



RMYC ANTI-RACISM CAMPAIGN -- MULTICULTURAL BOWS

The Regional Multicultural Youth Council (RMYC) has been making multicoloured bows of black, red, white and yellow ribbons intertwined to symbolize the beauty of the human race united and co-existing in harmony since 1992. The "Multicoloured Bows" are now an integral part of the youth council's race relations campaign to raise the profile of March 21, the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

The RMYC created the Multicultural Bow after a Multiculturalism Conference held in Saskatoon in 1992. A workshop led by Marge Naainar, a South African immigrant familiar with the Soweto riots that led the United Nations General Assembly to declare March 21, the International day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, encouraged delegates to develop a visible symbol for March 21 to show commitment to the elimination of racial discrimination – just as the Poppy is to Remembrance Day.

The Multicultural Association of Northwestern Ontario (MANWO) President, Peter Monks, attended the conference and shared the message with the youth council challenging them to come up with a symbol for their anti-racism message. The RMYC adopted the four colours – red, yellow, black and white from Indigenous teachings denoting the hues of the human race. First Nations also use these four colours to represent the Medicine Wheel, Four Directions, Four Seasons and so forth.

The RMYC shapes strips of coloured ribbons into bows to signify unity and the beauty of diverse people living together in peace and harmony. Since 1993, the RMYC has produced thousands of multicultural bows for people to wear and show support for eliminating racism. If Parliamentarians are meeting, the Multicultural Bows are sent to Parliament Hill in Ottawa and Queen's Park in Toronto for our political leaders to wear on March 21, and affirm their commitment to ending racism and all forms of discrimination.

We encourage everyone to make and wear a Multicoloured Bow to promote racial harmony, initiate discussion on strategies to achieve racial justice, and raise awareness about the significance of March 21, the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

