

# CIT newsletter September 7, 09



*happy labor day*

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- 1) [John, now living in Ottawa, wants to inform us of three things](#)
- 2) [Here is the agenda for the Ottawa get together.](#)
- 3) [here is the introduction to the BIENCA conference](#)
- 4) Here is a very good back ground paper on the concept, written for the conference. Read it in an [HTML version](#) from the CIT learnings library, or at the CPJ site; <http://www.cpj.ca/en/background-paper-guaranteed-income>
- 5) [Anyone feel like writing out their life's story? The Dignity for All campaign is interested in you.](#)
- 6) [Now, for the logistics of getting impoverished Toronto people up to Ottawa.](#)
- 7) The "Poor No More" video is coming along. I would love to get it out there. The producers have now promised CIT a free copy when it is finished, at the end of this year. See the web site for the production and view a trailer on the film. <http://www.poornomore.ca/index.php?pagename=index>
- 8) [Here is a good read. The Roundtree foundation's research knows the right way to deal with the question of how high a citizen's income should be.](#)
- 9) [Here is something from Gilles Seguin about a common form of "slacktivism", the online petition.](#)

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## Three things:

1) I have 10-15 free places that I can offer to low-income folks from TO at the Dignity Dinner on parliament hill on the evening of Monday 5 October. Please let me know if you (or any-one you know would like one). Some of you might remember that a group of us came up to Ottawa about two years' ago for a KAIROS Anti-poverty Fund meeting and we also joined in this Dinner then (at the Dignity Dinner low-income folks will eat at tables with parliamentarians who, can, therefore, share stories.

2) For the preceding Thursday and Friday ( October 1-2) I've also got 5-10 free places for low-income people at the Basic Income conference in Ottawa (all the details are below) - again if any-one would like

one of those free places, please let me know.

[I'm trying to find low-cost accommodation - for which we can't, unfortunately, offer reimbursement (or for travel, sadly) - more next week.]

3) Finally, the weekly CAW newsletter 'Contact' has asked us to offer 'First Voice' pieces from low-income folks for publication each week. An example can be found at [www.caw.ca/en/7704.htm](http://www.caw.ca/en/7704.htm) So, if anyone receiving this message would like to offer their own First Voice piece, then please, in the first place, send it to me at [john@cwpcsp.ca](mailto:john@cwpcsp.ca) - and I'll coordinate with the 'Contact' editor.

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### Income Security for All Canadians:

the Potential for a Guaranteed Income Framework for Canada October 1, 1:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. & October 2, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. in Ottawa Information on this BIEN Canada workshop is now on-line at:

<http://www.cpj.ca/en/bien-canada-ottawa-conference>

At this website, you will find

- a detailed program - an on-line registration form - information on nearby hotel options.

You will find a BACKGROUND PAPER entitled "Income Security for All Canadians: Understanding Guaranteed Income".

Given sufficient interest, there will also be a Pre-Workshop RESEARCH FORUM from 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon on Thursday October 1 (location and details to be announced). This session will be of particular interest to academics, policy analysts, and others involved in empirical research topics related to income security.

If you wish to participate in the Pre-Workshop Research Forum, please contact Mike McCracken at: [mccracken@informetrica.com](mailto:mccracken@informetrica.com)

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### "Dignity for All: A Personal Experience With Poverty"

Every two weeks CONTACT will feature a personal story of someone who has or is currently living through poverty; this personal story is brought to us from the Dignity for All campaign by "Canada Without Poverty".

This week, meet Debbie D Frost, a single mother who has lived in and out of poverty for most of her adult life. She has three grown children ages 25, 31,33 as well two adopted children aged 12 and 14.

At 16 Debbie had her first child, after being kicked out of the house at 15 years of age. Raising her children was a real struggle. "My children suffered at the hands of my poverty stricken life. I would go hungry so my kids could eat." Through high school Debbie could barely afford a glass of milk, never mind a school fieldtrip. Her children would ask her questions like "what do we have to eat today Mom? Where are we going to live now?" In addition to all the turmoil Debbie went through, she also lived through several

abusive relationships.

