



RICHARD LAUTENS/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

In honour of International Women's Day, Mayor David Miller honoured the YWCA's Women of Distinction, at a reception at City Hall. From far left: Alison Youngman, Dr. Sheela Basrur, Myrna Mather, Josephine Altilia, Debbie Douglas and Michelle Dagnino.

Women honoured for service

Thirty-eight per cent of women of colour and 31 per cent of all women in Ontario work for less than \$10 an hour in precarious jobs without union protection, benefits or job security, said Debbie Douglas, one of the winners of the 24th annual YWCA Women of Distinction Awards.

Douglas is one of seven people whose work with urban women was honoured yesterday at International

Women's Day celebrations at City Hall. Every year, the YWCA recognizes the efforts of women who have made outstanding contributions to improving the lot of girls and women in Toronto.

She and others painted a stark picture yesterday of the lives of working immigrant women. Close to 40 per cent of workers across Canada, mostly women and immigrants, are in part-time, contract or casual jobs, or

work through temporary employment agencies.

Other Women of Distinction award winners include: ■ Josephine Altilia, executive director of Literature for Life, which helps teen mothers improve their literacy through writing poetry. ■ Dr. Sheela Basrur, Ontario chief medical officer of health and assistant deputy minister of public health. ■ Michelle Dagnino, a first-year law student studying

the effects of misogyny in hip-hop culture.

■ Myrna Mather, a feminist and educator.
 ■ Adeena Niazi, executive director of the Afghan Women's Organization.
 ■ Alison Youngman, a senior partner at law firm-Stikeman Elliott.

They will be honoured by the YWCA at a May 20 dinner at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre.

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