CFUW Orillia Joins Community Partners to Mark the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women

On Friday 6 December, 2024, despite extreme winter weather, CFUW Orillia joined with community partners to host a Walk of Remembrance and Candlelight Vigil to honour the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. The event, organized in collaboration with the Orillia OPP and The Green Haven Shelter for Women, remembered the horrific act of violence which took the lives of 14 young female engineering students at École Polytechnique 35 years ago.

The Vigil aimed to raise awareness of gender-based violence and offered a moment to reflect on all those affected. A total of 16 candles were lit to remember the 14 women, missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, estimated at 4,000 over the last 30 years, and all the other victims of gender-based violence including children.

CFUW Orillia's partners in the collaborative event are all dedicated to uplifting women and addressing the root causes of gender-based violence:

- The Green Haven Shelter for Women provides safety, support and resources to women and children escaping violence.
- The Elizabeth Fry Society Simcoe Muskoka advocates for marginalized women and addresses systemic barriers.
- Dress for Success Orillia and Barrie empower women with tools for economic independence.
- The Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses is a coalition of first stage emergency women's shelters, second-stage housing organizations and community-based women's organizations that work towards ending violence against all women.
- The Ontario Provincial Police have revised how they respond to calls of domestic and intimate partner violence to ensure victims' needs are addressed.

CFUW Orillia also joined with The Green Haven Shelter for Women at Orillia City Centre on November 25 to raise the Wrapped in Courage flag, declaring The International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women.