The Dignity for All campaign has the objective to create a poverty-free Canada by 2020. One of the main goals of the campaign is to insure that there is social inclusion along with house, food and income security. This would enable Debbie to have a voice without fear of repercussions and to be set free from abuse. The campaign would give Debbie a better quality of life, giving her the resources necessary to help herself and her children. "It would give my children the lessons needed to be productive adult citizens without being afraid to speak out." Debbie lives in Saskatchewan and supports what the Dignity for All campaign is trying to accomplish.

To get involved with or support the Dignity for all campaign please visit [www.dignityforall.ca](http://www.dignityforall.ca) .

## the Ottawa expedition

Now, about the logistics of getting to Ottawa to attend all this. So far two of us are going.

The logistics of it are slowly coming together. It is a bit difficult because Citizens for Public Justice does not appreciate a couple of things. One is that their sign up page requires people to use a credit card. How many low income people have credit cards.

However, John in his communication says he has arranged for five free passes to the event. If more people want to go, contact CIToronto at [hello@citizensincome.ca](mailto:hello@citizensincome.ca) or John at [john@courtneidgeassociates.com](mailto:john@courtneidgeassociates.com)

The hotels CPJ recommends are a bit pricey and even cheaper, back packer hostels require a credit card to book them in advance. But John is working on accommodations too, and has some lines on cheaper digs.

Richard looked into transportation to and from Ottawa, but unless we get more people coming it will not be cheaper than Greyhound's best rate. For that you have to buy tickets 21 days in advance, which means by the ninth.

So the whole trip, including food and lodgings, will probably cost about \$180 to \$200 each. This is not cheap.

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5. Internet Petitions, Shminternet Petitions.

### Internet Petitions

Signing and circulating online petitions is an effective way of helping to remedy important issues.

Or is it?

"The 2000s have seen the birth of an Internet phenomenon: **the e-petition**. It offers instant comfort to those outraged by the latest ills of the world through its implicit assurance that affixing their names to a statement decrying a situation and demanding change will make a difference. That assurance is a severely flawed one for a multitude of reasons..."

Source:

[Snopes.com](http://Snopes.com)

COMMENT:

When I stumbled across the above link on the Snopes website, I was reminded of the e-petitions that were circulating back in 2002-2003 (promoted by the Amnesty International Australia site) in an effort to prevent the stoning death of Amina Lawal, a Nigerian woman sentenced to death for adultery. If the Snopes.com article on e-petitions didn't give you pause to reflect, perhaps the collection of links to the Amina Lawal case on my Internet Petitions page will:

[\*\*Internet Petitions and Letter-Writing Campaigns - Yes or No?\*\*](#)

[\*\*The story of Amina Lawal\*\*](#)

Last updated September 26, 2003

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Revised: 16 August 2009

## ***Income Security for All Canadians***

### ***A Workshop to Explore the Potential for a Guaranteed Income Framework for Canada***

**Sponsored by:  
Basic Income Earth Network Canada (BIEN Canada)**

**October 1-2, 2009  
Dominion Chalmers United Church  
355 Cooper Street (corner of Cooper and O'Connor Streets)  
OTTAWA Ontario**

**What is GUARANTEED INCOME (also known as Basic Income, Citizen's Income, Guaranteed Livable Income)?**

"Basic income" is defined by the Basic Income Earth Network ([www.basicincome.org](http://www.basicincome.org)) as "an income unconditionally granted to all on an individual basis, without means test or work requirement." Behind this or similar terms is a vision for income security for everyone, made possible by governments ensuring every individual has unconditional access to at least a modest but adequate income to meet basic material needs.

The goal of universal income security could be provided in principle through a single basic or guaranteed income benefit. However, such a benefit could also work in concert with existing or modified government programs such as seniors' pensions, unemployment insurance, child benefits, and financial support to students.

#### **Purpose of this Workshop**

The purpose of this workshop is to share perspectives and build understandings about approaches to Guaranteed Income. BIEN Canada believes that such sharing will aid the continued growth and mobilization of a network of individuals and organizations in Canada committed to realizing an expanded basic/guaranteed income system for Canada, and thus to realizing income security for all Canadians.

