

2020 OCUFA Status of Women and Equity Award of Distinction

Citation for Min Sook Lee

The logo for OCUFA, consisting of the letters 'OCUFA' in a bold, blue, sans-serif font.

Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations
Union des associations des professeurs des universités de l'Ontario



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Read by Rahul Sapra, OCUFA President

The Status of Women and Equity Award of Distinction celebrates the outstanding contributions of OCUFA members whose work has advanced the interests of professors, contract faculty, academic librarians, and academic staff who are Indigenous, women, racialized, LGBTQ2S+, living with disabilities and/or belong to other historically marginalized groups.

Min Sook Lee embodies the work this award celebrates with her tireless commitment to equity in her academic, documentary, and service work. As a professor teaching both Integrated Media and Art for Social Change, Min Sook has been an advocate for racialized students and leads by example with her commitment to the labour movement and social justice. Her documentary filmmaking practice and pedagogy are rooted in principles of equity and she has applied those same principles to her work at OCADFA.

Min Sook stepped into the role of OCADFA president around the same time that the pandemic changed the ways faculty taught and engaged with each other. While some might have seen this as a challenge, she used the opportunity to hold frequent town halls with members and increase engagement with the association's committees. In this time of uncertainty, Min Sook worked to improve the lives of precarious workers, negotiating a \$650 payment for all sessional instructors teaching online during the pandemic. In addition to recognizing the material realities of precariously employed faculty, Min Sook led a coalition of faculty, staff, and students called OCAD United at our University. This group aimed to dismantle the austerity agenda underpinning the budget of OCADU. OCAD United at our University's work culminated in a recent alternative budget that prioritizes student learning experiences, academic integrity, and working conditions for everyone employed at the university. Over 200 OCADU community members have formally requested the institution's Board of Governors consider the alternative budget.

In addition to her community collaborations and work within the faculty association, Min Sook recognized the importance of a Canadian response to the calls to action around Black and Indigenous lives. She dedicated herself to helping organize Scholar Strike Canada, an initiative that gathered widespread support and provided nationally broadcast teach-ins opposing police brutality and violence towards Indigenous and Black members of our communities.

Min Sook has an impressive collection of documentaries that highlight the breadth and depth of her passion for social justice. These documentaries raise awareness of injustice and push for social change in the mining industry, the garment industry, for migrant worker rights, and policing.

Min Sook brings her intelligence and passion to her work at OCADFA, and she is just getting started. Her vigour cannot be fully expressed in this short citation, but the selection committee was struck by her commitment to equity and her embodiment of the spirit of the award. For all these reasons, it is an honour to recognize Min Sook Lee with OCUFA's Status of Women and Equity Award of Distinction.