



**COMMITTEE REPORTS
TO THE
2023 CUPE BC CONVENTION

APRIL 2023**

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In this next phase of the pandemic, we remain confident that strong public services are crucial to our collective success against the COVID-19 virus and its impacts on our society and economy. Our BC NDP government continues to invest in public services, as evidenced by our strong economic recovery. Politicians in all levels of government are under immense pressure to impose austerity measures and to stop investing in the common good. A key point of pressure is for the government to reduce and privatize public services, or to roll out new services but through private sector partners who want to profiteer on post-pandemic spending. We must not allow this to happen. Now more than ever, we must advance an agenda that centres strong public services at the core of resilient communities.

We continue to fight attacks on our jobs in all sectors of CUPE, including municipalities, school districts, post-secondary education, social services, healthcare and more. Locals throughout the province continuously challenge employers to bring more work back in-house, and to prevent the contracting out of work that could be done by our members. It is vitally important to continue our fight against privatization and contracting out, as it negatively impacts our members and our work, especially our most vulnerable and marginalized members, who are often engaged in precarious work.

We see a wide variety in the services that are contracted out across the workplaces represented by our Locals; garbage collection, recycling collection, snow removal, custodial work, skilled trades, security, and food/catering services are among the most contracted out. Employers often cite a lack of equipment and resources as a primary reason to contract work out, which is unsurprising considering the trend of public employers drastically underfunding the critical infrastructure and tools needed to maintain our communities. CUPE will continue to fight austerity and privatization at every opportunity.

Publicly Delivered Universal Affordable Child Care

One of the most significant privatization risks in BC is the privatization of childcare on school grounds. The creation of a childcare program in British Columbia is a much-needed new core public service that will ensure a just and equitable recovery from COVID-19. However, it also presents one of the most significant privatization risks in BC as the provincial government determines if they will roll out a truly universal, robust, publicly delivered service, or simply expand the current patchwork of privatized childcare spaces.

For the last three years, CUPE BC has actively campaigned for publicly operated affordable and accessible childcare delivered by integrating the emerging system of early care and learning and our existing public education system. Building on our successful “Seamless Day” campaign, which expanded to 40 districts in the 2022/23 school year, our campaign for publicly delivered before- and after-school care is growing in popularity. Through a cost share with CUPE National that ended on December 31, 2022, CUPE BC has created a campaign that centres CUPE members, tells our members’ childcare stories, engages the public through traditional and digital media, and seeks to influence decision makers through lobbying at local and provincial levels of government to adopt a publicly delivered system of childcare.

Through all this work, CUPE BC has made significant inroads in the public childcare conversation, and we will be continuing those conversations with an exciting re-invigoration of the campaign in the coming year. Like all our work, our strength is our members. The Committee encourages locals to join the “Public Childcare Now” campaign and members to take action through our [campaign website](#).

Building Community Awareness

CUPE Local 556, a composite local representing municipal workers in the Comox Valley on Vancouver Island, continues their campaign and cost share with CUPE National to build public awareness and support for contracting-in services. This campaign builds on the local’s successful actions in 2016 to stop a P3 sewage treatment facility and keep services public. Goals of the campaign include raising community awareness of improvements to services through public delivery which include accountability, increased quality, and safety. Through a variety of methods, the campaign will increase public awareness about the value of high-quality public services and the public employees providing them.

Raising the Floor Through Teamwork

CUPE Local 3338 continues their campaign to bring custodial work back in-house at Simon Fraser University. In July 2022, the SFU President announced that the University would be pursuing Living Wage certification, especially to support contract workers, including custodial workers, represented by CUPE. While this announcement was made and positive media coverage was given to SFU, they have not made any steps toward following through on their commitment to becoming a Living Wage employer. As these workers enter bargaining, a living wage will be one priority, along with improving working conditions and benefits for these members.

Even if a living wage is achieved, the work will continue to bring these members in-house. We understand the importance of bringing contracted-out work, especially custodial and food service work, back in-house. These workers deserve the same working conditions and benefits as other workers on campus.

Bringing Work Back In-House Pilot Projects

CUPE BC and the Anti-Privatization Committee have a pilot project program for Locals to apply for funding and support to help bring work back in-house. The pilot projects pertain to work that has either been contracted out and should be brought back in, or work that has never been in the bargaining unit but should be. CUPE BC will provide funding toward the project if applicant Locals are successful and will provide other types of resources as required, such as research and communications. We strongly encourage Locals to speak to a member of the Anti-Privatization Committee or their CUPE National Representative about this opportunity.

When preparing your Pilot Project Application, please include the following:

1. Sector represented.
2. Help required: staff, research resources, leaflets, ads, communications, etc.
3. History of work that was contracted out – when and why it was lost.
4. History of work to be brought in-house – why you believe this work can be returned to your bargaining unit.
5. What type of resources your Local is prepared to commit to the project: book off time, funding from your local.

Living Wage Campaign

The fight for a living wage in British Columbia is led by the “Living Wage for Families Campaign”. The Living Wage for Families Campaign is supported by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives BC in developing annual living wage rates for communities across British Columbia. The group advocates for both private and public employers, including municipalities and school boards, to pay all their employees, and often contractors, a living wage. There is also a certification process for employers to be certified living wage employers. CUPE participates in the Living Wage Advisory Committee, along with representatives from other unions, allies, and coalition partners.

The living wage for a region is based on a two-parent family with two children, with both parents working full-time. Arriving at the determination of a living wage, the campaign group collates the costs incurred by a family of four: food, clothing, rental housing,

childcare, transportation, and small savings to cover illnesses or emergencies. The [Living Wage for Families BC](#) website provides a breakdown of living expenses for a family of four and the living wage calculation. It should be noted that even when an employer adopts the living wage, the prevalence of casual, part-time, and other precarious work means that not every employee will be lifted out of poverty.

Living wage rates rose significantly this year in large part due to inflation impacting food costs, as well as rising housing costs and a change in how housing costs are determined.

As part of the leadup to the 2022 municipal elections, candidates seeking labour endorsement have been asked if they support a living wage. This information helps labour councils and individual labour organizations make better-informed decisions about who to support.

In addition to supporting the living wage campaign's goal to lift all working people out of poverty, the Committee encourages CUPE locals to advocate that their employers become living wage employers and that the living wage criteria be applied to the employer's contractors. A requirement that ensures that organizations in contracts with public sector bodies pay a living wage removes the economic incentive to contract work out, and will have a positive impact on our ability to protect existing work and to bring additional work in-house.

Anti-Privatization Education Module

We encourage Locals to consider requesting and participating in the new pilot "Stop Contracting Out" module as part of the "Stop Contracting Out" Toolkit. The main topics covered in this workshop are: how to find and use the "Stop Contracting Out" Toolkit, what is contracting in, why contract in and how it works, and what it takes to get it done, including a plan to bring services in-house.

Bargaining Language

Throughout the bargaining process, Locals can plan to include language to bring work back in-house and to prevent contracting out. We encourage Locals to include information and questions about privatization in your bargaining surveys, and to make use of the many resources on anti-privatization that are available through CUPE including the guide "[Protecting our work from privatization: How to fight contracting out at the bargaining table](#)".

Conclusions

Privatization remains an issue that can sometimes feel removed from the day-to-day operations of a Local. It is very important that we continue to learn and educate ourselves as much as possible about this complex problem that affects communities across the province. Contracting out is indeed an existential issue for the union movement; it is critical that we continue to fight for our members and the high-quality services they provide. If this subject seems daunting, we encourage you to speak to members in our Committee and to seek out resources from CUPE and other progressive organizations. It is vital that we are vigilant in our efforts to stop privatization before it starts, as employers seek out austerity cost savings post-pandemic.

We encourage you to support the resolution brought forward by our Committee, which include the opposition of Canada Health Transfer funds being used to fund privatized medical services, and the creation of a master database to track existing contracts that should be our work.

Education & Resources

Canadian Union of Public Employees

BC Families Need Affordable, Public Childcare for School-aged Kids

<https://www.publicchildcarenow.ca>

Living Wage for Families BC

What Is a Living Wage? Living Wage for Families Campaign

https://www.livingwageforfamilies.ca/what_is_living_wage

CUPE Education

LET - Resisting privatization during a pandemic (OLS)

<https://cupe.ca/mrm-union-education/workshop/157>

Canadian Union of Public Employees

Protecting our work from privatization: How to fight contracting out at the bargaining table

<https://cupe.ca/protecting-our-work-privatization-how-fight-contracting-out-bargaining-table>

Canadian Union of Public Employees

Bringing Our Work Back Home: A Guide to Standing Up for Public Services

https://cupe.ca/sites/cupe/files/bringing_our_work_back_home_a_guide_to_standing_up_for_public_services.pdf

Canadian Union of Public Employees

Keep Our Pensions Out of Privatization: A guide for CUPE members, trustees and other pension representatives

<https://cupe.ca/new-toolkit-helps-members-keep-pensions-out-privatization>

Canadian Union of Public Employees

Checklist: Protecting public services during the pandemic and beyond

<https://cupe.ca/checklist-protecting-public-services-during-pandemic-and-beyond>

Canadian Union of Public Employees

Guide: Early warning signs of privatization

<https://cupe.ca/guide-early-warning-signs-privatization>

Thank you to Tuesday Andrich, Steven Beasley, and Maja Bohinc for their contributions to this committee.

Respectfully submitted:

Michelle Waite, Chair
Gary Jarvis, Recording Secretary
Jim McKay
Michael Pat St. Pierre
Tuesday Andrich, Staff Advisor
Amy Issel, Co-Chair
Lorena Harrison
Denise Naef
Tony Volpe
Maja Bohinc, Administrative Assistant

March 2023



COLLEGES COMMITTEE

The CUPE BC Colleges Committee is composed of Local Presidents or designates from BC colleges, institutes, and special-purpose universities, who are appointed by the CUPE BC Executive Board. CUPE members are the foundation of our institutions and provide invaluable operational support and services. The next few years will see some committee members retire from their institutions or step down as Presidents. This committee has done a lot of great work together over the years and will miss each other's friendship and solidarity.

Our challenges as a sectoral committee are ongoing, and resolutions are difficult to attain in the short-term. However, we continue to advocate for affordable and accessible public post-secondary education for current and future generations of workers and students. The Committee extends this solidarity and friendship to all CUPE BC Colleges and hopes that the colleges will come onboard for the next term. We also say thank you to our members who supported our work.

Boards of Governance (BOG)

College Governance is legislated through the College and Institute Act. The College Board of Governors consists of appointed and elected board members as well as the President of the institution (ex-officio) and Chair of the Education Council (ex-officio). There are eight people appointed by the Government, plus the following who are elected by the respective organizations: one support staff, one faculty member, and two students. The BOG Chair is elected by the Board but must be one of the eight members appointed by the Government.

The Education Council consists of 2 support staff, 10 faculty members, and 4 students who are elected by their respective organizations. There are also four administrators appointed by the College President. All members of the Education Council have a vote. The Chair of the Education Council is elected by these members, who can also run for the position.

As college employees, CUPE members have the ability to make a difference at their workplace by becoming members of the Colleges Board of Governors. The CUPE BC Colleges Committee is committed to increasing the number of elected members to these Boards. We look forward to utilizing the Board Resource Kit, which will empower locals to actively engage in the board member election/appointment processes for the boards that govern many of our employers and our workplaces.

The CUPE BC Colleges Committee urges you to inquire through the Board Resourcing Office, which is responsible for candidate appointments to public sector organizations funded by the BC government.

Engagement

Engaging our membership and obtaining community support for CUPE members is an ongoing challenge faced by the post-secondary sector. The Colleges Committee remains committed to fighting for gains in social and economic justice for our members by engaging and motivating our members through communication and education.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Our institutions have Equity, Diversity and Inclusion committees established to work on identifying inequities and are working to find ways to remove barriers. Our members are active participants in these committees and are committed to effecting change in their workplaces. The CUPE BC Colleges Committee recognizes the importance of, and supports the efforts of, all post-secondary institutions making meaningful changes that go beyond talk and result in effective actions that move us towards achieving inclusive and safe workspaces.

Inflation

The College Sector as a whole continues to be impacted by ongoing inflation. Increases in the cost of food, transportation and housing are undermining the buying power of workers across the globe, and workers in the College Sector are no different. More and more research has identified ongoing corporate profits as the biggest factor contributing to increases in prices for essentials.

Long Term Effects of The Pandemic

As variants continue to emerge, so do concerns from CUPE members in the college sector. The increases in absences continue, as do the strains on staff who must backfill employees who are absent. The workload increases for people who already have heavy workloads is causing increased stress, leading to fatigue and frustration. Also, some members are afraid to come to work or perform duties that they believe to be unsafe due to their personal fear of catching the virus. COVID-19 is still circulating and the chance of catching the virus, and spreading it to vulnerable family members, has not been eliminated. In summary, the pandemic continues to be a concern for the sector and the front-line employees who are the most at risk.

Mental Health

There has been a marked increase in anxiety-related mental health issues. The mandate of all Colleges across BC may be to provide education to students, but these same institutions also have a duty to provide their employees and students with the education and resources needed to support mental health. While BC Colleges may acknowledge their responsibility towards mental health, the reality is that it is increasingly difficult to manage these issues and provide the services needed using past and traditional methods of supporting medical conditions without additional investment in support.

Post Secondary Funding

The BC Government is in the process of reviewing the funding model for BC's Post-Secondary System. In July 2022, CUPE BC submitted a comprehensive proposal outlining our vision for post-secondary funding in British Columbia. A few highlights of the proposal include:

- Providing consistent funding to institutions that acknowledge the real cost and is fair across the system
- Improving portability of education to allow students greater opportunities to study locally while still giving them the ability to achieve their preferred credentials
- Reducing or eliminating contracting out to improve the quality of services and to ensure fair pay and benefits for workers
- Providing funding that ends institutional reliance on international students to balance budgets

Truth and Reconciliation

CUPE members in BC colleges are very conscious of the impact of Truth and Reconciliation. We are working together on our worksites to promote the indigenization of our curriculum and our workplaces, to recognize the history of the residential school system, and to educate future generations.

We recognize the significance of building relationships, supporting Indigenous communities, and ensuring an equitable education.

In Closing

Our Committee is committed to educating our membership, employers, and the general public on the values of union principles and the benefits of union membership. We encourage you to join us in our fight for publicly funded post-secondary education. We hope you will support our resolutions regarding a provincial contracting-in strategy for public sector institutions in BC; lobbying the provincial government to increase funding for public community colleges, special purpose and research universities; advocating to CUPE for the creation of region-specific Indigenous education workshops; and lobbying for the expansion of public transit for students and workers in all communities throughout British Columbia.

Respectfully submitted:

Michelle Waite, Chair, Local 3479 North Island College
Tiffany McLaughlin, Co-Chair, Local 1858, Vancouver Island University
Patrick Barbosa, Staff Advisor
Lily Bachand, Local 4951, College of New Caledonia
Jeff Brett, Local 3479 North Island College
Kristy Brons, Local 2773, College of the Rockies
Rose Palozzi, Local 15, Langara College
Keith Todd, Local 2081, Camosun College
Maja Bohinc, Administrative Assistant

March 2023



COMMUNITY SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

The CUPE BC Community Social Services (CSS) sector is a sector in crisis. Still reeling from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, CSS workers continue to face critical levels of stress, burnout, workload concerns, and other issues such as workplace violence and mental health challenges. Unprecedented recruitment and retention issues are not only hurting employers but are also impacting the mental and physical health of members, with devastating consequences.

The CSS Committee has been working hard to tackle these issues in creative ways. Committee members are dedicated to raising public awareness of these challenges and pushing for change. Recognizing the sector's strength in numbers, as well as the capacity for resiliency, compassion, and tenacity in its members, has fueled the Committee to continue addressing these critical issues.

Recruitment and Retention

CSS workers have toiled in the face of significant and worsening recruitment and retention issues in the sector. This is a longstanding problem, but employers and members alike agree that it has never been as severe as the current staffing crisis. Members report working significant overtime to address staffing shortages. Recruitment and retention in the CSS sector have been exacerbated by the pandemic, as staff contracting COVID-19 have been forced to take long-term medical leaves due to long COVID-19 and/or their own or a relative's immuno-compromised medical conditions, or because they are not vaccinated and so cannot work due to vaccine mandates. These challenges have increased burnout and vicarious trauma, prompting members to take much needed medical leaves.

Unprecedented Stress

As noted above, CSS employees are reporting overwhelming workloads leading to stress and burnout; on top of the exhaustion from workload, additional challenges are also mounting throughout the sector. Due to working with marginalized, vulnerable, and at-risk individuals, CSS workers can be faced with exposure to traumatic stories and the painful or fearful experiences of others. This is known as vicarious trauma, and it is being observed at unprecedented rates.

Additionally, there are increasing rates of violence in the workplace. CSS workers are reporting more frequent, as well as more severe, episodes of violence on the job. These reports range from threats and other forms of verbal abuse or harassment to damage to

personal property and physical and/or sexual assault. The CSS Committee has been working to raise awareness of this issue and has supported the development of a public campaign to highlight individual member stories. These stories are being shared as part of an online campaign during March Community Social Services Month. Sadly, CSS workers are also reporting increased addictions and mental health issues in their own lives, as they navigate these overwhelming and stressful situations on the job.

