**Advocacy Report**

*Prepared for the Annual General Meeting of the IIWR-MB taking place on March 3rd, 2020*

***About the Advocacy Committee***

The Advocacy Committee currently consists of 14 members, including:

* Alexandria Kazmerik
* Alyssa Mariani
* Darci Todoruk-Lazar
* Elizabeth Andrea
* Kristyn Anderson
* Laila Chebib
* Leah Wilson
* Mary Scott
* Micaela Crighton
* Muriel Smith
* Nick Catalano
* Rosemary Kezaabu
* Shayne Bloomfield Wong
* Teruni Walaliyadde
* Tyler Andrade

In 2019, the Advocacy Committee began a year-long revision and renewal campaign to rebuild the Committee to work effectively and inclusively. The outcome of this rebuilding period will extend into the work of the Committee into 2020. Thus, while the Committee continued its work to review and support various requests for solidarity concerning local and global women's rights issues, the Committee has spent much of 2019 with an internal focus to emerge in 2020 with a renewed drive, commitment and vision for advocacy.

A highlight of this year's work was the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence from November 25th until December 10th. During the 16 Days, the Committee successfully ran an action or event every day for 16 days to advance the elimination of Gender-Based Violence. In addition, the Committee participated and developed advocacy and education-based events to increase community outreach throughout the year.

***The Year in Review***

Since the 2018 Annual General Meeting, the Committee has participated in the following advocacy initiatives on behalf of the IIWR-MB:

* + In January 2019, the advocacy committee signed a pledge to support solidarity with Unistoten and the Wet'suwet'en.
  + Advocacy Committee members participate on March 8th, 2019, in the International Women's Day march in New York City. Advocacy members, as well as other organizational members, were in New York for the 63rd Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women. Co-Chairs Micaela Crighton and Darci Todoruk-Lazar represented IIWR Advocacy Committee during the conference.
  + On May 30th, 2019, the Committee hosted a film screening of *The Tale*. The film examined director Jennifer Fox's personal experience with sexual violence in sports as a young equestrian and the trauma that survivors experience throughout their lives. It was a personal memoir examining the elusive nature of memory and the stories we tell ourselves to survive. The screening was followed by breakout sessions with audience members to discuss sexual violence in sports, particularly for young people.
  + On May 4th, Advocacy supported the resolution of Anita Neville that stated that "IIWR condemns the actions of the Iranian government on Nasrin Sotoudeh and urges the Canadian government to speak out on the necessary actions needed."
    - In October, advocacy invited members of IIWR and the Committee to sign on to Amnesty International's petition to call for Iran to release Nasrin Sotoudeh.
  + From June 2nd to 6th Advocacy Committee Co-Chair, Micaela Crighton represented IIWR-Mb at Women Deliver in Vancouver, British Columbia. She participated in advocacy workshops and events both as part of Women Deliver and Feminist Deliver, including the Women's Honour Canoe which supported the #Meares35 Campaign for Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCAs)
  + In September, IIWR-Mb supported, along with 38 other organizations, UP for Debate Manitoba during the Provincial Election, which invited each party to debate specifically on issues related to women and gender. The debate focused on three thematic areas: violence against women, economic inequality, and health.
  + In October, Advocacy responded to the Women's Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF) national survey on issues impacting women and girls.
  + In October, IIWR-Mb acted to sign on to the call from Women's Shelters Canada to renew its call for a National Action Plan on Violence against Women (NAP on VAW). In the lead up to the 2015 federal election, Women's Shelters Canada had worked with over 20 partners to develop a Blueprint for Canada's National Action Plan. IIWR-Mb supported this action in 2015 as well.
  + In October, advocacy invited committee members and members at large to support the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders' online signature campaign to support Afghan women's rights and peace activists in their call for meaningful participation in the peace process.
  + In November 2019, advocacy committee members participated in a survey to determine the focus and goals of the Committee for 2020.
  + Advocacy Committee successfully ran IIWR-Mb 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence. The campaign featured:
    - Lighting the Winnipeg sign at the Forks orange to #OrangetheWorld for the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women on November 25th. The lighting was used to kick off the campaign in the evening at the Forks.
    - Supporting, tabling and marching at Take Back the Night, organized by Vivienne Ho with sponsorship by CUPE 2348 and the Canadian Labour Congress Winnipeg chapter.
    - Supporting and sharing the #OurActionsMatter campaign from Women and Gender Equality Canada on all social media platforms. Online participants were encouraged to comment and share how they would commit their actions to end GBV.
    - Ran online campaign across social platforms for community members to donate to Doctors for Protections from Guns. The campaign featured informational graphics about gun violence and violations of women and gender protections.
    - Supported the #TriggerChange Campaign from the Coalition for Gun Control on all social platforms. Invited participants to participate in their letter-writing campaigns to their MP.
    - For International Women Human Rights Defenders Day, IIWR-Mb hosted the screening of Wave Goodbye to Dinosaurs about women's political participation in the peace process in Northern Ireland. The film was followed up by breakout session discussion on women, politics and peacebuilding.
    - Sent open letter to various ministers and government representatives signed by various community members calling for the ratification of ILO C190. Calls for signatures were supported by the online campaign created by the 16 Days Campaign.
    - Online campaigns across all platforms that called for participants to sign onto both the NDP an Unifor's petitions to end the blood ban in honour of World AIDS Day.
    - Ran online campaign across social platforms for community members to donate to Shelter Safe and encouraging dialogue and education about intimate partner violence.
    - Online campaigns across all platforms to encourage discussion of masculinity and the role of men and boys in ending gender-based violence. Participants were invited to sign and share a pledge against GBV from the White Ribbon campaign as well as to support the campaign by wearing a white ribbon. Participants were also invited to sign and share the pledge from the Moosehide Campaign and to wear a moose hide pin.
    - Supported the 231 Calls for Justice rally at the Manitoba Legislature on December 6th at noon in honour of the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence against Women in collaboration with Manitoba Moon Voices, Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre, and Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak. The online campaign highlighted parts of the 231 Calls to Action before the rally.
    - We hosted two Advocacy 101 workshops on December 7th and 8th, in collaboration with the University of Winnipeg Global College. The workshop on December 7th was co-led by advocacy committee member Leah Wilson and co-chair Micaela Crighton. Louise Simbandumwe, from Amnesty International, led the workshop on December 8th.
    - Support the UN Women's Campaign during the 16 Days to highlight how GBV impacts women and folks around the world — called for participants to engage and share actions to end GBV at home and around the world.
    - Supported Amnesty International Write for Rights letter-writing event on International Human Rights Day on December 10th.
    - Seven community members articles published on our website speaking about the 16 Days Campaign; Gun Violence and Gender-Based Violence; The Blood Ban, AIDS, and the 2SLGBTQ+ community; Engaging Men and Boys; Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls; Barriers for Women in STEM fields; Youth and GBV. Each article held a correlated call to action on the issue in relation to the campaigns listed above.

Report prepared by Micaela Crighton.