



June 15, 2017

## Summer 2017: A SUMMER OF PRIDE

Postal workers are a proud group. We are proud every day to present every part of the spectrum in terms of sexual orientation and gender expression. This summer, we again have occasion to celebrate with the entire community, our families, friends and co-workers, in pride events from coast to coast to coast. Please support and participate.

We're workers, we're neighbours and friends, and we all have the right to be who we are, love whom we love, and be respected, valued, and supported in that. When you support pride you are supporting all of us. You are demonstrating support and appreciation of those family members and friends who deserve the right and support to be who they are. Solidarity is about all of us.

Pride events are well established and a few are celebrating a 25 or 30 year anniversary. These events were grounded in resistance against a police and society that attempted to punish consenting love between human beings. We've come a long way in the struggle for equity for LGBTQ workers. We are not done. Homophobia still must be resisted in every corner. There are still social institutions that are not fully inclusive. Even in 2017, there are politicians in Canada and the U.S.A. who are afraid or even hostile about publicly supporting Pride events. Around the world, people are still putting their lives on the line just by being open about sexuality and gender, and by advocating for equity. For example, Saudi Arabia, a Canadian ally and recipient of Canadian-made war weapons still criminalizes and publicly executes people who do not conform to an archaic approach to sexuality and identity. Around the world many countries have laws that openly discriminate, while many more do far too little to protect people from discrimination, harassment and violence.

Pride dates and locations vary. But one thing is for sure, they are growing! Every year more communities join to acknowledge and celebrate this event.

Contact your local or refer to <http://canadianlabour.ca/event-calendar/all-events/pride-events-2017>

The character of Pride events has changed over the years, too. Banks and other corporations have tried to derail the original meaning of Pride to advertise their products – sometimes called “pinkwashing.” However, the original purpose of Pride, to claim freedom, respect and dignity and “out” police harassment can never be taken away.

By participating in Pride, we can show their supporters and each other that no love is less valuable than any other, and we all have to be free to be ourselves in work, life and in every part of society. Until we all have that freedom, none of us is really free.

In solidarity,

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