Training Needs

The CSS Committee has identified significant issues with training for staff in this sector, as there are significant accessibility issues when it comes to training in almost all classifications. Workers across many job classifications do not have access to ongoing training opportunities, and several themes are emerging:

- New workers may be thrown into a new position with very minimal training, only to become overwhelmed; frequently, these unsupported individuals leave the sector before these challenges are addressed.
- Often, longstanding workers are forced to provide support to new employees who have not received adequate training.
- In some cases, limited access to ongoing training leaves longer-standing workers feeling stagnant and unmotivated to progress in their field; in other cases, they feel unseen, unappreciated, and undervalued.
- Some specific classifications require program certification that very few individuals have access to, in terms of location of institutions, flexibility of learning opportunities, or number of program graduates; postings in these areas are left vacant for extended periods, causing additional strain and increased workloads for existing CSS workers.
- Across the province, there is disparity amongst diverse geographical regions when it comes to accessible training opportunities. In particular, workers in rural communities are facing multiple barriers, often experiencing little to no access to training opportunities.

The CSS Committee is calling for improved access to training for existing employees, across classifications and geographical regions, as well as increased awareness, flexibility, and accessibility of training for those interested in working in the CSS field.

Inappropriate Placements for Clients

Due to the critical recruitment and retention challenges noted above, there are shortages of appropriate placement opportunities for clients that meet their individual

and diverse needs. Unfortunately, a new trend is emerging in which neurodivergent clients are being housed in spaces with unrestricted drug and alcohol use. This is leading to devastating consequences for persons served, as well as frustration and helplessness for CSS workers and the families of persons served. The CSS Committee recognizes that inappropriate client placements are unacceptable and calls for change in this area.

Community Social Services Month

March is recognized as Community Social Services month. One goal of the CSS committee was to promote a richer understanding of the sector and its employees, as well as to raise awareness of key issues. This had led to a virtual CUPE BC March Community Social Services Awareness Campaign. Campaign highlights are outlined in the article "[Community Social Services Awareness Month: Honouring our members' commitment](#)" on the CUPE BC website.

The Community Social Services Committee Workplan

The CSS Committee has developed a diverse workplan that reflects the many components of this complex and multifaceted sector. As noted in the resolutions below, key issues include CSS worker priorities as well as improved services for clients. This committee has also strived to promote awareness of CSS and its various classifications, priorities, and challenges, as well as appreciation of its workers. It is an ongoing priority of the Committee to develop connections among CSS workers across the province; new perspectives are valued, and an expansion of this Committee is welcomed.

The CSS Committee also continues to work towards promoting the health, safety, and dignity of those from vulnerable and marginalized communities. Considering the devastating consequences of the lack of safe and accessible housing in the province, the CSS Committee fully endorses the housing first initiative, which prescribes safe and permanent housing as the first priority for people experiencing homelessness.

Substance use is a critical issue in this province and affects individuals and their loved ones in all sectors. Substance use is a public health crisis, not a criminal justice issue. Given this, the CSS Committee also supports the ongoing evolution of the decriminalization of narcotics in BC, which will help reduce the barriers and stigma that prevent people from accessing lifesaving supports and services. Additionally, the Committee calls for increased treatment programs to address the ever-widening gap between detox and treatment programs. Too often, people struggling with addictions

challenges enter detox programs only to find there are no available treatment programs. Consequently, they often relapse.

Committee members are dedicated to ongoing discussions on these matters so that attention does not shift away from these key issues. Recommendations to the executive board include:

- Pushing for continued support of the housing first model of housing
- Pushing for continued support of the decriminalization of personal possession of narcotics
- Continued advocacy with the provincial government to address the deepening recruitment and retention crisis in the Community Social Services Sector

Additionally, the CSS Committee offers support for other initiatives across CUPE BC; for example, this committee endorses the CUPE BC Childcare Campaign, and plans to liaise with the Skilled Trades and Persons with Disabilities Committees to support increased funding for people with disabilities to enter the trades. Also, the Committee intends to work with the K-12 Education sector and CUPE National Education to develop increased awareness of reporting near hits when experiencing violence in the workplace.

Recommended Resolutions in Order of Priority

As per the above workplan, the following are the CSS resolutions in order of priority:

- Social Services Education and Training
- Appropriate Supportive Housing and Program Placement
- The Gap Between Detox and Treatment Programs

Resources

CUPE BC

Community Social Services Awareness Month: Honouring our members' commitment.

https://www.cupe.bc.ca/2021/03/01/community_social_services_awareness_month_honouring_our_members_commitment/

Respectfully submitted:

Sheryl Burns, Chair, CUPE Local 1936

Nikki Kazimer, Co-Chair, CUPE Local 523

Lee-Ann Lalli, Recording Secretary, CUPE Local 1936

Carla Bailey, CUPE Local 3403

Gabrielle Cameron, CUPE Local 606

Bob Crozier, CUPE Local 523

Edmund Ma, CUPE Local 1760

Mike Varga, CUPE Local 3999

Michael Reed, CUPE National Staff Representative

Carmen Sullivan, CUPE National Community Social Services Coordinator

Morgan McCrystal, Administrative Assistant

March 2023



EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The CUPE BC Education team has had a busy start to 2023, as there have been over 25 different workshops, both in-person and virtually scheduled, in the BC Region from January to February. There are an additional 30 workshops scheduled over the next couple of months. Some highlights from the past few months are outlined below.

CUPE had a very strong presence at the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) Winter School over the past five weeks, both with facilitators and participants. Thank you to all the CUPE members and staff who participated and represented CUPE strongly.

The CUPE National Women's Conference was a great success with over 600 women gathering from across the country to be empowered, engaged, and educated.

Planning for Spring School is well underway, with registration open. The school will take place from May 28 – June 2, 2023 at the Coast Hotel in Kamloops. The courses being offered include: Mental Health, Executive Leadership with a panel discussion, an Advance Grievance to Arbitration legal workshop, 2 streams of Steward Learning Series and modules, and Collective Bargaining. Don't forget to apply for your scholarships and bursaries from CUPE BC.

The NADC has set dates for their Spring School taking place in Prince George from May 15-18, 2023. More details on that to follow soon.

Fall school is in the planning stages as there is a lot going on this fall with the National Convention right around the corner.

If your local wants to book or host a workshop, be sure to have your National Representative request the workshop or you can reach out to Tina Meadows or Vanessa Wolff for assistance.

Keep your eyes peeled for upcoming workshops and learning opportunities on the CUPE Education website. You can search all available workshops both in BC and other provinces and can register for any open workshop across the country. Be sure to have your local's approval if it involves book-off for your employer.

Education Committee members act as Social Convenors at weeklong schools sponsored by CUPE BC, and this year was no exception. Darlene Foley was a pillar at both last year's Spring and Fall Schools, holding down the social activities single-handedly, and should be commended for her amazing efforts to make a great week of

social fun for all participants. She will be back for Spring School, joined by another member of the Committee.

Metro District Council Report (Dennis Donnelly)

The Metro District Council (Metro) will be introducing bursaries this year for members to attend CUPE-sponsored education events, including weeklong schools. Details of this should be finalized shortly. With the recognition that its member locals are not equal in size, accessibility, and financial capabilities, Metro will be instituting a policy of assisting locals financially for their members to participate in education opportunities.

As we move towards more in-person education, Metro plans to sponsor additional courses and seminars both through CUPE and other organizations. Some of our larger locals have exhausted the lineup of courses offered in the Online Learning Series and look forward to the return of in-person education offered by CUPE. In the meantime, several locals have taken advantage of courses offered by Area Labour Councils that have partially resumed in-person offerings.

Although there is a desire to return to in-person education, we recognize the importance of continued use and expansion of online programs to allow for broader access to union education for all members.

Northern Area District Council Report (Jennie Copeland)

This past year, the Northern Area District Council (NADC) has been able to offer both a Spring and a Fall School. The Spring School was held in June 2022, one of the first in-person events post-COVID. It had a smaller turnout, due to the timeframe of the school year and the concerns in regard to COVID-19. In November 2023, a Fall School was held in Prince George. This had a bit of a better turnout, as it was a more centrally located school that allowed for more locals to attend.

Having the two weeklong schools in person made for a more in-depth learning experience for the attendees. With the previous format of online only, it was a half or full day of learning for each subject, whereas the in-person allowed for the facilitators to take the time that was needed on the subjects being discussed to allow for the shared discussion amongst the attendees.

At the last Convention, I was extremely happy to see the Resolution that I had personally worked on for each of the Committees brought to the floor for a vote and unanimously passed – dealing with lobbying the provincial government to increase the

cell phone and internet services across the province to remove the “dead” zones which create areas where you cannot access a signal when issues arise. When I was heading to Vancouver for the One Big Committee Meeting (OBCM), I was happy to see that the Fibre Optic line was finally being run to my home, but to date it has still not been connected to allow for better internet service.

I have also noticed while travelling the various highways in this vast province, that the cell service dead zones are slowly getting smaller and smaller, but there is still a lot of work to be done. For the Alaska Highway running north of Fort St John to the Yukon border, there have been payphones installed along the highway to allow for phone access, as well as a few cell phone towers. It is still a difficult area to be able to contact any help, and with the vandalism in this province, I don't feel these payphones will last for very long.

I am hoping to continue on the two committees that I currently sit on, to work with CUPE BC for the next 2 years to support matters that are important for the north, but also all of the province. I felt very fortunate that the Convention was in person, as I was able to network with the CUPE BC staff and explain to them how the pandemic has affected our members, asking them to come here and talk to our members personally to understand why we are so passionate about representing our members and the issues that they face in front of management in our local.

Okanagan Mainline District Council Report (Darlene Foley)

2022 saw the return of in-person/hybrid meetings. Although we had planned for a blanket ceremony to take place, we were not able to complete this request. Our members are still very interested in planning this, and we are working together to hopefully make it happen this year.

One of the highlights of the year was having Shelley Saje Ricci join us through Zoom, to give us an inspirational and motivating discussion on Indigenous history. OMDC has educational ideas/courses, including an Intro to Stewarding Course, that we are aiming to put into action throughout this New Year.

In November 2022, we successfully facilitated a Retirement Planning Course, a course that is in demand throughout the province. We look forward to hopefully hosting more. As the year is beginning, we are very excited as to what the future holds for the education of our members.

CUPE Local 900 (Darlene Foley)

Local 900 is very pleased to say that we were able to train 47 of our members throughout 2022. Some of these were online courses, some were local courses, and some were from the two schools that were put on by CUPE. This local has a very active Education Committee and is very diligent in searching out and requesting courses. In April, we put on a two-day Introduction to Stewarding course, with our National Rep Harry Nott facilitating, and the members have said it was one of the best courses they had ever attended. We've been fortunate to have such an excellent trainer available to us.

The local Education Committee met in September to go over and award the bursaries that we are pleased to give out each year. Four bursaries of \$1000.00 were allotted to members or relatives, as well as two for \$500.00, to current members only for continuing education. The two \$500.00 bursaries are in the name and memory of Bill Ferguson, a longtime CUPE activist and founder of CUPE Kamloops. 2022 saw the increase to two \$500.00 bursaries, from one the previous year.

We are excited to begin the New Year, and what promises to be a year of new education opportunities.

Kootenay District Council Report (Anita Early)

The Kootenay District Council (KDC) Executive, along with the National representatives assigned to our District Council, have been working hard to restore attendance to our general membership meetings by offering educational workshops over two days prior to the meeting. We devised our two-year plan to include a Steward Learning Series workshop along with a Local Executive Training workshop option for each quarterly meeting outside of the Mental Health First Aid being offered at least once every year. We are hoping that with advance notice for early registration and small local subsidies, we'll be back in the full swing of maximum attendance once again.

Respectfully submitted:

Anita Early, Chair

Jose van Berkel, Co-Chair

Darlene Foley, Recording Secretary

Lily Bachand

Aaron Brandon

Stephen Burns

Jennie Copeland

Dennis Donnelly

Erynne Grant

Lisset Peckham

Tina Meadows, Staff Advisor

Steven Beasley, Communications

Morgan McCrystal, Administrative Assistant

March 2023



ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE

The CUPE BC Environment Committee is thankful to be able to meet and collaborate on the unceded lands of the Coast Salish peoples. May we all walk softly through this land upon which we are uninvited visitors, respect it, and care for it as the Indigenous Peoples have done for centuries before us.

BACKGROUND

The Committee is responsible for proposing initiatives and activities that help CUPE members contribute to addressing climate change, as well as increasing engagement with members and communities on issues of environmental justice. The Committee also considers how CUPE BC can reduce its own carbon footprint and waste profile, to play a more significant role in fighting climate change as a prominent voice for workers in British Columbia.

As part of its work, the Committee makes space to consider the 94 Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Members read the calls to action that speak to them, and then in turn consider how to bring this knowledge into the business of the meeting, and back to locals.

All Committee meetings include the One Earth Statement, which Committee members encourage locals and district councils to adopt into their practices to help spread awareness and grow environmental action.

The One Earth Statement reads: CUPE members shall be mindful of their choices, and endeavour to make decisions that support the best practices to protect our environment. Please recycle all distributed documents, respecting the confidentiality of the material therein. Commit to walk, bike, carpool, or take Public Transportation when you can. Bring a reusable cup to your meetings. Our Union fosters awareness of reducing, reusing, and recycling. In this way, we respect our Environment, each other, and future generations.

2021-2023 OBJECTIVES

The Committee held roundtable discussions on many environmental issues and topics, including waste reduction, procurement of sustainable products for local and CUPE BC events, resistance by employers to transitioning fleets to carbon neutral technology, a just transition for workers, the importance of public transportation in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and many other issues.

The Committee also considered the role of CUPE BC as a labour union, the province's largest, and the juxtaposition of being a strong and well-respected voice but having a relatively low profile on environmental issues. Members considered how to be strategic, asking how best CUPE BC could take effective action to mobilize its strengths to the benefit of environmental issues.

After considering the pressing issues, and CUPE BC's assets, members came to the unanimous conclusion that addressing the climate crisis was its priority. The global climate emergency has become a dire situation that requires thoughtful and proactive long-term commitment from us as Leaders, our membership, government, and the public at large. Committee work over this term focused on this issue, addressing topics related to CUPE BC's existing public profile and reputation.

Guiding Document: CUPE National Environment Policy

The Committee's work was informed by a full review of the National Union's recently re-developed Environmental Policy, found at <https://cupe.ca/environment>. This policy helped the Committee narrow its scope to unified issues that speak to the diversity of members, workplaces, and environmental issues. The policy provided a solid grounding for the Committee's work over the term and reaffirmed the climate crisis as the single largest challenge facing humanity in terms of the environment.

WORK IN 2022-2023

Committee Meetings

The Committee met on November 8 and 9, 2022 at the One Big Committee Meeting (OBCM) where we finally met in person. Members participated in team building exercises and mapped out the plan for the remaining term. The Committee then met again at the BC Regional Office (BCRO) in January 2023, where turnout was unfortunately low due to the inclement weather and travel challenges.

Presentation to Think Tank

On behalf of the Committee, Chair Amber Leonard and Staff Advisor Steven Beasley facilitated a presentation to at the 2022 Think Tank on the contents, recent updates, and themes of the CUPE National Environmental Policy. The presentation fulfilled a goal of the previous year and helped grow understanding among the CUPE BC leadership about the need for the union to take a bigger role in fighting climate change.

Right to Operate a Clean Energy Vehicle

A successful resolution was served to the 2022 Convention that would see CUPE BC promote the idea that workers should have the right to operate clean energy vehicles and equipment, and to pressure governments to adopt this principle with funding for employer fleet conversions. This issue was incorporated into CUPE BC's Budget 2023 consultation strategy and formed part of the 2023 BC Budget submission. The Committee developed a proposal to create supporting materials on this issue, which are being prepared for Union of BC Municipalities meetings in 2023. Further, the Executive Board will serve a similar resolution to the National Union convention scheduled for October 2023. The 2023 Budget provided \$40 million for what it calls the *CleanBC Go Electric Commercial Vehicle Pilot Program*, which corresponds to this project of the Committee and provides strong support for continued advocacy on this topic.

Just Transition for Workers

Not as much work was undertaken in support of this successful committee resolution than the above noted on clean energy vehicles and equipment. For much of the past year, the federal government has signaled pending action on this topic, which would then change the political landscape on this issue. With legislation expected in early 2023, the Government of Canada released its Sustainable Jobs Plan, which asserts that the conversion to clean energy will be a net producer of jobs. This federal work on a just transition, plus the substantial funding for clean energy development in the 2023 federal budget, will prompt the Committee to consider the changing political landscape on this issue prior to further work in British Columbia. Just transition remains a central element of CUPE's National Environmental Policy, and work at the federal level continues to support the positive changes described herein and to pressure further action from the federal government.

BC Federation of Labour (BCFED) Climate Justice and Jobs Committee

The [BCFED Climate Justice and Jobs Standing Committee](#) has now been elevated from a working group to a standing committee, and a BCFED Clean Transportation roundtable has been founded. This exciting work with government, union partners and other key voices provides an important venue for labour to unite behind an expanded role in the climate change fight. CUPE BC's representatives at this table include the Committee Chair, who connects the CUPE BC work to provincial-scale work on environment and climate justice issues.

