

# University of Winnipeg Archives

## **Finding Aid - Congress of Black Women of Manitoba Inc. fonds (11.003, 15.014, 16.015, 17.008)**

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Generated by Access to Memory (AtoM) 2.3.1 Printed: August 23, 2017

Language of description: English

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# Congress of Black Women of Manitoba Inc. fonds

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## Summary information

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<b>Repository:</b>	University of Winnipeg Archives
<b>Title:</b>	Congress of Black Women of Manitoba Inc. fonds
<b>ID:</b>	11.003, 15.014, 16.015, 17.008
<b>Date:</b>	1973, 1980-2015 (date of creation)
<b>Language:</b>	English
<b>Physical description:</b>	1.5 m textual records 349 photographs 10 CDs & DVDs 7 VHS tapes

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## Administrative history / Biographical sketch

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### Note

On International Women's Day, March 8, 1981, the Congress of Black Women of Manitoba Inc. was officially created. The non-profit organization, based out of Winnipeg, Manitoba, is also referred to as the Congress of Black Women (Manitoba Chapter) and the Congress of Black Women of Canada (Manitoba Chapter).

The Congress of Black Women of Manitoba Inc. traces its history to 1951 and the creation of the Canadian Negro Women's Association (CANEWA) in Toronto. CANEWA was created by a small group of mostly Canadian born Black women. Dynamic human rights activist Kay Livingston was CANEWA's first president and founder. She had a vision of building a united network of Black women. From 1951 to its dissolution in 1976, CANEWA served as one of the most active and organized Black organizations in Canada. During its tenure, CANEWA advocated for, and experienced, massive legal and social change for Black people living in Canada. CANEWA initially served primarily as a social organization, but became increasingly oriented towards social activism. 1973 served as a turning point for CANEWA when they organized their first national conference, which was held in Toronto under the banner the National Congress of Black Women, and was attended by over 200 people. Subsequent national Congresses were held across Canada, including Montreal (1974), Halifax (1976) and Windsor (1977). In 1980, during the national meeting in Winnipeg, the Congress of Black Women of Canada was formally created with the ratification of its constitution and the election of its National Executive. With the inception of the National Congress, came the creation of regional chapters in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Ontario and Manitoba.

Manitoba's regional chapter was formally created a year after the founding of the National Congress. Educator and activist Dr. Beryle Mae Jones served as the first President of the Manitoba Chapter. The programs and operations of the Congress are the responsibility of its elected Board of Directors. Every two years elections are held to fill the Board's nine officer positions, which include President, Vice President, Past President, Secretary, Treasurer, Membership, Program, Fundraising and Social Director.

The Congress holds monthly meetings, except during July and August, and membership is open to all Black women sixteen years of age and over.

Since its creation, the Congress has actively advocated -- through monthly meetings, community outreach events and workshops, newsletters, and involvement with the government and other organizations with similar mandates--for Black women's rights and education, while striving to unite all Black women in Manitoba. Through their workshops, meetings and outreach projects, they aim to create a forum and climate where Black women are able to openly discuss and propose solutions to relevant issues, while also increasing awareness about those issues. The Congress actively advocates for the elimination of racism, sexism, classism, and violence against women and families. They promote Black consciousness and history, and unity among Black women through events like the celebration of Black history and women's history, holding cross-cultural presentations, celebrating Kwanzaa and other community events, and holding dinners, fundraisers and socials. Among their initiatives, they established a scholarship program for Black students, and provide aid for recent immigrants and their families. They undertake social action and advocate for human rights, pension reform, employment standards, affirmative action, the health concerns of Black women and their families, raising awareness about international issues related to women in lower income countries, and facilitating cross-cultural relations. Throughout their history they have maintained an active correspondence with government ministers, departments and agencies to discuss issues relevant to the Congress, and have built strong ties with many national and provincial ethnic and women's groups that share similar mandates and goals.

### **Custodial history**

The Congress of Black Women of Manitoba Inc. fonds was donated to the University of Winnipeg Archives by members of the Congress on several occasions between 2011 and 2017.

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### **Scope and content**

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The fonds consists of four separate accessions: accession 11.003, accession 15.014, accession 16.015, and accession 17.008. Accession 11.003 consists of 6 series: minutes and agendas, constitution and by-laws, minutes and agendas, correspondence, events and workshops, internal publications, and external publications. Accession 15.014 includes one series containing 345 photographs. Accession 16.015 includes 10 series: meetings and reports, correspondence, events and workshops, grant applications, research materials, internal publications, external publications, electronic records, moving records and photographs. Accession 17.008 consists of one series of presentations.

## Notes

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### Title notes

### Restrictions on access

Some items in this fonds are restricted because they contain sensitive or personal information. The restrictions will be lifted fifty years after acquisition.

### Conditions governing use

Where owned, copyright has been transferred to the University of Winnipeg Archives.

### Finding aids

A more detailed finding aid including box, folder, and item listings are available at the link above.

### Accruals

Further accruals to this fonds are expected.

### Other notes

- **Publication status:** published
- **Level of detail:** Full
- **Status description:** Draft

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## Access points

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- Textual record (documentary form)
- Graphic material (documentary form)
- Multiple media (documentary form)

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## Collection holdings

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