July 17, 2019

The Canadian Association for the Study of Adult Education (CASAE) stands with Shelby McPhee who attended the Black Canadian Studies Association as part of the national Congress put on by the Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences.

We join in the chorus of other scholarly associations and attendees who have expressed concern, frustration, and indignation regarding Mr. McPhee’s experiences of anti-Black racism, racial profiling, and racial discrimination by the two Congress attendees and the Congress organizers involved on June 2, 2019.

Anti-Black racism, a global phenomenon, is deeply institutionalized in Canadian society and we must collectively, actively, and fiercely condemn it wherever and whenever it rears its ugly head. We agree with the Black Canadian Studies Association’s demand that “the Federation must not only respond appropriately to what has happened to Mr. McPhee, but also commit to the challenging, long-term work of addressing systemic, widespread anti-Blackness and all forms of racism” (see BCSA’s letter https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/0a936d_78363838e10447f6ac9d562ca14190c0.pdf).

In June CASAE President, Dr Susan Brigham, expressed concern and indignation to the Federation’s President, Dr. Patricia Albanese about the incident and received a response back from her. However, the need for further response to the incident is ongoing and the BCSA’s demands are appropriate, fair and reasonable: “(a) clarify that it will ensure the delivery of a letter from the BCSA to the two accusers; and (b) commit to the addition of ‘Confronting anti-Black racism’ or ‘Confronting anti-Blackness’ to the 2020 Congress theme”.

We acknowledge we have a collective responsibility to take action against anti-Black racism, and all forms of harassment and discrimination. Looking forward to continued updates on the actions and next steps the Federation will take in response to this incident.

In solidarity,

CASAE Executive:

Dr Susan M Brigham President
Dr Hongxia Shan, President-Elect
Dr Adam Perry, Secretary
Dr Jim Sharpe, Treasurer