



Community Equity Council

Ottawa Police Services

A learning moment

The community members of the Community Equity Council advocated since the beginning of its inception in 2019 for two things: violent situations against Indigenous, faith based and racialized people be identified as hate incidents/hate crimes; and when these incidents occur, the OPS respond to the needs of both the individual and community. This week we have seen that response in action.

Although there continues to be a lot to be done, we are increasingly seeing an intersectional response to hate crimes within the OPS.

In the US they are debating whether the eight women, six who were Asian, murdered in Atlanta is a hate crime. In our city, the response from the OPS Chief Peter Sloly is “what took place in Atlanta is a hate crime that victimized those directly murdered or injured, their families, the Asian community and women (locally and internationally).”

The Atlanta Chief of Police, sought to understand the intentions of the man who killed the eight women. Somehow the narrative was about him being a victim. Does his thinking really matter at this time? The outcome is that eight women are dead as a result of his actions. Who speaks for the eight women, six who were Asian.

Since the incident, the Ottawa Police have been reaching out to Asian female members, Asian community members and VAW community leaders. The OPS saw the connections between what happened in Atlanta and how members of the Ottawa community might be experiencing. They saw the connection between gender and race. That is the response that we asked for in 2019 and we are getting it.

The CEC understands that this was a crime of hate against women and the Asian community and the actions of the OPS show that they understand it as a hate crime. We need to continue to name these situations for what they really are – that is the first step to change.