2023 Environment & Climate Justice Award

This year's award has been refreshed with more of a diverse focus that includes district councils, locals, and members who have:

- demonstrated, through concrete actions, a deep commitment for the environment and climate justice as a civil rights movement;
- undertaken an initiative or innovation to provide a sustainable impact on the environment to support those in our communities who are most vulnerable to climate change;
- demonstrated activism through political advocacy and policy change; or
- contributed to their community by building a stronger environmental movement.

The 2023 award winner will receive a certificate, and CUPE BC will make a \$1,000 donation to an environmental organization of their choice. Congratulations to the winner, Michael Pollard, and thank you for all that you do for the environment and future generations.

Reusable Materials from CUPE BC

The Committee discussed ways to make CUPE BC's own operations more sustainable, and this conversation focused on merchandise and branded materials. Members felt that items like zero waste kits and other sustainable options could be featured more prominently among the Union's branded options, and that unsustainable/single-use items should be discontinued. It was also felt that steps could be taken to add sustainable production to the Union's procurement priorities (in addition to union-made, and other such values). To highlight such options, the Committee is providing re-usable straws as part of its materials on the Standing Committee table and encourages delegates to visit the table to pick one up.

ONGOING AND FUTURE WORK

Sustainable Public Transportation

The transportation sector is among the greatest sources of greenhouse gas emissions in British Columbia, and a significant portion of these emissions come from passenger vehicles. There is already a better alternative—one that is publicly run, affordable, and addresses social and economic inequities—and that is public transportation. For public transportation to realize its tremendous potential to address climate change, it requires greater government support.

CUPE BC has a strong relationship with this issue: CUPE members work in transit, and, in far greater numbers, CUPE members rely on transit for work and life. For CUPE BC, there is perhaps no better solutions-focused campaign on the climate crisis than one which advocates for improved public transportation in all parts of BC. Such a campaign addresses members' goals for climate justice, worker mobility, affordability, and a more fair and equitable society. As a public service that our members provide, CUPE BC has solid credibility on this issue and advocacy on transit makes the best use of our union's natural assets and abilities toward a critical solution to our climate crisis.

The Committee's 2022 resolution to Convention on public transportation did not make it to the floor, so members have served a revised version to Convention 2023 in the hopes that a campaign on this topic will be a member priority in 2023.

Focus on Climate Justice

The effects of climate change will not be borne equally and are likely to have a greater negative impact on equity deserving groups, particularly those from low-income communities, regions and countries. Consequently, an increasing focus within the environmental movement, one reflected in [CUPE's National Environmental Policy](#), is on the concept of climate justice. The United Nations summarizes climate justice as looking at the climate crisis through a human rights lens, including a focus on civil rights, with the people and communities most vulnerable to climate impacts at its heart. Increasingly, the Committee's own deliberations have reflected this principle, promoting members to propose a corresponding change to the Committee's name as a means to entrench this important principle.

CONCLUSION

Committee members stand with the many CUPE members, British Columbians, Canadians, and global citizens around the work calling for urgent climate action. As CUPE's National Environmental Policy clearly articulates, the time for action is now.

To be effective, CUPE BC's action on climate change must harness the Union's immense potential as an agent of change, directing its full capacity towards acting in a unified manner. This means working in solidarity through the labour movement, connecting with our communities, and evolving our internal culture to make climate change, climate justice and environment issues a higher priority. The work of the Committee in the past term has followed this model, working to elevate our Union's

commitment to this work, developing practical actions, projects, and campaigns to engage members in making a difference in the greatest challenge facing our generation.

The Committee would like to thank the staff at the CUPE BC office who assisted us in navigating with grace and kindness through the operations of our Committee. Without them, this report would not be possible.

Respectfully submitted:

Amber Leonard, Chair
David Hollingworth, Co-Chair
Chloe Martin-Cabanne, Recording Secretary
Aaron Brandon
Ken Evans
Kevin McPhail
Carol Nordby
Harmony Raine
Patrick Telford
Joleen Turgeon
Bernice Way
David Wieler
Steven Beasley, Staff Advisor & Comms Rep
Maja Bohinc, Administrative Assistant

March 2023



INDIGENOUS COMMITTEE

The CUPE BC Indigenous Committee would like to acknowledge and express gratitude to Elder Sam George, who is Səlíl̓wətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) and on whose unceded territory many CUPE BC and CUPE National events occur, along with Sk̓wxwú7mesh (Squamish) and xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) Nations. He continues to provide wisdom, grounding, and voice to the good work that we strive to do. We also have fifteen Indigenous workers and two Indigenous national staff reps representing twelve First Nations territories in what is now called British Columbia. Whether we, as First Nations, Inuit, or Métis people, are on our home-based territories or are visitors from other parts of Turtle Island, we respectfully recognize the Elders, Ancestors, culture, and contributions of the Nations who have stewarded these lands since time immemorial.

It is important to note that this report is a collective of experiences with members contributing using their own words. This year has been incredible with several new members on our Committee. We currently form the largest committee within CUPE BC, representing many diverse cultures and traditions across Turtle Island. With diversity come varying perspectives, and members appreciate the variety of holistic teachings, which are especially important to those not raised in their homelands or with their language and culture.

Activity Report

Our work on the Indigenous Committee often raises emotional reactions because the work is tied to our identity, loss of identity, and lived experience. We cannot undo being Indigenous nor detach when we work to lift up Indigenous CUPE members and pave a path for future generations of Indigenous workers. As a result, this year, our Committee focused on taking space and being heard. We are not startled by the distractions and limitations of the colonial systems, but we are affected by them; for example, holding a meeting on National Aboriginal Veteran's Day, instead of attending the memorial service of our relatives was unsettling. This required our Committee to pivot and focus on healing to restore our members as whole before the work could continue. We are in the process of creating an Indigenous Calendar of Important Dates to prevent booking meetings on relevant days and alert CUPE at all levels to consider creating awareness statements, campaigns, articles, or information blasts.

Most of our action items pertain to representation and seeing ourselves on Local Executives, taking up space in the Public Employee, being featured in the childcare videos, and creating educational resources. One committee member was featured in

the childcare campaign video series, Larissa's Childcare Story (CUPE BC Facebook page), where she spoke of the barriers to accessing childcare in rural communities and the inclusion of Indigenous culture and language in schools. Living on her Secwépemc'ulucw traditional territory, she was honoured to amplify the voices of Indigenous parents and believes that creating space for language and cultural safety in childcare is vital to the continued work of decolonizing and indigenizing school systems, beginning at the daycare level and extending into school age.

Our Committee was featured on the front cover of the [Public Employee Spring 2022 issue](#), presenting our ribbon skirt art installation, which will again be part of the 2023 Convention. We also contributed two articles to the [Public Employee Special Labour Day Edition](#) about the Kairos Blanket Exercise and the Kamloops 215, One Year Later, The Importance of Bearing Witness.

As we have been working to strengthen the voices on our Committee, so we can speak our truths, we have noticed that the regularly allotted time for committee meetings is insufficient for us to accomplish our goals to build up our profile in the CUPE BC landscape. For our Committee, advancing truth before reconciliation, decolonizing and indigenizing takes time and must be done with great care and attention to detail, in a consensus style, with all voices contributing.

The Committee has had three formal meetings since the last CUPE BC Convention, including the One Big Committee Meeting in the fall of 2022, another in the winter, November 2022, and our final meeting in January 2023.

Most of our work over the past year focused on Resolution 65, which is to produce an educational video addressing the need for increased awareness and protocols for Indigenous Cultural Safety in union spaces. Culturally safer organizations are committed to the ongoing learning of colonial history, deconstructing power imbalances, and developing anti-racism standards and strategies. Over the next term, we look forward to actioning the National Anti-Racism Strategy as it relates to Indigenous workers and fulfilling the goal of creating the Indigenous cultural safety video, which we hope is one step in raising awareness about safety issues and reducing harm that holistically affects Indigenous workers. Our collective experiences are an opportunity for CUPE BC to move forward in supporting reconciliation by providing safe spaces for Indigenous workers and committing to ensuring our inclusion in all aspects that concern us as CUPE members and as Indigenous peoples. We also commit to working in partnership with CUPE BC to create an orange shirt design in time for Truth and Reconciliation Day, September 30, 2023.

During the 2022 Convention, we proudly unveiled the booklet “[How to Include an Indigenous Workers Position on Local Executives – A Guide](#)” to increase Indigenous workers’ representation in leadership roles (Resolution 52, Convention 2021). As a result of the work completed to create this guide, Local 4951, which contains five units in Northern BC, successfully created a 2nd Vice President - Indigenous position, which falls in line under the President, along with the current 2nd Vice President. Creating space at the table for an Indigenous leader is one aspect of representation, and the next step is to ensure the Executive is aware and trained in Indigenous cultural safety, so that Indigenous leaders emerge into welcoming, informed circles. Ideally, over the next two-year term, the CUPE BC Executive and Local Executives will be trained in cultural safety and continue the work to create space for Indigenous workers at all tables and in all circles.

In other good news, two members of our Committee stepped out of their comfort zone and presented the Guide at the Annual General Meeting of the North Area District Council. The members felt empowered by taking up space, having a voice in CUPE and educating on topics that our Committee worked on. They spoke from their hearts on the importance of Indigenous representation on union Locals and shared the step-by-step process from the Guide. They received a standing ovation, and some attendees took pictures of the Guide to take back to their Locals. Very inspiring!

Bargaining for Indigenous members to experience dignity and equality in the workplace was also part of the work of Committee members in their home Locals. Some Locals bargained for language on territorial acknowledgments, representative workforce, training for Indigenous workers, and leaves for bereavement, cultural days and observances, which are important dates that are not official holidays, such as National Indigenous Peoples Day. Several members are on their bargaining committees and successfully bargained for paid cultural days; as Indigenous people have followed the colonial calendar for hundreds of years, this recognition is another step toward reconciliation.

2022 Events Members Attended or Acknowledged

- Elder Sam, along with CUPE BC President Karen Ranalletta and Secretary-Treasurer Trevor Davies, laid a wreath at the National Aboriginal Veterans Day ceremony.
- Committee members participated in or planned events and marches to honour and remember the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-Spirit People (MMIW2S) on February 14, the Women’s Memorial March (October 4 and May 5), the National Day of Awareness and Action on the MMIWG2S

either in their communities, personally or at Canadian Labour Congress Winter School.

- National Indigenous People's Day (June 21)
- Truth and Reconciliation Day / Orange Shirt Day (September 30, 2022)
- Moosehide Campaign

Resolutions to Convention

1. Create a campaign advocating that June 21, National Indigenous People's Day, be recognized as a statutory holiday in British Columbia.
2. Host and cover the costs of a one-day virtual workshop about Indigenous cultural safety in alignment with Safe Union Spaces and further education toward Truth and Reconciliation.
3. Serve a resolution to CUPE 2023 National Convention seeking the creation of educational resources to assist Locals in improving or developing territorial acknowledgments with region-specific information.

Resources

CUPE BC Indigenous Committee & Canadian Union of Public Employees

How to Include an Indigenous Workers Position on Local Executives – A Guide.

<https://1123.cupe.ca/files/2022/05/how-to-include-an-indigenous-workers-position-on-local-executives.pdf>

CUPE British Columbia & Canadian Union of Public Employees

Public Employee: Bearing Witness Together (Spring 2022)

<https://www.cupe.bc.ca/2022/05/16/public-employee-spring-2022/>

Saje Ricci, S. & CUPE BC Indigenous Committee

A Truly Holistic Experience in Unlearning Racism, Colonialism

Public Employee Summer 2022

https://issuu.com/cupebc/docs/public_employee_-_summer_2022

CUPE Local 3500 Executive & CUPE BC Indigenous Committee

Kamloops 215, One Year Later: The Importance of Bearing Witness

Public Employee Summer 2022

https://issuu.com/cupebc/docs/public_employee_-_summer_2022

Acknowledgements

The Committee would like to thank the CUPE BC Executive and officers, CUPE BC staff, and each other for their time and effort in working toward stronger, safer, and more progressive union spaces on the pathway toward truth and reconciliation. Finally, we would like to thank the land-based Nations, on whose unceded, traditional territories we conduct our union business.

Respectfully submitted:

Sam George, Elder
Shelley Saje Ricci, Chair
Shawn Bortolon
Larissa Deneault
Johnathan Dyer
Lori Gagnon
Simone Gauthier
Luke George
Karen Lynn Green
Nora Hooper

Michael Lupo
Debra Merrier
Kerra P. Michel
Stuart Myers
Tracy Telford
Taily Wills
Deea Bailey, Staff Advisor
Carissa Taylor, Staff Advisor
Darci Schmid, Administrative Assistant

March 2023



INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE

The CUPE BC International Solidarity Committee (ISC) has been working together since November 2021. There have been a lot of changes and challenges, and the Committee continues to focus on issues of global justice, community, CoDevelopment (CoDev) Canada, and building relationships with current partners.

Action Plan

- Maintain relationships with current partners (Indigenous Councils with TRC, Trade Unions)
- Expand partnerships with other international human rights organizations
- Promote international solidarity education amongst CUPE members.
- Submit resolutions pertaining to Iran, Migrant Workers, and Palestine
- Build an International Solidarity Committee workshop on “How to Build International Solidary (OLS)” with CUPE BC (April 2023 – 2024 Term)

Ongoing Committee Work

The ISC recommends that the National Executive Board (NEB) lobby the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship to call on the Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) to expedite refugee claims by Iranian asylum-seekers.

Further goals:

- Engage with Iranian solidarity organization “[Free Them Now](#)”
- CUPE BC to enter a partnership with “Free Them Now”
- Support the [Migrant Workers Centre](#)
- Support ongoing participation in partnerships through CoDev Canada

Summary of Resolutions

At this year's Convention, the ISC has crafted resolutions calling on CUPE to:

- Lobby the federal government to immediately ban the practice of incarcerating children and adults seeking immigration and refugee status, or asylum, in Canada
- Support the struggle of the workers and people of Iran for freedom, the right to organize and strike, and for welfare, equality, justice, and dignity
- Lobby the BC government to work with their federal counterparts to expand labour mobility, permanent residency access, qualification recognition and credentialing, and work permit access for migrant workers, permanent residents, new Canadians, refugees and others new to Canada, and to advocate that the BC government increase protection for these workers to ensure their workplace and labour rights are upheld
- Amend the Policy Manual to add the following under the International Solidarity section, in the subsection related to Middle East-Palestine:

We support the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) campaign until Israel abides by international law and ends its illegal occupation of Palestinian land.

Reports from Collaborator Organizations

Please refer to the Appendix for a compilation of reports submitted by CUPE BC's partner organizations: Iranian human rights organization "Free Them Now"; CODEMUH (Honduran Women's Collective); MEC (Maria Elena Cuadra Movement of Employed and Unemployed Maquiladoras in Nicaragua); NOMADESC (Association for Research and Social Action in Colombia); SPTAPH (the Havana Province Division of the National Union of Public Administration Workers in Cuba).

Respectfully submitted:

Debra Merrier, Chair
Frank Lee, Co-Chair
Betsey Cadamia
Amandeep Cheema
Warren Leeder
Jas Parmar
Drew Parris
Lisset Peckham
Harmony Raine
Rocco Trigueros Chavez
Tammy Yazdanyar
Bryan Bickley, Staff Advisor
Steven Beasley, BCRO Comms Rep
Maja Bohinc, Administrative Assistant
Deanna Fasciani, CoDev Canada Executive Director

March 2023



K-12 COMMITTEE

Violence in the Workplace

Violence in the workplace is one of the biggest challenges facing the K-12 Sector. The CUPE BC K-12 Committee encourages locals to continue efforts to educate members on their rights and responsibilities with respect to reporting incidents of violence in the workplace, irrespective of whether an injury occurs. When members report all incidents, locals are better able to work with their employers and through Joint Health and Safety Committees to prevent future workplace violence, ensure appropriate and timely responses to incidents when they occur, and re-evaluate prevention practices in order to provide safer workplaces for all.

Educating members on their rights and responsibilities under WorkSafeBC legislation and regulations is a key action in addressing workplace violence, as is holding employers accountable. A recurrent theme we hear from locals is that members are often discouraged from reporting incidents of violent behaviour. We know that failure to report does nothing to improve worker safety or learning conditions for students.

The Committee also encourages locals to advocate for workers to be consulted in the development, implementation, and evaluation of individual safe work instructions, known as worker safety plans. WorkSafeBC requires employers to provide workers with time to review these plans, but it does not require employee input or consultation in their development. Workers are best positioned to provide feedback on the effectiveness of the safety plans meant to protect them, so the workers directly affected should be given the opportunity to contribute to the creation and revision of their respective plans. A key resource for K-12 locals for this work are the [K-12 Workplace Violence Prevention Tools](#) available on the BCPSEA website.

