

**University of Toronto
University Arts Women's Club (UAWC)**

NEWS – EVENTS
<http://groups.chass.utoronto.ca/uawc/>

Volume 1 No 2

December 2018

On Thursday, November 15, 2018, at our General Meeting, Reverend Dr. Cheri DiNovo – United Church Minister, former Member of Provincial Parliament, and radio personality talked openly about her multi-faceted life and career. As a child in Toronto, she endured a violent home life, which led her to live on the streets when she was 16. She became involved in the drug culture, including smuggling LSD into Canada, but managed to turn her life around with the help of the Fred Victor Mission and went back to school. She found a career as a corporate head-hunter, and then established her own firm which placed women in high-profile jobs.

Cheri became disillusioned with her corporate career and went back to the University of Toronto where she obtained a Doctorate in Divinity. Her first charge as a minister was at Emmanuel-Howard Park United Church. She described the challenges she faced, and how she was able to grow the congregation by reaching out to the community. She performed the first legalized same-sex marriage there. One of her stories of needy individuals included Toby, who identified as transgender. A talented musician, Toby became the musical director, but later committed suicide. She drew our attention to the terrible statistic that about 50% of the transgender population commit suicide. She was able to raise money for the installation of a church window in Toby's memory.

In the next stage of her many careers, Cheri was elected in 2007 (and re-elected three more times) as New Democratic Party Member of Parliament in the Ontario Legislature. She is known as "Queen of Tri-Party Bills" for tabling the most bills in the legislature to have all three parties' support. Always an activist for LGBTQ issues, she introduced Toby's Act, which is an amendment to the Ontario Human Rights Code to include gender identity and gender expression. She also fought for the \$10.00 minimum wage bill. Since her time in Parliament, she has returned to the ministry at Trinity-St. Paul's United Church.

The Rev. Dr. DiNovo is also a radio personality with her own show "The Radical Reverend" which broadcasts from the University of Toronto's Hart House (89.5 FM) on Mondays at 4:00 p.m.

This year the Christmas Party was held on Thursday, December 13, 2018, once again at the President's House of U of T. Members and guests started arriving at around 11:30 a.m. A delicious lunch was provided by Delmanor Retirement Living, Don Mills, served by Janice Hicks, Marketing and Community Relations. The Christmas Charity fund recipient was Habitat for Humanity GTA – Women Build. Raney Jansma, Events and Sponsorship Coordinator, explained that entering its 10th year in 2019, Women Build has rallied thousands of women to volunteer to swing hammers and raise walls so more low-income families in our community can have a safe, decent, and affordable place to live. She appreciated our support and generous donations totalling \$600.00. Following the traditional singing of carols the event was concluded at 2:30 p.m.



Janice Hicks, Marketing & Community Relations
Delmanor Retirement Living, Don Mills



Raney Jansma, Events & Sponsorship Coordinator
Habitat for Humanity GTA – Women Build

Anyone interested in joining UAWC is invited to contact Kathy Imrie, Vice-President of Membership, at 416-920-9153 or kathleen.imrie@utoronto.ca

December 14, 2018