

Statement



Unifor mourns the loss of Dr. Bromley Armstrong

August 27, 2018

Unifor mourns the loss of a great civil rights advocate and union leader. Dr. Bromley Lloyd Armstrong passed away on August 17, 2018.

His courage, dedication and resilience informed his lifelong struggle for working people and brought about great changes in race relations in our country.

Dr. Armstrong immigrated to Canada from Jamaica in 1947 and quickly became a leader in the struggle against racial discrimination, leading a delegation to Ottawa in 1954 to challenge racist federal immigration policy. As a member of the United Auto Workers Local 439, a founding union of Unifor, he organized tirelessly to challenge injustice.

“Brother Armstrong was unafraid to lead in the battle against racial discrimination in Canada,” said Jerry Dias, Unifor National President. “His devotion to improving the lives of the most marginalized workers among us is an example to us all. Canada’s union must fight for the rights of the most vulnerable, or we fight for no one at all.”

He is the founder of multiple organizations, which include the Jamaican Canadian Association, Urban Alliance on Race Relations, Black Business and Professional Association, National Council of Jamaicans and Supportive Organizations.

“I offer my sympathies to Dr. Armstrong’s family and community during this difficult time,” said Christine Maclin, Unifor Human Rights Director. “His passing leaves a large gap in the fabric of anti-racist activism in this country, as his life’s work has touched so many of us as Black Canadians and as trade unionists.”

Dr. Armstrong was involved in the National Unity Association sit-ins in Dresden, Ontario, where restaurants refused to serve black customers. His work with the National Unity Association took the challenge against racial discrimination to racist landlords and business owners across the country.

He was recognized with numerous awards during his lifetime including the Harmony Award, the Order of Ontario, the Order of Distinction in Jamaica, and the Order of Canada.

Dr. Armstrong’s memoirs, *Bromley, tireless champion for just causes*, has been required reading in Unifor’s Aboriginal Workers and Workers of Colour course for the past 15 years. Dr. Armstrong, a former UAW member, had been a regular speaker at union events, sharing his knowledge and inspiring the next generation of leaders.

A funeral service for Dr. Armstrong is scheduled for August 29, 2018 in Pickering, Ontario. In lieu of flowers, the family has asked for donations to the Project for the Advancement of Children's Education at pacecanada.org/donate.

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