Recruitment and Retention

As is the case in many sectors, the K-12 system faces an ongoing struggle to recruit and retain workers. From trades workers to education assistants, custodians, and youth and child support workers, school districts across the province are struggling to keep positions filled. Unfilled postings result in increased workloads for existing workers, which affects the support provided to students and families they serve. The recent wage increases and labour market adjustments achieved through bargaining are a step in the right direction, but are insufficient to address the scale of worker shortages. Funding increases to expand training spaces for trades programs in public post-secondary institutions is one measure the BC government can take to effectively

address the shortage of trades workers. Addressing low wages in the K-12 system, not only for trades but for many classifications, is another key action that would ensure schools are able to recruit and retain workers.

Provincial Job Evaluation

Wages in the K-12 sector are inconsistent, not only across the province but within regions as well. A worker in one district may make less than someone in a neighbouring district doing the same or very similar work. A major project to address these disparities is the Provincial Job Evaluation Program, which is close to completing its next major milestone: Phase 3—Job Matching and Data Gathering.

The next steps are for the Support Staff Job Evaluation Steering Committee to finalize a Provincial Job Evaluation Plan and develop an implementation plan. Implementation will begin once all 60 school districts have completed the matching process.

Childcare

The K-12 Sector has participated in CUPE BC's campaign for public childcare, which seeks a universal model of before- and after-school care delivered through the K-12 system. Public schools have enormous potential to quickly create thousands of urgently needed before- and after-school care spaces. We see real potential for school districts to address recruitment and retention of education assistants (EAs) by staffing before- and after-care programs with those workers who wish to work additional hours on top of their regular part-time positions as EAs.

We urge members to support CUPE BC's Childcare Campaign by using the [action site](#) to send a letter of support to the BC government. We also encourage members to talk to their school districts and trustees about the importance of public, universal, and accessible childcare.

Education Assistant Credential Standardization

CUPE has advocated for many years to standardize EA credentials as provided by training institutions across the province. Classrooms in BC have become increasingly diverse and complex, and EAs play a vital role in ensuring a safe and inclusive learning environment for students. After CUPE published a [paper](#) in 2021 calling for the government to standardize credentials, CUPE and the Ministry of Education and Child Care formed a working group to assess the current state of EA training in BC. The working group confirmed that training for EAs varies widely from institution to institution,

and that there is inconsistency in qualification requirements established by school districts.

As a next step in this work, CUPE BC has called on the Ministry of Education and Child Care to carry out a broad consultation on standardizing EA credentialing to seek input from the various stakeholders in the sector. CUPE K-12 locals and activists will continue advocating for consistent and coherent training to ensure our members enter the public education system equipped with the skills they need to work safely and effectively.

Member Engagement

During K-12 bargaining, locals worked hard to engage members. Surveys and in-person meetings were organized to help understand members' bargaining priorities, bulletins and member check-ins were coordinated to communicate about the bargaining progress and provide updates, and education sessions and workshops were facilitated to provide strike training and other learning. These methods, plus the ongoing engagement of community allies, were just some of the ways locals ensured members participated in the bargaining process and were able to support their bargaining committees in reaching deals at the table.

While bargaining for 2022-2025 is now complete, we must continue this vital member engagement work to make sure we are ready for the next round. Highlighting the important work our members do to provide a safe, diverse, and accessible learning environment is one way we can build awareness of our members' work and generate support and solidarity among members and the broader community alike. Mapping our membership, talking to members about their priorities, and taking action together to address workplace issues make our membership stronger, ready to stand together for the next round of bargaining.

Bargaining

The 2019-2022 Provincial Framework Agreement (PFA) for the K-12 Sector saw historic gains for workers, with a 10.74% wage increase over the next three years, up to 2.25% in cost of living allowance increase, and a \$0.25 flat wage increase in the first year. Year 2 of the agreement will see the full wage protection triggered, and members will receive the full 6.75% wage increase starting July 1, 2023. This is the most substantial public sector wage increase in decades. The PFA also allocated significant funds for collective agreement improvements at local tables, and this is in addition to the provincial settlement. This additional funding meant that locals had the ability to make real and meaningful gains for their members on issues of local importance, from

increased hours for education assistants, to labour market adjustments supporting improved recruitment and retention. These successes at local bargaining tables should be credited to the strength and hard work of local bargaining committees, and their ability to work with members to identify needs, and then have those needs directly addressed.

The historic wage increases would not have been possible without the leadership provided by CUPE, both the BC Region and CUPE BC, and the K-12 Provincial Bargaining Committee. Equally, this settlement would not have been possible without the solidarity developed and expressed between HEU, BCGEU, HSA and the BCTF, which allowed the united voice of public sector workers to stand firm, demanding a wage increase that recognized the rising cost of living, and refusing to settle for anything less. The results at the bargaining table are a testament to what we can achieve together when we stand united in solidarity.

Resolutions

The K-12 Committee has submitted resolutions to address many of the issues we face in the K-12 Sector: to support members with information on the right to refuse unsafe work; to urge the BC government to develop strategies to improve safety in the workplace; to address challenges in trade worker recruitment and retention; and to lobby the provincial government to change the K-12 funding model to ensure we have a fully funded public education system with a fair funding model so that schools meet the needs of our communities.

Resources

BC Public School Employers' Association

OHS Resources & Tools - BC Public School Employers' Association

<https://bcpsea.bc.ca/sector-services/occupational-health-safety/resources-tools>

Canadian Union of Public Employees

Job Evaluation – CUPE K-12 BC

<https://bcschools.cupe.ca/category/job-evaluation/>

BC Public School Employers' Association

Job Evaluation Committee - BC Public School Employers' Association

<https://bcpsea.bc.ca/support-staff/collective-agreement-administration/job-evaluation-committee/>

Canadian Union of Public Employees
BC Families Need Affordable, Public Childcare for School-aged Kids
<https://www.publicchildcarenow.ca>

Canadian Union of Public Employees
Position Paper: Standard Credentials for Education Assistants
<https://bcschools.cupe.ca/files/2021/03/Position-Paper-Standard-Credentials.pdf>

Respectfully submitted:

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Teri Wishlow, Recording Secretary
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Tammy Carter
Jennie Copeland
Anita Early
Daun Frederickson Caralyn Hoffman
Shona Kelly
Jane Massy
Tammy Murphy
Andrew Schneider
Kirsten Daub, Staff Advisor
Greg Taylor, Communications
Maja Bohinc, Administrative Assistant

March 2023



LIBRARIES COMMITTEE

The CUPE BC Library Committee is a small but mighty committee. It is a multi-sector committee representing CUPE library workers in public libraries, K-12, colleges, and universities. The Committee met both virtually and in person this term to discuss issues facing library workers as our Province and the country struggled through the COVID-19 pandemic.

Library workers in all sectors delivered hundreds of thousands of service transactions to their patrons, continuing not only their online access to valuable programs and services but gradually going back to in person programs, and vital support to all no matter what their economic or social status. Libraries were able to pivot and adapt to the changing needs of their communities so they could face the challenges brought on by the pandemic, reinforcing their place as important community anchors and economic drivers. Even though they adapted and tailored their programs to meet changing times, they continued to maintain their core functions.

Promoting digital literacy that enables patrons to find and use information they need, with free internet services to all, is one of those core functions that filled an important gap for many. This was particularly vital to families facing economic challenges, many lacking the funds to access technologies such as computers, internet, tablets, or smartphones. The significant rise in the cost of living forced some families to make difficult decisions on where to focus their budget, reaching out to their local library for some of those basic services.

We cannot forget the role libraries play in teaching children to read, instilling a love of books at an early age, as well as the role they play in teaching them important social skills through storytime programs geared towards specific age groups. Nor can we forget the role libraries play in keeping children reading and learning during the summer months with fun, innovative activities such as the Summer Reading Club.

Libraries do not limit themselves to services for children; they are a gathering place for many, provide lifelong reading and information to adults and seniors, resume building and job searching skills, and are a welcoming space for new immigrants and refugees. Libraries' focus continues to be facilitating equitable access for all. It is one of the few institutions whose aim is to lower the barriers, offering a welcoming environment to all regardless of their economic status, ability, or cultural experience. Access to books, reading, information, journals, research materials and other resources is a basic right that libraries uphold.

Despite the value libraries in all sectors provide, funding continues to be an issue, a financial struggle that libraries have faced for decades. Recruitment and retention became a troubling trend for many libraries. High cost of living in BC, has made it harder to recruit and retain qualified workers for the wages that libraries are paying. This has had a significant impact on staff. Some libraries are unable to replace staff and work short staffed, hours are not replaced when staff leave or retire, more tasks and work are downloaded on existing staff, vacations are postponed or denied. This has a significant impact on mental health, with some library workers leaving or having to take stress leave.

Another issue faced by libraries and library workers is the increase in health and safety concerns. As our social infrastructure changed, libraries faced increasing pressure to provide not only a welcoming space for all, but to address the needs of our at-risk population. Library workers find themselves having to change and adapt, often foregoing their reference skills for skills needed by social workers. Library workers faced increases in incidents, ranging from verbal abuse to physical abuse. One of the consistent themes discussed during our meetings was how much libraries and library workers were underestimated by the public they serve. The committee felt that while libraries and library workers were recognized, the public failed to understand the range of skills and abilities needed to provide all the services the libraries offer.

The committee also found that the irreplaceable and unique service libraries provide to their communities is not fully recognized by their communities and the politicians. The committee discussed the need for a public awareness campaign, a Public Employee contribution for Library month October 2023 focusing on “*Libraries Are More Than You Think*” and addressing how library work has changed toward a focus on engagement and community support. The committee also recommended a province-wide survey for all locals with library workers to gather data related to workplace violence.

Truth and Reconciliation

The Committee discussed ways they could honour and take action toward Truth and Reconciliation. The Committee resolved to make Truth and Reconciliation part of their regular agenda by taking the time to discuss both one of the Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, and one of the articles in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People at every meeting. They also requested that CUPE BC send a digital copy of the Indigenous Reading List Rack Cards they created for the 2022 Convention to all locals with library workers in their local, along with a letter encouraging locals to engage with employers/library boards to have the rack cards at their locations available for staff and public.

Summer Reading Club

CUPE BC continued to sponsor the BC Summer Reading Club (SRC). Children and adults enjoyed the variety of fun, innovative programs provided by library workers across the province. Library workers were able to go back to providing this valuable program in person, welcoming children ages 5 to 12 but also providing fun activities for those under 5.

The [BC Summer Reading Club](#) (SRC) is BC's largest literacy program for children and families, reaching over 200 communities across our province. This fun interactive program offers free activities to thousands of children in our province, while at the same time encouraging their love of reading and helping participants retain the reading and language skills they acquired during the school year.

As stated by the BC Library Association (BCLA), the theme for the 2022 SRC was *All Together Now!*. Each year, the BCLA works with an artist to provide illustrations. For 2022, BCLA worked with Vancouver-based artist and illustrator Elaine Chen, who perfectly captured the theme's spirit in her beautiful artwork. Her artwork and characters illustrated the different ways children can experience connections in this world. The Summer Reading Club runs from July to August and over 163,000 children in our province participated in the program and were proud to receive their SRC medals with the CUPE BC Logo upon completion of their reading log. This program not only provides fun, free activities that promote literacy, but it also celebrates and highlights the great work our members do in delivering these services. It is a great way to encourage parents and CUPE members to visit their local libraries. It also connects members from all sectors to reading and literacy.

BC Library Association (BCLA)

Our relationship with the BCLA continues to grow. Our participation in their annual conference and CUPE BC's sponsorship is a valuable partnership, building understanding and increased positive space for unionized members at the conference. It ensures that our voices, challenges, and ideas are heard. The 2023 conference will be held at the Sheraton Vancouver Airport Hotel from April 12 - 14. We encourage all locals with library workers to join BCLA and send delegates to the conference.

We were very pleased that our submission to the 2023 BCLA conference was accepted. The theme of the conference "*Windows, Mirrors and Sliding Glass Doors*" fits in with the ongoing discussion the committee had around the need to improve diversity, equity, and

inclusion in libraries. This theme of insight, reflections and transitions speaks to the role of libraries and library workers: the work we are striving to do in our communities, the work we are doing in CUPE BC and within ourselves.

The committee discussed the growing need to ensure that library workers in all sectors are treated fairly and equitably regardless of race, ability, sexual orientation, or gender identity. What libraries strive to provide for their community should also be reflected in their relationship with their staff. Our session “*Libraries: windows to their community*” will explore the benefits of hiring a workforce that reflects the diversity of their individual communities. Can libraries truly serve their community and their patrons without having that diversity amongst their staff? A library that embraces the benefits and the challenge of hiring a diverse workforce leads to a library that is successful and truly integrated and rooted in their community. A diverse, knowledgeable workforce can help enhance and grow the library collection, enhance, and grow library programs, and be truly welcoming to all populations in their community.

Our presenters will share some of their stories, successes, challenges and hope for the future. The committee will also be participating in the trade show with an information booth and will be sending two members of the committee to the conference. Some libraries are already doing the work and leading the way in making spaces more inclusive and equitable. We would like to highlight Xwi7xwa Library at the University of British Columbia (UBC). The Xwi7xwa Library is the only Indigenous-focused academic library in Canada. As stated on its website:

“Xwi7xwa Library is a centre for academic and community Indigenous scholarship. Its collections and services reflect Aboriginal approaches to teaching, learning and research. Everyone is welcome to visit the Xwe7xwa Library”.

We encourage all CUPE members to take the time, if they are able, to visit this amazing library and explore their website (<https://xwi7xwa.library.ubc.ca/>).

Organized And Unorganized Libraries

Our organizing team is doing amazing work but there are still libraries in our Province that are unorganized. The Committee discussed two issues:

1. Compiling a current list of CUPE locals with library workers so that we can enhance communication with all library workers.
2. Compiling a list of unorganized libraries.

The Committee would like to thank our staff advisors Carmen Sullivan and Tracy Mathieson for their invaluable help and support.

Respectfully submitted:

Rose Jurkić, Chair
Denise Parks, Co-Chair
Laurie Angus
Michelle Bennett
Erynne Grant
Wendy Jewell
Katy Livingston

Katherine Percival
Kathryn Davies, Staff Advisor
Tracey Mathieson, Staff Advisor
Carmen Sullivan, Staff Advisor
Greg Taylor, Communications Rep
Darci Schmid, Administrative Assistant

April 2023



MUNICIPAL COMMITTEE

The CUPE BC Municipal Committee worked on a streamlined Committee Action Plan (CAP) over the course of this last term. The issues were as diverse as the locals that make up the sector. In addition to doing focused work on particular issues, the Committee finds great value in the opportunities to come together in our meetings to discuss matters that our locals struggle with and to share solutions. This is at the heart of our resolution to Convention this year: finding ways for municipal locals to come together.

The first item on our CAP has been finding ways for municipal workers to continually engage with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Call to Action #57. We have shared learning and learning opportunities with each other at our meetings as well as written and promoted Resolution 68 from 2021, targeting our employers to do the work. We can work on taking leadership on this in our union, as well as pushing our employers and governments to do the same.

We also wanted to draw attention to the local government elections that were scheduled for October 15, 2022. This is where we literally elect our bosses in the municipal, library & K-12 sectors. We were hoping to contribute to the online messaging about good public services but were not able to put that into action. Still, the labour movement across the province did a fantastic job of interviewing, endorsing, and electing a record number of approved candidates, and we all had a hand in that.

Committee members started investigating the public health and safety and anti-privatization aspects of water and wastewater work that is done by municipal workers. This may be work that the next Committee can continue. There would be great value in making the Environmental Operators Certification Program (EOCP) apply to every aspect of these infrastructures, from construction through maintenance.

We also investigated how the leadership of municipal locals can be better supported when dealing with job evaluation issues in their collective agreements. We are grateful that Kari Scott-Whyte took the time to explain the world of CUPE job evaluation to us, though members were disappointed to hear there is no easy solution.

The Committee dealt with some member turnover this term, like most committees, and had members miss some meetings due to being in bargaining. Despite that, we had some very good conversations that included great contributions from Steven Beasley and Kathryn Davies about how the nature of the municipal sector is quite different from other CUPE sectors. These conversations led to our resolution on building more and

better connections between municipal locals in BC. We hope you support our resolution and that the next CUPE BC Municipal Committee will be inspired to do the work.

Respectfully submitted:

Sarah Bjorknas, Chair
Ravneet Dhillon, Co-Chair
Brian Warman, Recording Secretary
Scott Bruce
Ryan Doman
Lorena Harrison
Kim Jackson Dan MacBeth
Alexander Rebel, Young Worker Appointee
Darlene Worthylake
Rob Limongelli, Staff Advisor
Kathryn Davies, Communications
Morgan McCrystal, Administrative Assistant

March 2023



OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE

The appointed CUPE BC Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) Committee met via Zoom on January 20, 2022, in person in October and November 2022, and on January 16, 2023. We have strategized and focused on workplace safety for members dealing with COVID-19, violence in the workplace, Psychological Health and Safety, and other issues related to improving OH&S for all members.

COVID-19 issues continue to be a part of all CUPE members' lives across British Columbia. We are still facing many safety obstacles related to the pandemic. Although safety restrictions have been lifted, safety in the workplace related to communicable diseases continues to impact our members and all workers in BC.

Our Committee has continued to be a resource that informs, educates, and raises awareness for all CUPE members, especially when it comes to the Right to Refuse Unsafe Work. We continue to stay on top of new legislation, to advocate on behalf of workers in BC, and to be a strong voice for all members when new regulations and policy changes come into effect.

