

## Creating safe, respectful workplaces more important than ever

By Communications Staff  
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More than ever, employers and managers need to take action to create safe and respectful workplaces. A major conference organized by The University of Western Ontario's Centre for Research and Education on Violence against Women and Children (CREVAWC) is bringing together top experts on the topic to present and hear the latest research, legislation and best practices.

The conference, May 28 and 29 at the London Convention Centre, is called *Safe, Respectful & Inclusive Workplaces: Stakeholders & Strategies*. It includes 24 sessions and dozens of presenters.

"In these difficult economic times, work dynamics are changing, and not always for the better. Workers are less inclined to complain about mistreatment if they fear job loss," says Barb MacQuarrie, Community Director at the centre. "On the other hand, there is more focus on workplace violence and governments are taking steps to prevent such violence. This is evidenced by new Ontario legislation on workplace safety."

Last fall, prior to the introduction of new Ontario workplace safety legislation, the Centre, part of Western's Faculty of Education, hosted a think tank on workplace violence prevention.

The keynote speaker for next week's conference is Anita Hill, a professor of social policy, law, and women's studies at Brandeis University and a former colleague of U.S. Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas. She made international headlines testifying under oath at Thomas' 1991 Senate confirmation hearings that Thomas, her supervisor at the time, had made provocative and harassing sexual statements.

The conference includes sessions on how domestic violence can spill over into the workplace, the impact of trauma in the workplace, workplace bullying and more. David Lepofsky, Chair of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act Alliance will be speaking about community organizing strategies.

Members of the news media are welcome to attend.

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