#### **Who Should Participate?**

The workshop is designed to both inform and engage participants in discussion of a variety of approaches and models for achieving Guaranteed Income and universal income security. The target audience includes "first voice" persons (those with the lived experience of poverty), academics and researchers, social justice movements, community organizations, social and economic policy analysts, and government officials and politicians.

1.

## Schedule: Thursday, 1 October 2009

9:00 a.m. – 12 noon

**Pre-Workshop RESEARCH FORUM** (*location and details to be announced*)

This session will be of particular interest to academics, policy analysts, and others involved in empirical research topics related to income security. If you wish to participate, please contact Mike McCracken: [mccracken@informetrica.com](mailto:mccracken@informetrica.com)

12:00 noon – 1:00 p.m.      **REGISTRATION**

1:00–1:30 p.m.

**Welcoming Remarks** – Jim Mulvale, University of Regina

**Introductory Presentation** – “Income Security for All Canadians: Understanding Guaranteed or Basic Income” – Chandra Pasma, Citizens for Public Justice

1:30 – 2:45 p.m.      **Opening Keynote Address**

“A Governance Dilemma: Effectiveness and Legitimacy in Basic Income”  
Jurgen De Wispelaere, Editor, *Basic Income Studies* & Visiting Scholar, Centre de Recherche en Éthique de l’Université de Montréal (CREUM)  
(followed by questions and discussion)

2:45 – 3:00 p.m.      BREAK

3:00 – 5:00 p.m.      Panel Presentations (including questions and discussion)

*a) Starting Where We Are: Work Now Underway Towards Better Income Security*  
Ensuring Livable Wages and an Adequate Safety Net: a Perspective from the Labour Movement - Andrew Jackson, Canadian Labour Congress  
Social Program Reform for a Better Income Security Framework - TBA

*b) Winning Hearts and Minds: Strategic Advocacy for Improved Economic Security*  
Poverty Reduction Strategies as a Way Forward - Sheila Regehr, National Council of Welfare  
Economic Security as a Human Right: the “Dignity of All” Campaign - Rob Rainer and Canada Without Poverty representative (TBA)

5:00–7:00pm      **SUPPER (ON YOUR OWN – BUT LET’S KEEP TALKING INFORMALLY!)**

7:00pm – 9:00 p.m.      **Keynote Address**

Senator Hugh Segal, “The Real Recovery Challenge: Basic Income Security”  
(followed by questions and discussion)

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## Schedule: Friday, 2 October 2009

9:00 – 10:30 a.m. **Keynote Address**

*Is Guaranteed Income Good for Your Health? The Manitoba Story*

Evelyn Forget, Univ. of Manitoba

(followed by questions and discussion)

10:30 – 10:45 BREAK

10:45 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. Panel Presentation (followed by questions and discussion):

*GI Approaches and Economically Vulnerable Groups*

Women's Paid and Unpaid Work - Pat Evans, Carleton University School of Social Work

People with Disabilities: Income to Enable Participation - Marie White, Council of  
Canadians with Disabilities

Aboriginal Peoples: Income Security and Economic Development - Geraldine King,  
National Association of Friendship Centres

Ensuring Economic Inclusion for Newcomers to Canada – Vilma Dawson, Calgary Centre  
for Culture

12:15 – 1:30 p.m. LUNCH (provided)

1:30 – 3:00 p.m. Panel Presentation (followed by questions and discussion):

*From Rhetoric to Reality: Designing, Funding and Building Effective Income Guarantees*

Mike McCracken, Infometrica

Jim Mulvale, Faculty of Social Work, University of Regina

3:00 – 3:15 p.m. BREAK

3:15 – 4:30 p.m. *Moving Forward Politically: Parliamentarians Working on Income Security*

Tony Martin (NDP)

Liberal party (TBA)

Conservative representative (TBA)

BQ representative (TBA)

4:30 – 4:45 p.m.

Closing Remarks and ADJOURNMENT

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