

**Niagara Region Anti-Racism Association Delegation: Vicki-Lynn Smith Remarks to Niagara
Regional Council**

September 19, 2019

My name is Vicki-Lynn Smith. I was born and raised in St.Catharines, with a black father and a white mother. There was racism then because of our skin colour. I had to move away to get a job in Toronto when I finished school because there were no good jobs here for me. I got a job with the federal Government, ended up in Ottawa for the last 21 years of my working life. I moved back to St.Catharines in May of 2016. When I moved it didn't take long to see that Niagara had gotten more diverse but I didn't see that in the workforce at all.

I joined the The Niagara Region Anti-Racism Association when it started about a year ago. We as a group started advocating for an Anti-Racism Advisory Committee and an LGBTQ2+ Advisory Committee at city hall in St. Catharines which we now have. Around the same time my daughter started going to Brock. My daughter had never noticed any racism till she went there and made friends with people of darker skin or people who are not from Canada and she was very upset with the racism she was seeing. Her friends did not want to stay in this area because of what they were experiencing. Not just at school but in the community.

I would ask council to move forward on this issue by joining the Coalition as part of making Niagara a place where people will happily stay and contribute to the economy.

Thank you,

Vicki-Lynn Smith