



An Alliance of Transgender and Gender-nonconforming Tradespeople

P R E S S R E L E A S E

TORONTO, February 16, 2021 – An Alliance of Transgender and Gender-nonconforming Tradespeople was founded in January 2021 by a small group of film and television production technicians in Toronto. Their first campaign, targeted at the film and television industry, officially launches today.

The campaign, creatively titled “A Campaign for use of proper pronouns and access to appropriate bathroom facilities in the workplace”, launched with an invitation to industry leaders to “help us make the film and television industry a safe and welcoming work environment for Transgender and Gender-nonconforming technicians.”

“For my entire 20 plus year career in the film and television industry, I have witnessed and faced harassment for gender-nonconforming behaviours,” says founding member Polly Jean Vernon, a member of Toronto’s NABET 700 and a carpenter, set dresser, and props technician. “It reached a point for me, like many of my LGBTQ+ friends and acquaintances, that I couldn’t go to work anymore and face the abuse and the toxic atmosphere. We need to address the pandemic of transphobia that pervades so many technical and construction workplaces, and this organization will work towards making more workplaces safer for queer and gender-nonconforming people.”

Studios, labour organizations, individual producers and productions currently filming will be targeted for participation in this campaign. The goals for this initial campaign are twofold:

- 1. Work to change standard industry practice to indicate crew members’ pronouns on crew lists and call sheets.** This would normalize the idea across the industry that everyone has the right to define their own gender identity (as per the Ontario Human Rights Code), and that employers support gender diversity in their workplaces by acknowledging and respecting their employees’ individual identities.
- 2. Advocate for Gender-neutral bathrooms to be available on every film set.** Access to appropriate washroom facilities is extremely important. Transgender and Gender-nonconforming technicians have a lot to think about on set, and worrying about being “bathroom challenged” can cause substantial undue stress on top of their day’s work.

The organization asks “that industry leaders including production managers, location managers, and department heads work individually and cooperatively to ensure that Transgender and Gender-nonconforming people may be more often addressed by their proper pronoun in the workplace, and that they have access to safe and appropriate facilities in the workplace.”

Campaign representatives assert that taking some “simple steps will make an enormous difference to making sets safer for us, your colleagues and creative partners. Please join us in spreading our message and supporting our goals within your personal and professional networks. We look forward to working with you to help make our industry more inclusive for Transgender and Gender-nonconforming technicians, and all cast and crew.”

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