

CVFM recognizes four public servants to address workplace harassment

The federal public service has made significant progress to address the issue of workplace harassment but a lot more work needs to be done to make visible minorities more comfortable in their workplaces.

"I think there is good progress being made by the public service," said **Kevin Page**, former Parliamentary budget officer in his keynote speech Nov. 27 at the Grand Annual Event hosted by the Community of Federal Visible Minorities (CVFM).

The CVFM is an independent, member-run organization created for visible minority public servants to advance their issues of common concern. It was inaugurated in 2012 by retired Senator Donald Oliver and has been active across the

federal government by holding networking events, sponsoring mentorship programs, and commenting on policy initiatives.

Four public servants who played a key role in highlighting and addressing the issue of workplace harassment were recognized at the event, including **Don Head**, the commissioner of Correctional Services Canada, **Marie-Edith St.Vil**, senior editor with Citizenship and Immigration Canada, **Henry Quan**, senior science officer with Environment Canada in Vancouver, and **Faith Moneke-Ukadike**, administrative assistant with the CBSA in Dartmouth, N.S.

"I think we have almost slayed the dragon of employment equity, especially under the leadership of [former PCO clerk] **Wayne Wouters**," said **Franklin Assoumou Ndong**, vice-president of the CFVM, at the event, adding that "now we need to start tackling other issues like discrimination and racism. The leaders we recognized tonight are doing exactly that—changing outdated cultural norms."

According to CVFM, the four public servants who were recognized were picked by a subcommittee of the organization. There were a total of 20 submissions.

In an interview with **HOH**, Mr. Head said:

"I'm actually quite honored and surprised from my perspective [because I was] just doing the job that a deputy minister should be doing," said Mr. Head.

He added that to address the issue of workplace harassment, he met with his staff across the country, including employment equity groups, staffers of aboriginal ancestry and public servants with disabilities to hear their concerns and how to address these challenges. The key to address any issue, he said, is that the top management must not only consult, come up with a plan but also execute the suggested solutions in their true letter and spirit.