We continue to advocate on behalf of our members and apply pressure to WorkSafe BC and our Provincial Government to:

- ensure the continued support of injured workers in BC; and
- change the WorkSafe Act and legislation that will foster hazard prevention and reduce the number of workers being injured or killed as a result of a workplace incident.

We continue to watch and ensure that there is a continued commitment to improve the working conditions for CUPE BC members and all workers in BC.

Establishing a safe working environment at our worksites through a Psychological Health and Safety plan continues to be a focus for our Committee. We will continue to advocate and lobby WorkSafe BC and our Provincial Government for legislation to focus on better, safer working environments and conditions. We need Psychological Health and Safety training and education for our members to deal with their life issues, especially from the COVID-19 pandemic.

We will also continue advocating for resources and effective policies to protect our members from workplace violence. There should not be any acceptable level of violence for any workers in BC for any reason.

For information and resources on Occupational Health and Safety in BC, please visit the CUPE BC website at <https://www.cupe.bc.ca>.

Respectfully submitted:

Henry Lee, Co-Chair
Martha Higgins, Recording Secretary
Amandeep Cheema
Nicole (Nikki) Cooke
Cody Dillabough
Corey Froese
Allan Henricks
Hailey Fielden, Young Worker Shadow
Lisa Medynski
Tony Rebelo
Amanda Thielen
Charlene Turnbull
Kelly-Lynn Ware
Tony Rebelo, Staff Advisor
Kathryn Davies, Communications
Maja Bohinc, Administrative Assistant

March 2023



PENSION COMMITTEE

The members of the CUPE BC Pensions Committee are pleased to offer the following report on our work for the 2023 Convention.

The Committee continued to work on the goals and objectives of the past Committee. We continued to work on highlighting the fundamental value of pensions to workers, defending and improving existing pension plans, and improving access to defined benefit pension plans for all workers. Most Canadian workers do not have a pension at work, and CUPE must continue to be a leader for better pensions for all workers. We all need better public pensions, and CUPE has an important role to play in this issue.

CUPE BC members belong to many different pension plans. The Pension Committee encourages all members to keep updated on their plan. Having a solid understanding of pension plans will help us advocate for our members. These are the pension plans that our members belong to:

Municipal Pension Plan	College Pension Plan
Public Service Pension Plan	United Way Lower Mainland
Simon Fraser University	University of Victoria
Pacific Blue Cross	University of Northern BC
UBC Hourly Plan	CUPE 873 Paramedics
UBC Staff Plan	Southern Rail
The Multi-Sector Pension Plan	

The Committee is actively working on Pension education opportunities for all CUPE members to attend. Pensions are more than just retirement: it is important for our members to understand how they work and why they are important. The Committee encourages locals to look for these opportunities to send members to learn about pensions.

The Committee continued its work on supporting the Truth & Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action. A subcommittee continued their work on a report titled *"Advancing Reconciliation Through Investments"*, which provides an overview of investment opportunities available to Pension Fund Investors. We continue to work on this report and look forward to seeing its progress. We are working with partners to highlight the work done by pension plans on this work. Keep a watch out for these highlights in upcoming additions of the Public Employee.

Respectfully submitted:

Sara Manchester, Chair
Jeff Culhane, Co-Chair
Roberta Ciaraulo, Recording Secretary
Michelle Bennett
Justine Blanco
Dave Chiddle
Tracey Dahlin
Navin Jain
Ireneusz (Eric) Jaworski
Dave Leary
Kevin McPhail
Cindy Ozouf
Manuel Tunchez
Lindy Pinson, Young Worker Shadow
Karl Fultz, Retired member
Gary Yee, Staff Advisor
Steven Beasley, Communications
Maja Bohinc, Administrative Assistant

March 2023



PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES COMMITTEE

Oh, what a year this has been for our Committee. With Pat Shade retiring and new ideas from our members, we have been very busy. We continue with our “*Not All Disabilities Are Visible*” campaign that came out of a resolution at the 2022 Convention, and we continue liaising with the CUPE BC Transportation Committee to get Transit to reinforce disability-accessible seating on all forms of transit. We are also liaising with the CUPE BC Skilled Trades Committee to determine supports for people with disabilities that are interested in working in skilled trades, or people who are already working in skilled trades and have become disabled.

We have rack cards stating our campaign available at our *Persons with Disabilities* table, along with buttons and thick pens (able to grip with restricted hand ability). Please wear and use these items as much as possible to spread the word about invisible disabilities.

We will be hosting a Persons with Disabilities and Allies Caucus at the 2023 Convention along with a separate caucus to elect a new Diversity Vice-President Persons with Disabilities and Alternate Vice-President Persons with Disabilities.

With Pat retiring, we will lose a strong (and loud!!) voice in the disability community. He promises to stay in touch and will continue his advocacy work long into the future. Laurie Whyte has been doing a great job of learning to take on that loud voice for disability rights.

At our Persons with Disabilities and Allies Caucus, we will be discussing disability/accessibility/inclusion issues (we want to hear from you about what issues are important to you), encouraging and recruiting committee members for the next term (explaining the application process), as well as discussing issues for the new Committee to follow up on. All are welcome to attend this caucus.

The Election Caucus is for Persons with Disabilities (no allies, unfortunately) to elect the Diversity Vice-President Persons with Disabilities and Alternate Diversity Vice-President Persons with Disabilities. We hope to see all delegates with visible or invisible disabilities at the caucus.

On a personal note, I would like to thank all the members that have served with me on the Persons with Disabilities Committee. A huge thank you to my co-chair Laurie Whyte for all her hard work, the invaluable Darci Schmid for keeping me in line and making sure I got stuff done!!! Karen Ranalletta and Trevor Davies for their support of the

Committee and always making time to drop into our meetings with suggestions and words of encouragement. To the CUPE BC Executive, it has been an honour to serve with all of you and I hope you all continue the work of our provincial union.

Fight the good fight and remember “No one stands alone in CUPE” and “Not All Disabilities Are Visible”.

Respectfully Submitted:

Pat Shade, Chair, DVP Persons With Disabilities
Laurie Whyte, Co-Chair, ADVP Persons With Disabilities
Monica Brady, Recording Secretary
Yvonne Desabrais
Allan Henricks
Ellen Monteith
Harmony Raine
Azucena Rudland
Amber Wynn
Brittany Gibbons, Young Worker Shadow Appointee
Sarah Cibart, Staff Advisor
Dan Gawthrop, Communications Representative
Darci Schmid, Administrative Assistant

Respectfully submitted:

March 2023



PINK TRIANGLE COMMITTEE

CUPE BC continues to support members who identify as two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, and beyond. The Pink Triangle Committee works for all CUPE members through lobbying on issues such as gender identity and gender expression, as well as standing up to individuals or groups who spout hatred towards 2SLGBTQIA+ persons. We look forward to the day when true inclusion, understanding, and acceptance in our communities all around the globe is reached.

Our Committee met in person on two occasions since our last report in April 2022. The first was at the One Big Committee Meeting where Adrienne Smith, of Adrienne Smith Law, provided us with a workshop on Human Rights law focusing on gender identity and gender expression rights. At our February 3, 2023 meeting, we worked on our Action Plan and resolutions to the 2023 CUPE BC Convention.

In May, our Alternate Diversity Vice-President, Hailey Fielden, represented CUPE Young Workers at the International Lesbian Gay Association Conference in Long Beach, California. She sat on a conference panel and was able to share not only her story and experiences, but also the struggles and success of young queer workers.

With the easing of COVID-19 restrictions, events such as Pride Parades, Pride picnics and community events, Dyke & Trans Marches were held again in person. CUPE and other labour organizations found themselves facing roadblocks in participating around the province. Pride Societies and their Boards of Directors have labelled labour unions as political parties and tried to restrict our involvement in events. We are working closely with the BC Federation of Labour to make sure that the labour movement is present at these events, and that 2SLGBTQIA+ community members see their union involved and proud. If your local is interested in getting involved in your local Pride event, the CUPE BC Pink Triangle Committee is here to support you!

Libraries and library workers have been subject to anti-2SLGBTQIA+ hate and threats for hosting Drag Queen Story Time across the province. No one should be harassed, threatened, or subjected to violence because of their sexual orientation, gender expression, or gender identity. CUPE has an obligation to promote the values of equity, safety, and anti-oppression in our workplaces and communities. Should you need support for an event in your community, please reach out so we can organize the labour unions in your area to help.

To educate all CUPE members, we worked on de-mystifying the acronyms associated with Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation by creating a [2SLGBTQIA+ glossary](#), which was sent to locals and district councils and linked on our [CUPE BC Pink Triangle webpage](#) along with other pertinent resources.

In an attempt to reach and support our 2SLGBTQIA+ members, we have a [Pink Triangle Facebook page](#), where members can share valuable news regarding the 2SLGBTQIA+ community as well as any upcoming events. We encourage you to share this information with your members.

Lastly, we are looking for leaders to create safe workspaces, promote gender-neutral language, support gender affirming processes, develop a culture of inclusion, and keep discrimination out of our workplaces. To accomplish this, we encouraged locals and district councils to transition from the term “Brothers/Sisters” and use more gender inclusive terms like “friends, folks, or fellow workers.” Another step locals and district councils can take is to create a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Representative position on their Executive or contact person within their membership to support not only members who identify as 2SLGBTQIA+, but also those who identify as Indigenous, racialized, and persons with disabilities.

Respectfully submitted:

Joyce Griffiths, Chair
Hailey Fielden, Co-Chair
Dalton Owen
Leanne Yearley
Page DeWolfe
Rocco Trigueros Chavez

Shamus Halvorsen
Diane Allen, Staff Advisor
Sarah Cibart, Staff Advisor
Dan Gawthrop, Communications Rep.
Darci Schmid, Administrative Assistant

March 2023



INTRODUCTION

Why Political Action Matters

Much of what a union achieves for its members happens in bargaining; however, some victories we seek for our members and workers everywhere cannot be won at the table. Expansion of public services and healthcare, improvements to the Labour Code and WorkSafeBC regulations, expansion of childcare, more funding for public transit, and measures to address the rising cost of living are just some of the goals we have that locals cannot negotiate with their respective employer.

Political action is the tool we use to win broad policy change, and to gain for members those things which no employer can grant. Political action is about building a better world for working people today and for future generations. Importantly for CUPE, as a union where most members work directly or indirectly for governments, political action is also about ensuring those who oversee our workplaces and direct management are progressive, support working people, and value the unions that represent them.

Electing Decision-Makers and Holding Them Accountable

Government decisions and actions, both good and bad, impact the lives of CUPE members every day. Our workplaces, communities, and even our families are shaped by the choices made by elected governments, and by those we elect to serve in public office.

Our ability to shape the world around us, to set a progressive direction for our communities, province, and countries, and to win public policy victories for members, is directly related to our ability to mobilize our power in relation to government decision-making. Our primary venues for this mobilization are provincial, local, and federal elections where our work focuses on ensuring every eligible CUPE member is voting for the progressive choice in their community.

We also exercise our power by holding elected leaders accountable as they govern, ensuring our voices are heard when decisions are made that impact the interests of working people, when promises are broken, or when emerging issues demand quick action.

Engaging and Mobilizing Members

With over 100,000 CUPE members across BC, we have a critical mass of voters who can be mobilized to effect political change. The margin of victory and loss in many elections, especially for local government, is often fewer than people think. Mobilizing CUPE members to vote in our communities can make the ultimate difference between elected anti-union, far right extremists who want to contract out our work, or electing a slate of progressive voices who will invest in public services, public workers, and whose decisions will build a better future for working families.

The role of the Political Action Committee is to maximize member engagement and mobilization in elections and other political campaigns so we can use our power to lead progressive change.

ROLE OF THE COMMITTEE

Purpose of the Political Action Committee

The Committee provides members with information about political choices and encourages them to participate in the political process. We work with the Executive Board and Strong Communities Working Group to consistently expand the number of CUPE members who are politically active and leading change in their communities.

Committee members support ongoing campaign work, and advise on regular improvements to campaign tactics, resources, and tools. The Committee also provides advice on emerging political issues, and directly brings the voice of CUPE members to decision-makers at all levels.

Building Capacity in Activists

A central objective of the Committee is to build CUPE BC's political capacity as represented by the number of members engaged in political action, and the level of engagement achieved. Providing avenues for members to get involved in simple and introductory political actions is equally important to providing ways for activists to increase their skills and knowledge and work their way up slowly to a point where they feel comfortable running a campaign or running for office themselves. Developing these steps of engagement is a key priority of the Political Action Committee.

Building Campaign Capacity

Equally important to the activists who undertake political action are the tools and resources they need to be successful and win. The Political Action Committee is therefore equally focused on building the infrastructure and systems necessary to support activists, engage members, reach voters and build strong, winning campaigns.

2022/23 POLITICAL ACTION HIGHLIGHTS

The past year has been a very active one for CUPE BC political action, and a full reporting of this work can be found in the Executive Board report. Below are some highlights that involved member coordination and Committee support.

2023 BC Budget Consultations

The provincial budget consultation process occurred much earlier for the 2023 Budget, with hearings and submission deadlines in the early summer. With the support of the Strong Communities Working Group, a very robust engagement was conducted in the budget consultation process that saw more than a dozen presentations from CUPE members in communities across the province. The process, which included a fulsome submission by CUPE BC, saw CUPE members advocate on emerging issues identified only weeks before at the 2022 Convention, and progressive proposals that have long anchored CUPE BC budget engagement.

2022 Local Government Elections

The local community elections were a major undertaking in 2022. Through a member-to-member engagement campaign, 282 candidates for mayor, councilor, school trustee, park board commissioner, and regional district director were recommended to members. Two-thirds of recommended candidates were successful, with 187 labour-recommended candidates elected.

Campaign work on the local government election would not have been possible without member engagement. The campaign saw Member Mobilizers participate in 276 shifts of 3 hours each of calling for a total of 828 hours of member contact to 23,967 unique phone numbers in priority jurisdictions. Live connections with at least 4,522 members and others received direct voicemails, texts and/or emails. Other actions included door knocking, worksite visits (including municipal hall offices, works yards, and school staff lunchrooms) with voter card distribution, and Zoom forums with candidates for members. This direct engagement was supported by a direct mailing to all members, a

website to help members find the endorsed candidates for their community, and a non-partisan get-out-the-vote campaign conducted online.

Childcare Campaign and 2022 Lobby Week

A major initiative of the past year was the province-wide campaign for public, universal childcare for school-aged kids. This campaign, cost shared with the National Union, is one of the largest campaigns in CUPE BC's history, and last year included online and radio advertising, member videos, a digital engagement site, and a government relations engagement strategy.

The communications component of the campaign had a far reach into communities across the province, with over 5.6 million digital impressions, over 12,000 radio spots, nearly 43,000 click-throughs to our engagement site, and over 85,000 website views. The lobby week, held in November, included general members who shared their lives as parents struggling to find childcare, as education assistants struggling to make ends meet, and private non-profit childcare workers who know the current model is failing. During the week, CUPE BC representatives met with all three parties represented in the Legislature, including nearly every BCNDP MLA.

BCNDP Leadership Change

In June, then-BC Premier John Horgan announced his intention to step down as leader of the BCNDP. This decision prompted a leadership campaign that ultimately resulted in David Eby becoming our province's new Premier. CUPE BC was an early and enthusiastic supporter of Eby, becoming the first union to publicly endorse him for leader.

Changes to BC Election Laws

Though not an event or campaign, changes to BC's election laws warrant reporting given their effects on CUPE BC's political action tactics. With the support of progressive organizations, CUPE BC included, the BCNDP government made the necessary changes to remove big money from our province's elections and political system. However, these recent changes made to election laws have greatly limited CUPE BC and other progressive third-party advertisers' capacity to support progressive candidates and parties. Caps to election and pre-election spending, a wider definition of what constitutes support for, or donation to, political parties, and limits to issues advertising, have collectively made public campaigning for progressive candidates a challenge. Consequently, CUPE BC political action work increasingly focuses on

member engagement and mobilization, an element of our political action work that has remained protected in BC law.

2022/23 COMMITTEE INITIATIVES

Member Mobilizers

Building on previous work, and in consideration of the resolutions passed at the 2021 and 2022 Conventions on re-establishing the zone coordinator system and election readiness, the Committee spent considerable time envisioning possible options for a framework for coordinated political activism across the membership. Given the new tools and technology available today, and the recent changes to BC election law, the Committee worked to update the past model for zone coordinators and opted for a system of member mobilizers. The concept of member mobilizers is not new but builds on experiences with member book-off during past election campaigns, and on the past zone coordinator structure that existed in-between elections.

Using the local government election as a venue to roll out the new model, more than sixty new member mobilizers from across the province were recruited, trained and highly engaged in the campaign. All member mobilizers reported gratitude for the experience, and most have committed to continued work with the union on ongoing political action efforts. We will continue to build their skill and capacity as we implement a plan for the provincial government election set for the fall of 2024.

Member Survey

A committee resolution passed at the 2022 Convention called for a system of biennial surveys of members on political action topics. Such a survey was conducted in advance of the 2022 local government elections and the results were used to shape the campaign. Data driven work like this improves our outcomes, helps tailor tactics to the members we intend to engage, and tracks our progress over time. The Committee is looking forward to the next survey, which would be rolled out in 2024 in support of a campaign to engage members in the next provincial election.

