

Show up for social justice: Vote this election ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

Jasmine Ramzee Rezaee, Senior Marketing and advocacy Officer at YWCA Toronto conducted the following interview with Margaret Hancock, reflecting on the importance of social justice and why voting matters this election.

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EXCERPTS

Switching to current affairs, there are two elections coming up this year, one is the provincial election in June and the other is the municipal election in November. What issues do you think will be important and why?

Both provincially and municipally we are still fighting for universal childcare and we should not be. That one baffles me because it is such an obvious thing to do to support all families. Women are still disproportionately poor even though good strides are being made around minimum wages and workplace situations, but women are still disproportionately poorer than men.

Gender-based violence is still a reality and the supports for that, although strengthened recently, are still insufficient. Women are isolated and vulnerable to harm as a result of that. Women are still doing the bulk of unpaid work and when families split up, women often bear a disproportionate amount of caregiving work – this contributes to gender-based poverty. There are still some real disadvantages for women that we should be able to fix. We are closer but we are not there yet.

Unfortunately, the richest one percent secured 82% of the wealth created in the world last year (according to Oxfam). Inequality is getting worse at a global level. Provincially and municipally we feel the effects of rising inequality as well; so something is not working and we need action from both provincial and municipal governments to support our communities, eliminate poverty, and narrow inequality.

Housing and education are also connected to these issues. Housing is a basic right and a basic need. Yet every year, it is an unmet need and from shelter to supportive housing options, many people are left in precarious housing situations. More must be done by all levels of government. I believe these issues will be important in these upcoming elections.

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