receives Governor General's Persons Award in Ottawa.

AWCEP joins feminist allies at the Bedford Supreme Court hearing in Ottawa

AWCEP participated as an intervenor before the Supreme Court of Canada at the June 13 Supreme Court hearing of the Bedford case. The court has not released a decision. The court will decide whether some of the laws relating to brothels and street prostitution offend s.7 of the Canadian Charter. Section 7 says "Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of the person and the right not to be deprived thereof except in accordance with the principles of fundamental justice."

Current prostitution laws offer women some protection, and make it possible for police to investigate human trafficking, but only if they are applied to men who create the demand for prostitution and not to the prostituted women.

AWCEP is concerned that normalizing brothel keeping and male demand for prostitution will normalize the racism and sexism that impede Asian women's ability to have access to the equal protection of Charter rights, including the right to security of the person. We hope that the critical race analysis we provided will help the court come to a conclusion that takes the racist and sexist impacts on

women into account. The Asian Women Coalition Ending Prostitution is represented by Gwendoline Allison, Foy Allison Law Group and Christine Boyle, Q.C., Professor Emerita, UBC.

Indigenous feminist abolitionist recognized

We were honored to be with our wonderful feminist ally Cherry Smiley of Indigenous Women Against the Sex Industry (IWASI) as she received the prestigious Governor General's Persons Award on October 29, 2013. Our applause to this activist dedicated to fighting for the abolition of prostitution and for women's equality.

United Nations: Listen to survivors – don't jeopardize efforts to prevent sex trafficking

Join AWCEP, Equality Now and a coalition of 97 survivor-led and anti-trafficking organizations worldwide in urging UNAIDS, UNFPA and UNDP to address two reports made in 2012 that are in direct opposition to efforts and policies about women's equality and health that have been and are widely supported throughout the UN. The recommendations in the reports jeopardize efforts to prevent and address sex trafficking and promote gender equality under the guise of HIV prevention. Learn more and take action at www.equalitynow.org/take_action/sex_trafficking_action511.

Film screening of "Traffic" documentary in Richmond

On June 19, AWCEP, in partnership with CHIMO Community Services and the Canadian Federation of University Women, organized a film screening of 'Traffic' – a unique and powerful film about human trafficking. The film was followed by a panel discussion with Jaclyn Chang, AWCEP; Cherry Smiley, IWASI; Gwendoline Allison, co-counsel to AWCEP in the case Bedford v. Canada; Keira Smith-Tague, Vancouver Rape Relief; Darla Tomeldan, West Coast Domestic Workers Association. The panel addressed some of the impacts that prostitution and human trafficking have on the Richmond community.

AWCEP meets feminist abolitionists in Australia

In October, AWCEP was honoured to make two presentations in Melbourne hosted by the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women-Australia (CATWA) at the University of Melbourne and at RMIT. It was a wonderful opportunity to deepen our connection with feminist abolitionists in Australia and to foster relationships with other potential new allies. Many thanks to the wonderful CATWA women, especially Dr. Sheila Jeffreys, Dr. Caroline Norma and Sue Leigh.



Suzanne Jay presented in Australia on behalf of AWCEP

Keeping up with AWCEP

Thank you to the over 30 people who came out to the August fundraising event. It was great to get to know so many new folks and make new friends.



AWCEP members Ada Tsang, Jean Fong and Yuly Chan at fundraising event held at Moxie's Bar and Grill.



Help Support Our Work

The holiday season often allows us to think about our wishes for ourselves, our families, our friends, and for the future. Our wish is to abolish prostitution and human trafficking in favour of women's equality. We deeply believe that this is possible and will continue to organize to make this wish a reality.

We ask you to support AWCEP's work with a donation that can be made online on our website, in person or by mail to: PO Box 43051, 3790 Canada Way, Burnaby BC V5G 4S2, Canada.