

Gender inequality plays out in donation efforts

Have you heard of Kent Molgat? He is the CTV journalist who recently broadcast a story about the alleged systemic discrimination of an incredible local charitable group: 100 Men Who Give a Damn.

Achieving Justice

PAUL HERGOTT



There's a touch of a recruiting advantage. Premier Christy Clark being a notable exception, the majority of influential people in our community happen to be men, and men tend to have more money to throw around.

An Oct. 9, 2015, Globe and Mail article notes: "Canadian women still take home on average 73 cents for every dollar men earn, even as educational attainment has surpassed their male counterparts."

Encouraging strides have been made towards gender equality, but it's indisputable that women continue to face an uphill battle.

Women have been well prepared for the challenge, though; fighting uphill every step of the way for the right to vote, to break the glass ceiling into the corporate world and into the world of politics.

That continual uphill slope is what is called systemic discrimination.

And yes, of course this incredible men's 100 group is perpetuating it.

But I feel certain that every one of the men who are throwing \$100 on the barrel for charity every three months is doing so out of the altruistic motivation of doing good for our community.

I am willing to bet, and bet big, that not one of them is intending to perpetuate the systemic discrimination of women.

That's why it's called "systemic." Preferential treatment of men has long been woven into the fabric of our society.

Unfortunately, this leads to often inadvertent preference and entitlement that can be addressed only if it is recognized for what it is.

We learned decades ago that we need to take active steps to counter it, such as affirmative action.

Those steps are moving us, though very slowly, in the right direction.

This men's group, as well-meaning as it is, takes us a step backwards.



Scotiabank has donated \$10,000 to support the Adolescent Psychiatric Unit at Kelowna General Hospital. The donation is part of Scotiabank's overall commitment of \$50,000 to the APU which offers one of only five specialized programs in B.C. for youth aged 12 to 17 who have complex mental health issues. The unit has served over 800 youth since opening in November 2005, the most common treatments being for depression and anxiety. In the photo (from left) are Rob Edwardsen, Kelowna main Scotiabank branch manager; Jason Waters, district vice-president; Colleen McEwan, APU manager; Dorothy Mills, KGH Foundation board member; Mischa Mueller, senior development officer, KGH Foundation; and Winnie Leong, Scotiabank regional senior vice-president.

Do we throw the baby out with the bath water?

Hell no! How about a gender inclusive group: "100 beautiful human beings who give back."

Yes, you could come up with a much better name but the idea remains sound.

Thank you, Kent Molgat, for taking it hard on the chin for gender equality in our community.

With this column, I'm sure to join you in the 'doghouse' of public opinion, and I'll accept that.

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STORY NO. 6

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