New Political Action Staff Person

The Committee has long supported CUPE BC's ongoing efforts to seek funding from the National Union for a full-time staff person devoted to political action. With the frequency of local government by-elections, the need to support the BCNDP government and push for deeper and more lasting progressive change, and the capacity for greater political action by members, there has been a solid argument for such an investment in political

action staffing for some time. The 2023 National Union budget delivered on this request, and the new position of Political Action Coordinator is expected to begin in the Spring, joining the Strong Communities Working Group team as a key support to CUPE BC's political action and member engagement work.

2023 Convention Resolutions

As the Committee's term concluded, members considered the successes of the past two years and goals for the future, as well as the ever-changing political and technological landscape in which our political action takes place. These considerations led to the submission of two Convention resolutions to improve political action capacity. The first calls for investment in technology and data, building capacity through resources and readiness to better enable swift political action, and better integrate campaigns pages with the CUPE BC main website. The second resolution encourages locals to better integrate political action information and training into local orientation and like structures.

LOOKING TO 2023/2024

Looking to the next year, the Committee identified the coming events or possibilities that could shape 2023/24:

- Though a confidence and supply agreement that exists between the federal Liberals and NDP, there is always a chance that one or both parties will step back from this arrangement, triggering a federal election.
- The next BC election is not scheduled until the fall of 2024, and though there are no signs an early election will come, the election of a new Premier through an internal party process automatically opens the door to an early election.
- Recent resignations of MLAs in Vancouver-Mount Pleasant and Langford-Juan de Fuca means that by-elections will be called within the next six months.
- With the 2022 local government elections now in the rearview mirror, local government by-elections will soon begin. During the last term there were several dozen per year.

Respectfully submitted:

Dal Benning – Chair
Jessica Orcutt – Recording Secretary
Michelle Bennett
Donald Grant
Nathan Allen – Staff Advisor
Steven Beasley – Communications Rep
Dagoberto Vargas – Young Worker Appointee
David Fleming – Staff Advisor
Morgan McCrystal – Administrative Assistant

Denice Bardua – Co-Chair
Nicholas Angrignon
Dave Bollen
Nathan Goudie
Lisa Kennedy
Leanne Yearley
Jeffrey Jacobs
Darin Nielsen

March 2023



RACIALIZED WORKERS COMMITTEE

Bonjour, Namaste, Bula, Sasri Akhal, Hola, Salam, Moshi Moshi, Aloha, Annyeonghaseyo, Ni Hao, Pryvit, Hallo!

This report was written on the unceded and ancestral territories of the Musqueam, Katzie, Kwantlen, Semiahmoo, and Stolo first nations. These lands are where we live, work, learn, educate, and play with knowledge and leaders helping us to change the future with truth and reconciliation with the Indigenous caretakers of Turtle Island and the world.

Awareness

The Racialized Workers Committee has for the first time in many years been blessed with a full complement of committee members. While the Committee has undergone changes and losses in the membership tally, the focus on continued growth has resulted in the full Committee that exists today. Our Committee also shared some of our members who sat on multiple committees. We would like to acknowledge all members' contributions and work on the Committee. They all worked so hard on sharing stories, ideas, points of view and information that was used to carry out the Committee Action Plan. Our Committee Action Plan and resolutions were also driven by the [CUPE National Anti-Racism Strategy](#), of which we are extremely proud.

An organization is only as good as its culture – and building that culture is not only a role for Human Resources and management. It is every worker's responsibility. We can all help make our workplaces safer by understanding what systemic racism is, and what our own unconscious biases are. We did a lot of work on that in the Committee this term, and we urge all of our friends to do the same. We thank the friends and allies who helped us in this work. The 2021-2023 Committee would like to give special appreciation to Anusha Balam, Nicholas Angrignon, Sarah Cibart, Greg Taylor, Darci Schmid, Dan Gawthrop, and retired staff Janet Szliske for all the time, effort, resources, and consultations – both on and off work times – to meet deadlines and create working spaces that were productive for all.

When it comes to education, it was important for us as a committee to think about the topics that resonate with working people who are Indigenous, Black, and Racialized. But sometimes those topics were triggering for us as racialized people, even though it was necessary to work on them to build awareness or understanding. Our Committee experienced a lot in our work this term, and it was difficult as well as a source of growth for us. We noticed that sometimes support is hard to come by, and we look forward to

building more trauma-informed approaches to instituting workplace remedies like education and training.

Anti-Racism Data Engagement

In Spring 2022, we concluded work on CUPE BC's participation in the government's Anti-Racism Data Engagement consultations. To recap, the Committee held focus groups with a total of 234 Indigenous, Black, and Racialized workers and their families to talk about how folks would like to see their information collected (or not collected) by the government for the purposes of anti-racism work. Some of the focus groups were supported by and included the CUPE BC Indigenous Committee.

We are incredibly pleased to report that the [Anti-Racism Data Act](#) was passed into law in June 2022! We should all be extremely proud that some of the important issues that CUPE BC focus group participants raised are directly reflected in the legislation, such as the need for transparency as to why any race-based information is being collected, that the way this legislation is enacted should be decided by a group that includes Indigenous, Black and Racialized voices, and that any race-based information can only be collected by the government specifically for the purposes of advancing racial equity and eliminating systemic racism.

Our work is not complete in the fight against racism, but we are so proud to be able to connect with our communities and participate in historical advancements in which we can visibly see and show that work is being done and that anti-racism strategies are working.

BC Office of the Human Rights Commissioner Inquiry into Hate in the Pandemic

In Summer 2022, the office of the BC Human Rights Commissioner conducted a consultation with the community about Indigenous, Black and Racialized people's experiences of racism during the pandemic. CUPE BC was invited to participate. This was right on the heels of the Anti-Racism Data focus groups, and we were burnt out with that heavy work. We decided to leverage the data we collected from that, and CUPE National staff shared the findings in the Inquiry into Hate in the Pandemic, so that participants didn't have to take on more emotional labour by engaging directly in the Inquiry. Staff, including our staff advisors, wrote a report for the Inquiry and attended the consultations.

The Recommendations of the Human Rights Commissioner on addressing hate was published on March 7, 2023 in multiple languages including Chinese, Punjabi, Farsi,

Tagalog, Arabic, Vietnamese, Hindi, French, Spanish and Korean. While we are sad that hate crimes against all types of people who experience marginalization increased during the pandemic, we are proud to hear the strong voices of the 234 anti-racism engagement participants reflected in the recommendations of the Human Rights Commissioner such as that survivors need culturally appropriate help to navigate the legal system, that online hate should be taken more seriously, and that the safety of frontline workers should be paramount when planning for times of crisis – because too many workers who supported communities through the pandemic experiences experienced racism from the public. We hope that our work this term will help anti-racism goals on a provincial level, and we look forward to doing more of this work next term.

Building Capacity & Term Completion

Our Committee has gelled and grown in many ways. We have members who have taken their work and experiences on the Committee back to their home locals to manifest positive change. Several of our members have taken on new roles in the union – as officers of their local, member facilitators working with Union Education, and as members of other provincial or convention committees. This is an important component of the work of the Racialized Workers' Committee: to promote equity and representation throughout union structures. Just as we advocate for racialized workers and the unique issues we face, we also must build our folks up, encourage their personal growth as activists, and support their taking on roles throughout our union – this is one of the many ways we can ensure our union, in all its facets, looks like the members we serve.

In the dawn of our time together, we feel that the CUPE BC Racialized Workers Committee have been able to create a buzz of awareness and anticipation for new information and recommendations to the Executive Board on a consistent basis. The anticipation and lead up to events and information like the cultural events and information background, and the continued success of an informative Black History poster. The CUPE National Anti-Racism Strategy is a strong tool to help workplaces progress out of colonized procedures. The Committee highly recommends its use to change the way we all think and to break existing barriers.

Our creative minds and ears-to-the-ground approach to what is happening around us has helped us manifest recommendations, resolutions, and revitalization. As well, we have left our future Committee with progressive ideas and topics to help with the goal of having racism-free workplaces now and forever!

Respectfully submitted:

Edward Parsotam, Chair

Nicci Cabrejos, Co-Chair

Harjit Birdi

Ravneet Dhillon

Juan Hernandez

Sita Kumar

Valeria Mancilla

Cindy (Edelyn) Ozouf

Pavel Santos

Nicholas Angrignon, Staff Advisor

Anusha Balram, Staff Advisor

Greg Taylor, Communications Representative

Darci Schmid, Administrative Assistant

March 2023



SKILLED TRADES COMMITTEE

The CUPE BC Skilled Trades Committee has been working hard on furthering the advance of skilled trades in BC. 2023 wraps up a term with work that we are proud of having accomplished. We will continue our focus on reconciliation, promoting equity, diversity, and inclusion, and supporting women in the trades.

Discovery Trades Camp

During 2022, one of our members - Lisa Scott - was instrumental in the creation and operation of 2 youth trades training camps in Quesnel, BC. Lisa Scott shared this with our Committee:

“I also organized, led, and facilitated my first ever Discovery Trades Camp in Quesnel. The weeks of August 8-12 was the all-girls camp, and the week of August 15-19 was the all-gender Indigenous camp, both having participants from ages 9-13.

I had different tradespeople and other folks from across BC to help me teach, guide, and mentor the youth as they experience the fun and excitement of trades exploration. All the youth were introduced to occupational health and safety principles, and they made different trades projects involving carpentry, electrical, masonry, painting, plumbing and sheet metal.

CUPE BC and the Skilled Trades Committee supported these camps by sending Leah Murray from the skilled trades committee to Quesnel to participate in the camps. Leah was a huge support to me and to all who attended the camps. She helped mentor, teach, prep materials for the projects, shop for supplies, and help organize some of the lunches.

Also attending the camps from Quesnel CUPE Local 4990 was Tracey Telford, an Indigenous Education Support worker for School District #28 (SD#28) and a member of the CUPE BC Indigenous Committee.

Also at the camp was April Kopetski, a custodian with SD#28 that helped with lunches, snacks and added extra shop support. Both Tracey and April came during their summer holidays to support the Indigenous camp.”

The success of these two camps has led to Lisa running two more camps over Spring Break. The Discover Trades camps in Quesnel will happen from March 20-24 for young women and from March 27-31, 2023 for Indigenous youth. All participants receive lunch, snacks, and personal protective equipment at no cost, and again will cover a range of

different trades, where the students will get to try their hands at occupational health and safety principles, and they made different trades projects involving carpentry, electrical, masonry, painting, plumbing, sheet metal, welding, and Heavy equipment operators.

Just imagine the ability for youth to engage in trades at no cost to their families during spring break! Keep up the great work, Lisa.

Canadian Apprenticeship Forum Conference

In May 2022, both Jonathan and Kirk attend the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum conference in Halifax. The theme was “*Recovery, Resilience, Readiness*”.

During the opening session, we heard from Jude Gerrard (Millbrook First Nation), who welcomed delegates to the territory the conference was being held on. This was followed by Peter Katz, a Juno-nominated Musician and Storyteller, who was the MC for the event.

Next, we heard from Andrew George, the Director of Indigenous Initiatives, RSE (red seal) Cook, who spoke with the BCITA on a panel about how to support Indigenous people with entering the trades and accessing mentorship to help them succeed in their apprenticeships. We also heard from Shylah Nokusis, a RSE Iron worker from the Osihcikewin Trades Training school. Her presentation included stories of recovery, resilience, and readiness, the theme of this year’s conference.

On Day 2, we heard from Keynote Speaker Dr. Robyne Hanley-Dafoe, a multi-award-winning psychology and education instructor who specializes in resiliency, navigating stress and change, and personal wellness. Her keynotes provide practical strategies, grounded in global research and case studies, that help foster resiliency within oneself and others.

Hanley-Dafoe is also the author of the award-winning and bestselling book “*Calm Within the Storm*”, which outlines a powerful and achievable path to everyday resiliency. It won the 2022 Silver Nautilus Award in the Psychology/Mental and Emotional Well-Being category.

The next plenary session was “*Building It Green: Integrating Climate Literacy into the Skilled Construction Trades*”. Canada’s Building Trades Unions, in working with their affiliated national construction trades training directors and in partnership with Climate Academics (CIRT), researchers (SRDC) and curriculum developers (SkillPlan), are

creating industry awareness and training to better understand how processes and people can work together to impact climate change.

John Calvert, a retired professor from SFU, spoke about the need for all new construction to be built according to new standards through this collaboration; doing so will save money in the long run, as the building will cost less to operate after completion. John also spoke about the need for all levels of Government to see this through. The other panelist spoke on behalf of the Building Trade Unions, [SRDC](#) and [Skillplan](#).

The Honourable Carla Qualtrough, Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, announced a \$247 million investment in employer support across the country. CAF-FCA is the recipient of \$45 million in funding to administer grants to employers who hire new first-year apprentices in 39 Red Seal trades. This also helps first-year apprentices get the hands-on work experience they need for a career in the skilled trades.

The financial incentives available to small and medium-sized employers are \$5,000 per apprentice per year for a max of two Level 1 apprentices per employer; or \$10,000 per apprentice per year for a max of two Level 1 apprentices if the apprentice identifies as being from an under-represented group.

“The federal government’s announcement is a reflection of the critical role of the skilled trades to Canada’s economy,” noted France Daviault. *“Apprenticeship remains the best way to develop highly skilled trades professionals and these incentives will ensure that a broad pool of talent is available to employers with the expertise to train them.”*

CAF-FCA will collaborate with partners at [BuildForce Canada](#), [SkillPlan](#), [ApprenticeSearch.com](#), the [Aboriginal Apprenticeship Board](#) and the [Canadian Construction Association](#) to provide a range of supports, in addition to the grants, to the expert trainers of Canada’s future skilled trades workforce.

The last was “*TRC Call to Action #92 - Industry's Responsibility to Make Space for Indigenous Participation*”. Michelle Francis Denny (Director, Atlantic Indigenous Economic Development Integrated Research Program) and Rebecca Kragnes (Director, Indigenous Relations and Community Engagement, Bird Construction), spoke on advancing industry priorities through meaningful Indigenous relations. Indigenous engagement and participation is critical to creating shared values and enhancing relationships with impacted communities. In this session, the conference attendees investigated meaningful benchmarks contributing to this success, including core engagement and Indigenous Calls to Action and reconciliation, business best practices,

and employment growth and advancement. Rebecca Kragnes is now the Chair of the CAF Board of Directors!

CAF Supporting Women in Trades (SWiT) Conference

In June 2022, both Leah and Lisa attended the CAF Supporting Women in Trades (SWiT) Conference in St. John's, Newfoundland. Their report is below:

“We were very fortunate to be able to attend the SWiT Conference in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador. The Conference included tradeswomen from across Canada, and we came together to help support, guide, and learn from each other. We discovered what other provinces are doing when it comes to addressing the challenges that women and underrepresented people face in the skilled trades and construction industry. We created allies, friendships and a community of people all working together to make this industry more inclusive and safer for all. The representation that came from British Columbia was unbelievable and was talked about throughout the conference. Being involved in this conference was empowering, and the support we were able to give each other was amazing. We are honored to have been a part of this movement.

The first session, titled “*Seeds of Change*”, featured keynote speakers that spoke about the real problems and issues that women are dealing with in all sectors of the trades industry. One of the first keynote speakers was Candace Carnahan of “*Step Up Your Safety*”. She presented a new way to think about safety, after she experienced a traumatic injury at the age of 21 where she lost her leg and nearly her life in a workplace accident. Through her story and journey, she talked about and demonstrated how to use our voices and to see safety as an opportunity, not just an obligation.

The plenary “*A Rising Tides Lifts All Boats - Working for Inclusion in the Trades*” led by Karen Dearlove (Executive Director, BC Centre for Women in the Trades) was one of our absolute favorites. The 2-part workshop showcased how great British Columbia is doing compared to a lot of other provinces, even though BC still has a very long way to go. This workshop provided an overview of the “*Be More Than a Bystander*” program, including statistics, scenarios, resources and supports. Creating healthy, safe, respectful, and inclusive workplaces helps everyone! People from across Canada learned about what really happens in the trades, and it is not always good.

A 2017 report titled “*Enhancing the Retention and Advancement of Women in Trades*” identifies the toxic workplace environment, specifically gender-based bullying, harassment, and discrimination, as one of the main reasons women leave the trades. The “*Be More Than a Bystander*” program, developed in 2011 by the [Ending Violence](#)

[Association BC](#) (EVA BC) and the BC Lions, recognizes that most men care deeply about the women and girls in their lives and the world, and it engages those men to take ownership and play active roles in ending gender-based bullying, harassment and violence. In partnership with the BC Centre for Women in the Trades (BCWITT), the program was adapted specifically to address issues of discrimination, bullying and harassment in skilled trades training institutions and workplaces, with the aim of creating inclusive and safe spaces for everyone. Currently, BCCWITT is working on expanding the program to address other forms of workplace bullying, harassment, and discrimination more explicitly (including racism, homophobia, and transphobia).

