

RESCON announces campaign to fight racism in construction industry

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TORONTO — The **Residential Construction Council of Ontario (RESCON)** has launched a campaign intended to bring employers, unions and government together to address racism in the industry.

“We have always taken a leadership role in fighting racism and discrimination in the construction industry,” said RESCON president Richard Lyall in a Sept 10 release. “We are very proud of the fact that we have a multi-racial, multicultural and incredibly diverse workforce in Ontario’s construction industry and racist behaviour of any kind or in any form will not be tolerated by any of our employers.”

RESCON held a webinar Sept. 10 that featured a legal discussion on employers’ obligations when dealing with racism and discrimination incidents and a separate panel discussion on anti-racism and diversity efforts undertaken by builders and labour.



Lawyer Diane Laranja of Filion Wakely Thorup Angeletti LLP provided the legal commentary.

Danielle Feidler, senior vice-president, brand experience at Tridel, Fatima Saya, manager, community partnerships at the Daniels Corporation, and Jason Ottey, director, government relations and communications at LIUNA Local 183, participated on the panel.

“Our industry responded quickly and was the first to condemn racist acts that occurred recently on Toronto construction sites,” said Lyall. “The webinar brought together employer, union and government voices needed to make meaningful change.”

Additionally, RESCON announced a Construction Against Racism Everywhere (CARE) campaign, with the hashtag #RESCONCare. Stickers are being distributed to construction employers and the industry for workers to post on their hard hats and around construction sites. As well, RESCON and its board of directors are also spearheading formation of a coalition of employers, unions and subtrades from the industry.

The group will be given the responsibility of coming up with ideas on how to deal with racism and change the culture of the industry, the release noted. Meetings will be held with the Ontario Residential Council of Construction Associations, the Infrastructure Health and Safety Association, Construction Employers Coalition and the Construction and Design Alliance of Ontario.

“We intend to work closely with construction employers and unions, the provincial and municipal governments to address racism in all forms,” said Bruno Giancola, chair of RESCON’s board of directors and senior vice-president of project management at Tridel, referring to racist incidents at jobsites this summer. “While the recent incidents in no way exemplify the majority of the 400,000 workers, contractors and builders who work in Ontario’s construction industry, RESCON is aware that there is a problem and will continue to do all that we can to learn and educate the workforce.”