

Carol McGregor: Injured Worker Advocate

Carol McGregor passed away Saturday September 23rd after a short battle with cancer. She will be missed by friends in many communities, the legal clinics, injured workers, disability rights organizations, the labour movement, her fellow GO train commuters and her family, to name a few.

Carol came to work with IWC as a community legal worker in 1995 after a career in nursing and years of activism and advocacy in disability rights organizations. She was already known to the injured worker community through her efforts to make connections as an activist in the disability community. Carol brought to IWC a wealth of knowledge, experience, and community connections.

Undeterred by losing her sight, she quickly mastered and worked in one of the most complex, paper intensive areas of law, often with few or no accommodations. Carol carried a very active caseload of highly demanding cases. Many injured workers are grateful for her results at the highest level of appeal at the Workplace Safety and Insurance Appeals Tribunal. Carol earned a reputation for dealing with very complicated head injury cases and although it was frustrating for her because such cases take so long to assemble, she was successful time and time again.

Carol had outstanding skills as an advocate through her focus, discipline, commitment, analysis, and her personal capacity. She also had outstanding skills in media work, lobbying, and the development of law reform submissions. Carol shared these skills as she helped prepare injured workers to speak to the media, to the Minister of Labour, to the Chair of the WSIB/WCB, and to audiences at injured worker events. She continually amazed her co-workers for her ability to keep abreast of the news and find the links with the issues faced by injured workers.

Carol worked enthusiastically with various injured worker groups which meet at the clinic—The Bright Lights Group, the Injured Worker Loss of Retirement Income Group, and the Early and Safe Return to Work Group. She played an important role in these groups and was greatly admired by the injured workers. She also initiated a Mississauga injured workers' group which met at a physiotherapy clinic. She knew the importance of organised groups and gave much of her time to the Ontario Network of Injured Worker Groups. She knew the importance of the presence of injured workers in the process of decision making and law reform and as such she took great pride in the attendance of injured workers at the Supreme Court of Canada on the issue of equitable compensation for Chronic Pain Disability in December 2002.

In addition to attendance at the Supreme Court, Carol always saw the importance of bringing workers compensation issues to the Federal level. She did this principally through her union work and put forward Canadian Labour Congress resolutions on workers' compensation. She organised a recent meeting with Jack Layton, MP for clinic's area, to discuss problem areas for injured workers that could be addressed Federally.

Carol will always be an inspiration for everyone who knew her. She and her guide-dog, Xayla, are greatly missed at the clinic.

**There will be a Memorial Service
to celebrate Carol's life
at
Eden United Church
3051 Battleford Road (at Winston Churchill Blvd.)
Mississauga**

Tuesday, October 3rd, 2006 at 11:00 a.m.

Source: Injured Workers Consultants