Another epic plenary we attended was “*Equity in Apprenticeship & Technical Fields*”, with the legendary Dr. Marcia Braundy, a true pioneer for women in the trades. Dr. Marcia Braundy is a multidisciplinary academic feminist who keeps her hand in as a construction carpenter, multimedia project manager, educator, author, archivist, independent research scholar and social change activist. Marcia was British Columbia’s first Red Seal female carpenter (1981), and the first female carpenter in the union in BC! She has developed and delivered trades exploratory course curricula used across Canada. She chaired the Equity Committees of the Canadian Labour Force Development Board National Apprenticeship Committee and the Provincial Apprenticeship Board in British Columbia, as well as having a PhD in Technology Studies in Education from the University of British Columbia. She works with men and with women, often separately, to bring about effective integration for women in trades & technology training and work. Her book, “*Men & Women and Tools – Bridging the Divide*” from Fernwood Publishing is used in Technology Education at UBC. Her other projects include “[Lessons Learned & Best Practices for increasing Success for Women in Trades & Technical Fields](#)” and the currently in progress Equity in Apprenticeship & Technical Fields Digital Archive. Her publications are listed online at <http://www.men-women-tools.ca/Publications.htm>.

Another very informative session was called “*Fit Matters*” with Jodi Huettner (Helga Waer Inc.), which told the story behind our ill-fitting PPE. Jodi’s journey from field engineer to designer/supplier of women’s PPE has uncovered a shocking truth about trades and active STEM industries. She has championed the inclusive PPE standards movement in BC, which demands that women’s body data be included in the design and manufacturing of safety gear. With the support of key industry stakeholders (ILWU, IUOE local 115, BCCWITT, BC Building trades, Build TogetHER), she is using her story to advocate for meaningful policy change.

An amazing Alberta organization called “[Women Building Futures](#)” hosted a plenary session called “*Work Proud: Influencing Change*”. The guests for this session were

amazing: Keeley Prockiw (IRATA Level 3 Supervisor), Sheena Nakonechny (Industry & Alumni Relations Manager, Women Building Futures), and Tara Hoffmeier (Senior Advisor, Employer Engagement & Partnership Development, Women Building Futures).

Former BCCWITT executive director Nina Hansen hosted her plenary on Occupational Health and Safety. It was wonderful to reconnect with Nina and to learn more from her on mental health and well-being and how it affects us all on the job site. Nina is a Canadian Registered Safety Professional with more than 20 years' experience supporting workers and advocating for improvements in occupational health and safety law, policy, and enforcement. She is also a Certified Psychological Health and Safety Advisor and is passionate about addressing work-related psychosocial hazards such as discrimination, harassment, and violence. Nina worked for several years at the BC Federation of Labour supporting unions towards advocating for a robust apprenticeship and skills training system in BC. She would be a great guest speaker to invite to our workplaces to discuss mental health and well-being.

The “*Emerging Leaders, Women in Trades*” session had five women share their experiences in the trades, during which they discussed how women are marginalized in skilled trades workplaces and experience barriers. They discussed how female apprentices report more difficulty with finding employer sponsors and have lower apprenticeship completion rates than males, and how it leads to women not being able to access the high paying, full-time and leadership positions associated with certification in the trades. They talked about how a positive work environment and support from peers are key to program retention but in the absence of these, women apprentices report poorer mental health than male apprentices, which leads to a lack of confidence and sense of isolation.

The last session before the conference closed was from France Daviault, the Executive Director for CAF-FCA (Canadian Apprenticeship Forum), in which she shared the exciting and amazing news that they were launching a National Leadership Program for Women in Trades. This program is designed to provide tools and resources to help tradeswomen develop skills required to advance in their career as mentors, supervisors or managers, Union stewards, entrepreneurs, and skilled trades advocates. It will offer opportunities to network with like-minded individuals and provide recognition within our industries.

During the conference, there were also networking events and activities to share, enjoy and celebrate with all attendees. It was so moving to meet all these amazing tradeswomen from across Canada, but more so the ones from BC. Lisa Scott organized a dinner for a huge group of BC Tradeswomen and Female allies so that everyone

could come together one last time before heading home the next day, not knowing if or when they might see each other again. Lisa and Leah were so grateful and honored to have been provided the opportunity to attend this amazing conference, the experiences will last a lifetime.”

In Closing

The Skilled Trades Committee has had an amazing term, and has created, passed, and continued to work on our resolutions. We are dedicated to continuing our activism for diversity, equity and inclusion in the skilled trades and a safe working environment for everyone. We are doing our part to help with reconciliation and the calls to action, by creating opportunities for Indigenous youth in the skilled trades.

We look forward to moving the pendulum even farther in the upcoming years in the skilled trades and construction industry.

Respectfully submitted:

Kirk Mercer – Chair
Jonathan McCune – Co-Chair
Leah Murray – Recording Secretary
Lisa Scott
Alex Jacobs

Michael Russell
Shannon Mackenzie
Maja Bohinc – Administrative Assistant
Ian Clough – Staff Advisor
Steven Beasley – Communications

March 2023



TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

The CUPE BC Transportation Committee continues to work on a number of issues and areas of concern that affect all members in the transportation sector.

The Committee continues to work on the following areas of focus and concern within the transportation sector, both regionally and provincially.

- Vehicles passing school buses while stopped continue to be a major concern for the safety of our members and the children in our communities. The Committee is working on a campaign with CUPE BC on strategies to create awareness about this concern. We call on the government to increase enforcement and fines against drivers that violate these laws.
- Work rest rules/fatigue management continues to be a hot topic of discussion within the Committee. The Committee will continue to monitor the new work rest rules and how employers are implementing them.
- TransLink having oversight and governance of its subsidiaries continues to negatively impact our members. Centralization of services continues to pose a threat to our members' jobs.
- The Committee has discussed the concern around private "for profit companies" running public transit in parts of BC. We are calling to remove these companies and have public transit operated and maintained by a public entity.
- The Committee will be bringing forward a resolution for CUPE BC to create a Public Transit Policy to address issues like safety, accessibility, affordability, funding, public operation, and rural access.

CUPE BC Transportation Committee Meetings

Our Committee met in November 2022 and in January of 2023. We engaged in a lively round-table discussion and shared strategies regarding issues that are prevalent amongst our locals and District Councils. We discussed the use of file sharing technology that will allow committee members to communicate more effectively with each other and with CUPE BC. This strategy will also reduce the use of paper at meetings. We discussed the importance of accessible public transit and how important it is to all the residents of BC. The Committee has submitted the following resolution to Convention:

Amend the Policy Manual to add the following new section:

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Accessibility: We support public transit programs, facilities, vehicles and supports that ensure public transportation is accessible to everyone by following the model of universal design.

Affordability: We support the elimination of all fares and user fees for public transit, beginning with the elimination of fees and fares for all transit users 18 years of age and under.

Funding: We support the full public funding for public transportation systems, and the elimination of reliance on gas taxes and other forms of financially unsustainable subsidy and fee models.

Public Operation: We support full public operation of all public transit systems in British Columbia. We support the full elimination of contract operators within public transit systems, including those established by Public Private Partnerships (P3s), and support bringing all transit operations work in-house.

Rural Access: We support the provision of a full public transit systems in small and rural communities, and the provisions of public transportation between small communities and larger, regional centres.

Safety: We support the provision of safe and inviting public transportation systems that ensure riders are free from harassment, discrimination, violence, and other negative and oppressive behaviours that limit access to marginalized groups. We support the provision of mental health and addictions support in public transit systems to support riders experiencing mental health issues and overdoses while using transit systems.

Conclusion

CUPE members in the Transportation Sector are facing many ongoing and emerging issues. The Transportation Committee looks forward to working with CUPE BC members to tackle these important issues.

We remain committed to raising the profile of the important work that our transportation sector workers do in our communities. We look forward to the work ahead.

The Committee will continue to support transportation workers by participating in campaigns and lobbying politicians at all levels of government across the province and the country.

Respectfully submitted:

Tony Rebelo, Chair
Shannon Levinsky, Recording Secretary
Don Duncan
Lorne Beaudet
Brandy Frocklage
Carolyn Hooper
Tyler Mace
Liam O'Neill
Nola Welsh
Ryan Boyce, Staff Advisor
Dan Gawthrop, Communications
Morgan McCrystal, Administrative Assistant

March 2023



UNIVERSITIES COMMITTEE

The CUPE BC Universities Committee consists of the Presidents or designates representing ten locals. These are Locals 116 and 2950 from the University of British Columbia (UBC), Local 3338 from Simon Fraser University (SFU), Locals 917, 951 and 4163 from the University of Victoria (UVic), Local 3799 from the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC), Local 3386 from Royal Roads University, Local 4879 from Thompson Rivers University, and Local 2278, which has members at both UBC and UNBC. The Committee functions as the coordinating body for CUPE workers at these universities and liaises with CUPE workers at other post-secondary institutions in BC and in other provinces. Our meetings provide important opportunities for the Committee to discuss common concerns and plan strategies on a sectoral basis.

The Universities Committee met on November 8, 2022 and January 16, 2023 to develop strategies around significant issues facing our sector. The 2022/2023 term focused on preparations for 2022/2023 Collective Bargaining and supporting Truth & Reconciliation.

2023 Bargaining

Most universities' collective agreements expired on March 31, 2022. Locals meet as the Universities Coordinated Bargaining Committee (UCBC) to share updates and strategies. Wages and compensation are a primary concern throughout the sector, with many locals having now reached agreed settlements. We have seen COLA (cost of living) language introduced for years 2023 and 2024, thanks to the efforts of the BCGEU during their strike action in 2022. While workers are struggling to make ends meet, this will help out.

Recruitment and retention issues in post-secondary institutions are causing some employees to be tasked with high workloads, exacerbating stress and mental health issues within the workplace. Remote work language has been negotiated, although it has not ensured that equitable access is given to employees.

Layoffs

Locals are seeing numerous layoffs through 2023. Positions were eliminated, hours reduced due to budget cuts, up to 4% at UVic. This is on the heels of international and domestic enrolment shortfalls.

Truth & Reconciliation

The Committee spent a day at the Musqueam Cultural Centre and visited the UBC Residential School History and Dialogue Centre. We learned about the architect of the building, Alfred Waugh, who was the first Indigenous graduate of SLAIS at UBC. He designed the charred wood exterior cladding, the interwoven cedar wall of the staircase, the salmon roe light fixtures and the glass waterfall that is collected from the copper roof of the building. The IRSHDC works with survivors and communities to access records and information about residential schools across Canada. There is an interactive wall with a timeline, map and node function that helps communities access the collection of materials and oral histories of Residential School Survivors. The Committee asked unions to connect with Indigenous centers at their universities, as in doing so we can foster new relationships. Committee members have enrolled in the Indigenous Canada Course through the University of Alberta.

Acknowledgements

The Committee thanks our Staff Advisor Micha Pesta, as well as our Communications Representatives Gregory Taylor. Committee members also extend thanks to the CUPE BC staff who assist with our Committee's work.

Respectfully submitted:

Kirk Mercer, Chair
Lois Rugg, Co-Chair
Chloe Martin-Cabanne, Recording Secretary
Tony Ferreira
Greg Melnechuk
David Lance
Emily Cadger
Shaneza Bacchus
Joyce Henley
Nikki Seymour
Gregory Taylor, BCRO Comms Rep
Micha Pesta, Staff Advisor
Maja Bohinc, Administrative Assistant

April 2023



WOMEN'S AND GENDER RIGHTS COMMITTEE

At last year's CUPE BC Convention, the Women's and Gender Rights Committee – then called the “Women's Committee” – submitted a constitutional resolution to change the Committee name to the “Women's and Gender Rights Committee”. The Committee did this in order to ensure we would be inclusive of gender-diverse people, recognizing that not all CUPE members identify within the gender binary. The Committee was proud to receive overwhelming support for their constitutional resolution, which was passed at the CUPE BC 2022 resolution. This sends a message to gender-diverse CUPE BC members that they are welcome in our Union and on our Committee.

Community Engagements

Committee members participated in two Red Dress events on May 5 and September 18, 2022. The May 5 Red Dress event was an inaugural event in honour of the National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and Two-Spirit People (MMIWG2S). Both events were held at the beautiful Bear Creek Park in Surrey, BC and are held in remembrance of MMIWG2S and their families, who often lack closure around the loss of loved ones. The Committee would like to thank CUPE Local 728 for hosting the May 5 event and the Hospital Employees Union (HEU) for hosting the September 18 event.

Members of the Women's and Gender Rights (WGR) Committee have been active around women's issues in their communities and have worked hard to address the needs of impacted members who identify as women within our union. For example, our Committee chair Sheryl Burns participated in a meeting of labour union representatives with the Parliamentary Secretary for Gender Equity on August 11, 2022 to provide feedback on BC's Action Plan on Gender Based Violence as part of provincial consultations on gender-based violence. Significant feedback was provided, particularly relating to the high rates of violence inflicted on women and gender-diverse people from marginalized populations, including women and gender-diverse people living with disabilities. The Chair asked that marginalized groups and their needs be reflected in the province's Action Plan on Gender Based Violence.

Consistent with CUPE BC's commitment to recognize that sex work is work due to the passing of a resolution at the CUPE BC 2022 Convention, the Committee chair also urged the provincial government to recognize that sex work is work and that sex workers are often disproportionately the victims of gender-based violence. Moreover, Sheryl Burns called for increased and consistent funding for agencies serving women, as well as implementation of the \$10/day Childcare Plan, with childcare to be publicly

provided throughout school districts by CUPE members. Poverty and the lack of affordable childcare keeps mothers experiencing gender-based violence in abusive relationships simply because they do not have the support they need to leave. Sheryl also acknowledged that increased isolation and unemployment during the COVID-19 pandemic led to increased rates of violence, particularly among black, Indigenous, racialized, disabled and trans women and gender-diverse people.

Committee members participated in the December 6 Vigil to commemorate the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. This event honours the 14 young women who were killed at École Polytechnique on December 6, 1989 simply because they sought education in a male-dominated sphere. This mass shooting was a stark reminder to women and gender-diverse people throughout Canada that the liberation of women had not been achieved. As already stated, gender-based violence is still rampant in our country.

BC Federation of Labour Standing Committees

The Committee Chair also participated on the BC Federation of Labour's Women and Gender Rights and Human Rights Standing Committees. The BC Federation of Labour WGR Committee has focused primarily on:

- the decriminalization of sex work;
- the need for increased work/life balance;
- increasing rates of mental health challenges among public sector workers;
- gender-neutral language in our unions;
- pushing for a provincial sexual and domestic violence awareness month;
- continued lobbying for access to 10 days of paid leave for survivors of gender-based violence;
- access to and supportive health supports for trans and gender-diverse people; and
- pay equity and transparency legislation.

To this end, pay transparency legislation was introduced on March 7, 2023. This legislation is intended to help close the gender pay gap by requiring employers to include wages or salary ranges on all publicly advertised jobs as of November 1, 2023. Employers will no longer be able to ask potential employees for their pay history information and they will not be able to penalize employees who disclose their rate of pay to coworkers or potential job applicants.

Truth and Reconciliation

The CUPE BC WGR Committee is committed to Indigenous Truth and Reconciliation. In an effort to educate ourselves, Committee members have been provided with and read the 231 Calls to Action as contained in the Report of the MMIWG2S Inquiry, and *Red Women Rising: Indigenous Women Survivors in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside*. Additionally, at the beginning of each meeting, the WGR Committee reads one of the [94 Calls to Action](#) and one Article from the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People](#) immediately after the Territorial Acknowledgement and prior to the reading of the Equality Statement.

The Committee would like to take this opportunity to personally thank committee members Yvonne Desabrais and Shelley Saje Ricci for their emotional labour in educating our Committee with respect to the lived experiences of Indigenous women, girls, and gender-diverse people. The education and insights they have provided have been invaluable to our Committee.

Committee Action Plan

As part of their workplan, the Committee has committed to educating others with respect to gender-based violence, including its prevalence and resources to access help if one is currently experiencing such violence. To this end, the Committee will be providing bookmarks and whistles at their committee booth during the 2023 CUPE BC Convention. As well, Moosehide pins with accompanying postcards will also be provided at the booth to address the role men in our union have in the elimination of gender-based violence.

The WGR Committee is supportive of the CUPE BC Childcare Plan and has provided feedback with respect to the need for more culturally inclusive childcare for Indigenous and racialized children and for children living with disabilities. In her capacity as the Committee Chair and General Vice-President of CUPE BC, Sheryl Burns participated in a provincial childcare lobby that included NDP, Liberal and Green party MLAs on November 14 and 15, 2022. A number of other CUPE BC members also participated in this lobby, sharing personal childcare stories or success stories of having childcare provided on school grounds by school districts.

February 14 marks the Annual Women's Memorial March, intended to commemorate and grieve the loss of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. Those who attend this march are to make space for the family members who have endured such loss. This march is held in different parts of the province, including Vancouver's

Downtown Eastside and Maple Ridge. Our Committee chair and staff liaison were able to attend the Memorial March held on Vancouver's Downtown Eastside, along with other women and gender-diverse people from the CUPE BC Executive Board and CUPE staff. Committee member Yvonne Desabrais created and started the annual Memorial March in Maple Ridge a few years ago and organized and attended this year's event there.

