



My name is Bernadeth Betchi - my pronouns are she/her/elle. I identify as a Black francophone woman, who immigrated to Canada from Cameroon, at the age of three years old. I am a mother, a storyteller, a social justice warrior, a human rights activist and a scholar with a profound passion for using the power of narrative to ignite transformation and promote equity. As a storyteller, I have the rare gift for weaving narratives that not only captivate audiences but also serve as powerful vehicles for change. My stories are not just tales; they are vessels of empathy and understanding, opening doors to cultures, perspectives, and experiences that often remain untold. With each word I carefully craft, I invite us all to see the world through the eyes of others and challenge our own thinking and invite us to forge connections across boundaries and differences.

My unshakeable belief in the inherent worth of all people, has always been part of me. Reminiscing about young Bernadeth, I have always spoken against injustice and allowed myself in spaces where, as a Black young woman, growing up in Quebec City, a majoritarially white society, people made sure to make me feel like an outsider. I tirelessly championed and continue to champion the causes of those who have been marginalized, reminding us all that the fight for human rights is not just a duty, but a moral imperative. As such, I am one of the 12 representative plaintiffs of the Black Class Action Suit that was filed back in December 2020. The class action lawsuit has been filed in the Federal Court of Canada on behalf of Black Canadians.

In May 2023, I appeared as a witness before the Senate Committee on Human Rights to inform their study of anti-Black racism, sexism and systemic discrimination at the Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC). I gave my testimony, shared my experience and spoke out on behalf of Canadians about the systemic racism we continue to experience at the CHRC as well as across the federal public service and other institutions. I also gave my recommendations in the attempt to dismantle racism embedded in institutions, preventing Black employees from advancing in their career.

I currently sit, as a member of the 2023 Youth Group of the Second Permanent Forum for People of African Descent. In May 2023, I also provided a written submission to the Forum, detailing the systemic racism that employees continue to experience at the CHRC and across the federal public service and other federal institutions.

Beyond my advocacy work, I am an intersectional scholar who brings my storytelling gifts to academia in the hopes of marrying both qualitative and quantitative data and elements. I have a Bachelor of Communication with a focus on culture and identity. I hold a Masters degree in Women and Gender Studies from Carleton University and am a PhD candidate in Philosophy Feminist and Gender Studies at the University of Ottawa. I am currently completing my 3rd year and my studies focusing on the intricate intersections of mental health, race and health equity, allowing me to bring an unparalleled depth of understanding to my activism. My scholarship enriches my storytelling, infusing it with historical context and intellectual rigor that further empower my messages of justice and equality.

During my journey in the public service, I have worked at the Canada Revenue Agency, the Department of National Defense and at the Canadian Human Rights Commission. As a federal public servant, I want to extend my social justice work into the realm of the Union – supporting and fighting for principles of solidarity, equality, democracy, and justice.

I have had the opportunity to work in politics, as a staffer at the Prime Ministers Office of Canada as a Communications Advisor and Press Attaché to Madame Sophie Grégoire-Trudeau. I am a professor of communications, human rights, anti-racism and anti-oppression at Algonquin College. I also teach gender studies courses to nursing students at St-Lawrence College.

I am a community builder and believe in the power of the village. I am the co-founder of the Ottawa-Gatineau Black Breastfeeding week - which was created to bring awareness to the realities of Black parents and their access to support when it comes to breastfeeding. I previously sat on the board of directors for Immigrant Women's Services Ottawa, an agency that provides counseling and support services to immigrant women and their families in over 70 languages. I recently sat on the board of directors for Maison D'Amitié Ottawa, the only francophone women's shelter in Ottawa and my work in the community has inspired the creation of The Village Project Ottawa, a small collective which helps parents and caregivers with their various needs.

My journey as a passionate human rights advocate has equipped me with the profound dedication and strategic insight necessary to excel as the President of CAPE. Years of tireless work on the front lines of social justice have honed my ability to confront complex challenges head-on, advocate for all, but specifically for marginalized communities, and drive tangible change. This experience, combined with my strong leadership skills and commitment to fostering inclusivity, positions me to lead CAPE with unwavering dedication. I am ready to harness my expertise in human rights, amplify underrepresented voices, and navigate the intricacies of creating a more equitable world through my role as President at CAPE.

Accountability, effectiveness, professionalism, and integrity.