

2026 Ontario Council AGM and Conference

Women Leading Change

The 2026 Ontario Council AGM and Conference, held at the Peterborough Golf and Country Club from May 22 - 23, 2026, was an outstanding success. The event brought together delegates from across the province for two days of fellowship, learning, and advocacy.

The networking activity, "The Great Idea Expedition," facilitated by Anne Corden, VP Membership, provided an excellent opportunity to meet fellow delegates and exchange ideas.

Ontario Council President Sandra Shaw conducted the business portion of the AGM with warmth and humour, ensuring the meeting proceeded efficiently and smoothly. As outgoing President, Sandra also delivered a heartfelt and inspiring address focused on advocacy, community support, and the enduring friendships fostered through CFUW.

The keynote address was delivered by The Honourable Donna Dasko, Senator for Ontario, who spoke eloquently on the topic of advocacy. She highlighted the Senate's achievement of 50/50 gender representation while also acknowledging the growing backlash and increasing attacks faced by women in public life. Her thoughtful presentation emphasized the continued importance of supporting women's voices and leadership.

Delegates were also delighted to receive the beautiful CFUW scarves designed by Elena Scanlon and Marlene Starkman. The creators carefully explained the meaning behind the various symbols incorporated into the scarves, which were proudly worn and admired throughout the conference.

A beautifully written poem by Promise captured the spirit and values of CFUW in Canada. Its moving words reflected the organization's dedication to friendship, advocacy, and support for women and communities.

Attendees also enjoyed the opportunity to purchase Friendship Bracelets, a creative and successful fundraising initiative supporting CFUW Cornwall.

During the AGM, members unanimously approved a bylaw amendment establishing a new Chair for Environmental and Climate Change, reflecting CFUW's ongoing commitment to addressing important contemporary issues.

Students from CFUW London presented a thoughtfully researched and well-delivered resolution supporting awareness and advocacy surrounding postpartum depression. Their professionalism and dedication were greatly appreciated by delegates.

Following a delicious lunch featuring an assortment of salads and sandwiches, attendees reconvened for an afternoon of engaging discussion groups and workshops. The program offered a diverse selection of timely and meaningful topics, including:

- Encouraging Resilient, Age-Friendly, and Inclusive Communities
- Mastering the Art of Lobbying Politicians
- Strengthening Relationships with Indigenous Sisters and Communities
- Women in Politics: Challenges and Opportunities
- Using AI as a Tool

The conference concluded with remarks from incoming OC President Sandra Shaw, whose positive and encouraging message brought a fitting close to a highly successful AGM and conference. There were many thoughts to be shared from the inspiring speakers and much learned as we move forward with our own club events.