Our Committee elected to send at least two members to the CUPE National Women's Conference and were instrumental in ensuring that women and gender-diverse CUPE BC Executive Board members would also be able to attend. As a result, a number of WGR Committee members attended the CUPE National Women's Conference held from March 12 to 15, 2023.

The WGR Committee has identified a number of priority resolutions for the upcoming 2023 CUPE BC Convention to be held from April 26 to 29. The majority of this year's resolutions focus on issue unique to women, gender-diverse people and the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. These priority resolutions are as follows:

1. Paid Miscarriage and Pregnancy Leaves
2. Medical Coverage for Infertility
3. Bargaining Menstrual Leave
4. Constitutional Resolution - Change the Name of the Sergeant at Arms Committee

Working together on the CUPE BC WGR Committee on shared issues is a demonstration of solidarity. Something to notice is that when you look at leadership and executive tables, we have many women leading the way at CUPE BC and in the labour movement in general. Leadership training, femtoring/mentoring and succession planning are all part of growing individuals into strong leaders. CUPE BC has a female President, three of four General Vice Presidents are female, the Canadian Labour Congress has a female President, the BC Federation of Labour has a female President and eight of eighteen officers at the BC Federation of Labour are female. What we don't see is noticeably Indigenous or racialized women in those positions, giving voice and actions to issues unique to us. As women, we see ourselves reflected in leadership, but as Indigenous and racialized women and gender-diverse workers, we do not see ourselves in prominent leadership roles.

Our WGR Committee Action Plan promotes the need for increased training for Indigenous members because historically, Indigenous members did not and still do not have equal access to education that leads to empowerment. Indigenous children still

have the highest number of involvements in the child welfare system and the lowest graduation rates in the country. If education and knowledge are power, then we must provide opportunities for empowerment.

Equity deserving groups should have access to training that empowers leadership, not just human rights courses. Allyship is an important strategy in advancing equity, but it is slow-moving because the current leaders do not have the lived and ancestral experience to truly understand the struggle of Indigenous and racialized members. How will the labour movement adjust to create space for Indigenous and racialized workers to take the spotlight and privilege of leading our unions? When we have true inclusion in leadership, that is when our movement will see real change that advances equity deserving groups.

CUPE National Women's Conference

CUPE 5523 sent three Women's Committee members to the 2023 CUPE National Women's Conference in Vancouver March 12-15. Below is a response received from one of the attendees:

"Thank you, sincerely and with wholehearted gratitude, for giving me the opportunity to attend the CUPE Women's Conference this week on behalf of the CUPE BC Women's and Gender Rights Committee.

I was thrilled to feel the power and strength of 600 women participants in one big ballroom, gathering with a universal voice to stand together and support each other. All the strong, powerful women and self-identified female panel speakers brought so much inspiration and motivation to face every challenge and never give up – to stand together as equals and to lift each other up, bringing out the strength of each and every woman.

Many stories were shared with familiar faces and new friends. I look forward to participating in the Women's and Gender Rights Committee for the next term too. Thank you so much to CUPE National and BC, for organizing and presenting such an amazing and powerful conference.

Thank you for the opportunity, Sheryl, CUPE BC and I am glad to be part of this powerful Committee making a difference in the lives of every woman and self-identified female."

Further Engagements

As retold by Local 4177 member Harjit Birdi:

“To commemorate International Women’s Day on March 8, 2023, I sent an email to Fort St. James school district staff to “Celebrate strength, determination, resilience and accomplishments every day!” I ordered 100 stalks of roses and carnations from our local Save-On-Foods store, and the Manager generously matched my donation for all staff members identifying themselves as women in our school district in Fort St. James. It is an amazing partnership with the manager of this local store, recognizing the importance of inclusion and diversity of all identifying themselves as women. Each staff member was pleased and appreciated the thought and gesture for the recognition of this important day, unifying our strength and giving power to stand up for each other.”

On Sunday, March 5, CUPE 5523 members participated in a ski and snowshoe event celebrating International Women's Day at Sovereign Lake Nordic Centre. The event served as a fundraiser for the Vernon & District Immigrants & Community Services Society, an organization supporting newcomers, immigrants, and refugees in Vernon.

The CUPE Local 5523 Women's Committee pledged their support for the North Okanagan Labour Council's "*Fill a Purse for a Woman in Need*" campaign, running in March. Essential items such as shampoo, socks, body wash, hand sanitizer, band-aids, hats and gloves, toothbrushes and toothpaste were collected, along with gift cards and cash donations, to be loaded into large purses or backpacks for women and youth in crisis. Women and youth flee violence and trauma with little to no personal items, and often have children with them. These donations provide dignity and comfort to those in need. Cash donations supported women's shelters, teen shelters, and outreach agencies in the Okanagan.

On Sunday April 2, CUPE 5523 Women's Committee members attended a screening of "*Women Lead Through Adversity*", a documentary produced by Melissa Jacobs, featuring women from Vernon, BC. This film profiles a group of extraordinary women, aged 15-73, who led through adversity and were resilient despite hardships and challenges, including a world-wide pandemic. The screening also served as a fundraiser for Inspire Kindness Productions' "*Christmas in July*" campaign, supporting local families in need.

Respectfully submitted:

Sheryl Burns, Local 1936, Chair
Patricia Skalozub, Local 3500, Co-Chair
Tara Box, Local 4951, Recording Secretary
Bridget Barker, Local 3338, Young Worker Appointee
Lindy Pinson, Local 703, Shadow, Young Worker Appointee
Rena Bens, Local 748
Harjit Birdie, Local 4177
Fiona Brady Lenfesty, Local 3338
Yvonne Desabrais, Local 703
Kim Doucette, Local 5523
Sarah Kim, Local 23
Laurie Lakusta, Local 403
Theresa Pidcock, Local 728
Shelley Saje Ricci, Local 728
Sarah Cibart, CUPE National Human Rights Representative, Committee Liaison
Kathryn Davies, Communications Representative
Maja Bohinc, Administrative Assistant

March 2023



YOUNG WORKER'S COMMITTEE

The CUPE BC Young Workers Committee (YWC) continues to engage and develop activists aged 30 years or younger by providing opportunities, specialized training, and unique projects to promote inclusion in our union. We are determined to engage young workers and promote activism and solidarity in the union across the province. This term's Committee has identified a number of priority areas. These areas include reconciliation, leadership development, mentorship, and succession planning, building solidarity, and affordability issues, including tuition, housing, climate change, and precarious work.

Mentorship and Succession Planning

The Committee has focused on how best to encourage mentorship and succession planning to our Locals and District Councils across the province. Mentorship is a complex, symbiotic relationship between individuals that is highly personalized, and whereas the Committee believes strongly in the value of these relationships, it is outside of our scope to prescribe what this may look like.

At the One Big Committee Meeting (OBCM) coming up this fall, our Committee will host a panel of union leaders to discuss their experiences as mentors and/or mentees. We hope this will inspire members to naturally create similar supportive relationships that will help our young members to flourish in union leadership.

Reconciliation

The Committee is eager to engage in building relationships with allies and friends from Indigenous communities.

Shadow Committees

The Committee's Terms of Reference state that our members are able to participate in another Committee's meetings during their term. This opportunity has helped to ignite a passion for areas of interest within our union and to build solidarity between our Committee and the others. Young worker Bridget Barker attended the January 21, 2022 meeting of the Anti-Privatization Committee and the January 12, 2023 meeting of the Women's and Gender Rights Committee, and following these experiences, hopes to pursue further Committee involvement.

Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) Winter School 2023

After several years of cancelled schools due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we were thrilled to send members of the Young Workers Committee to the 2023 CLC Winter School earlier this year.

Bridget took the “Membership Engagement – Member Action” course during Week 1, and “Collective Bargaining Level I” course in Week 4. The coursework and the networking were both valuable experiences and will help her in her new role as Vice President – Lead Steward with Local 3338.

BC Federation of Labour Young Workers Committee and CUPE National Young Workers Committee

Bridget Barker represents CUPE on the BC Federation of Labour’s Young Workers Committee (BCFED YWC). She attended several remote meetings and also participated at the [Grant’s Law sit-in](#) that took place overnight on June 4, 2022 at the Circle K located at Commercial and Broadway in Vancouver. She was able to connect in-person with a few BCFED YWC members at CLC Winter School, as well. However, due to her new role, participation in further meetings will be a challenge.

Bridget Barker also serves as the Young Worker Liaison to the CUPE BC Executive Board. Bridget had the privilege of attending many Executive Board meetings (with a voice but without a vote). She enjoyed observing how the Board functions and how we make change happen, learning about the hard work of the Executive Board committees, and gaining new mentors along the way. Her term came with many rewarding experiences and new friends she hopes to stay in touch with for years to come.

Hailey Fielden represents BC as the Co-Chair of the CUPE National Young Workers Committee. The National Committee has been dedicated to addressing concerns with member engagement and involvement. We created a survey last summer focused on how to encourage young workers in their workplaces. With those results, the Committee is working on a pamphlet of barriers workers face in getting involved, and what bridges Locals can build to boost member involvement. We look forward to connecting with Young Workers in attendance at this Convention as well as the CUPE National Convention in the fall.

Conclusion

It is with the continued support from our staff advisor Kathryn Davies, the CUPE BC Executive Board, and the much-appreciated efforts of Kiran Kooner and the CUPE BC office staff, that our Young Workers Committee is able to successfully engage young workers across the province.

Respectfully submitted:

Stephanie Goudie, Chair
Hailey Fielden, Co-chair
Bridget Barker
Kamaljeet Bindra
Brittany Gibbons
Natasha Hanson
Navin Jain
Dalton Owen
Lindy Pinson
Alexander Rebel
Patrick Telford
Dagoberto Vargas
Kathryn Davies, Staff Advisor
Steven Beasley, Communications Support
Maja Bohinc, Administrative Assistant

March 2023



APPENDIX

Free Them Now

Report to CUPE BC on International Solidarity Partner Activities (2022-2023)

The labor movement is powerful in Iran. Last year was one of the liveliest years of labor protests in Iran. Workers in various oil centers, car factories, and service sectors such as municipalities, railways, electricity, and firefighters' departments, as well as teachers, retirees, and nurses, protest against living standards below the poverty line and against temporary contract work with the demand of cutting the hands of contractors, discrimination, inequality, embezzlement, against the securitization of the struggles and repressions of the government and corruption.

The labor movement has played a great role in the political mobilization of society and in bringing forth radical and nationwide demands. During the four months of the revolution, various labor sectors along with street protesters have begun successive strikes and gatherings. Widespread protests in the oil industry are the basis of nationwide strikes, and its scope extends to various labor centers at the community level. In this situation, nationwide labor strikes play an important role in strengthening the revolution. An important factor here is the issue of the livelihood of workers in strike conditions; therefore, [Free Them Now](#) has announced a support fund for striking workers and the families of imprisoned workers.

Previous Year's Work Report

Reflecting on the news of the current revolution and the worker's role in the heart of the revolution in English has been a regular task for *Free Them Now*. This news is published directly on the international worker's website [LabourStart](http://labourstart.org) (labourstart.org) with direct links to *Free Them Now*.

The fund to help striking workers, families of imprisoned workers and teachers is part of the *Free Them Now* activities. In this month, \$7,000 has been sent to Iran for numerous needs.

Free Them Now has written and sent letters to governments and international organizations emphasizing the Islamic Republic's global boycott and expulsion from the International Labour Organization and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNICEF). We are following this campaign.

A supporter of *Free Them Now* in England wrote to different music bands in an interesting initiative and called for the support of the *Free Them Now* fund. Fifty music bands from England, Uruguay, and Canada responded very well. Each is set to pay the proceeds of selling one of their songs as a donation to the *Free Them Now* fund. It will start in March 2023 joined by the celebration of International Women's Day on March 8 under the title of "Music Campaign for Women, Life, Freedom".

Free Them Now also has a TV show about the labor movement and imprisoned workers.

One part of *Free Them Now*'s work is with labor activists who are in danger of being arrested or killed by government security forces, those who must leave or hide in Iran, and aid workers who were on strike and were arrested. In this sector, \$2,000 in donations have been spent.

Activity Summary

- Regular coverage of information about the status of imprisoned workers and teachers
- Initiating and leading different campaigns of the day, including a campaign in support of imprisoned teachers, and a campaign against security filings following the arrest of Cécile Kohler and her husband.

Kohler is the head of the [National Federation of Education \(FNEC FP-FO\)](#) in France. These two union activists went to Iran in solidarity with the teacher strikes and were arrested under the title of espionage. A campaign against the arrest of a number of laborers, teachers, and social activists who were arrested with those two teacher union activists from France, under the title of cooperation with espionage conspiracy.

- The campaign to [Boycott the Islamic Republic of Iran](#) and its expulsion from the International Labor Organization (ILO) due to its crimes against workers, women, children, and the entire Iranian society like the expulsion of the Islamic regime from the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women.
- A campaign for: the release of those arrested during the current revolution and against executions; to assist the families of those arrested and in danger of execution; to assist the secret networks of doctors and nurses providing assistance to wounded demonstrators shot by the government.

- Initiating and starting an aid fund to help striking workers and families of imprisoned workers and teachers.
- Helping labor activists who flee from Iran or are in hiding due to the threat of security forces.
- Helping activists who go to court and the costs of hiring a lawyer, etc.
- Helping the families of workers who are imprisoned or workers who are fired due to protests.
- A weekly half-hour television program in Farsi on satellite for Iran.
- 67 thousand dollars have been spent on all the above activities in one year.

Free Them Now is working twenty-four hours to support the labor movement in Iran and gain support internationally.

February 01 2023

The Honduran Women's Collective (CODEMUH)

CoDevelopment Canada Report to CUPE BC on International Solidarity Partner Activities (2022-2023)

*EST. 1989
CUPE BC
Partner
since 2015*



CODEMUH
COLECTIVA DE MUJERES
HONDUREÑAS



CUPE supports CODEMUH's health and safety work with the mainly female workers of the maquilas, garment factories in the assembly for export zones in Honduras. This work includes the training of women maquila workers as shop floor health and safety advocates and public campaigns to improve working conditions and urge the government to enforce the labour code and uphold fundamental labour rights in the maquila sector. By focusing on occupational health and safety as it relates to women's experiences and rights, CODEMUH seeks to advance women's rights and prevent workplace violence and harassment. More specifically, CODEMUH accompanies workers with cases of wrongful

dismissal, workplace accommodation requests, and barriers to workers' receiving medical care for occupational illness or injury. CODEMUH's founder and Executive Director is Maria Luisa Regalado (represented in artwork to the left)

Partner Activities

During the 2022-2023 project period, CODEMUH conducted the following activities:

- A series of virtual and in-person meetings, including the CODEMUH Operational Team, Executive Director, and the Occupational Health Specialist, to gather medical advice and develop plans around the effective management of CODEMUH's administrative demands.
- Provision of qualified medical advice, in the area of occupational health, to 67 workers who present with assorted health problems resulting from workplace injury or disease.

- In-person interviews and participation in TV and Radio programs: CODEMUH engaged with media outlets in 27 separate incidences. Media coverage of CODEMUH spotlighted issues pertaining to women's human rights and labour rights, the failure of domestic authorities to guarantee the application of the law and access to justice, the unscrupulous and widespread practices of maquilas, such as the opportunistic and punitive closures of maquilas and the dismissal of workers with seniority and/or occupational illness or injury.
- Development of organizational social media presence, reach, and engagement`
- Advocacy actions: CODEMUH held 15 meetings with 130 workers from the companies Suyapa Apparel, New Holland, Gildan San Miguel, HANES Choloma, and Southern Apparel Contractors, to follow up on labour rights violations and plan next steps in engaging with public authorities in order to redefine redress and prevention strategies.
- 9 women leaders participated in the direction of public actions, as media spokespersons, and in pressings labour and human rights demands before the labour authorities, IHSS, and Judiciary.
- Provision of legal advice to 171 workers for rights violations; 91 were seen for the first time and 80 were workers who have received counsel in prior years
- 61 workers obtained 73 favorable administrative and/or judicial resolutions
- CODEMUH filed 110 administrative complaints with the IHSS Secretariat
- 67 people were evaluated by CODEMUH's Health Specialist, at work, in person and virtually; 65 were women, and 2 were men
- CODEMUH was invited by the Honduran government to participate in a draft update of the country's "Workplace Health and Safety Law"; CODEMUH conducted stakeholder outreach with elected representatives and trade unions, among others
- 220 women participated in CODEMUH-led training on Occupational Safety, Women's Health, Social Security, Women's Rights, and Labour Rights
- 35 women were trained on the Fundamental Principles of Labour Law
- 58 women were trained on the rights to health at work, social security as established by the Constitution of the Republic, the Labour Code, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)



Photo: Maquila workers during CODEMUH training session, Honduras, September 23, 2022

- 45 women were trained on the elimination of violence and harassment in the Workplace, as based on language adopted by the International Labour Organization in 2019
- 28 workers of the Gildan San Miguel maquila and Southern Apparel Contractor SAC participated in training on the identification and tracking of risks in the workplace
- 90 trained women in the use of social networks for activism
- 62 leaders participated in 8 training sessions on gender-based violence, national and international regulations on social security and workplace health, and methodological tools for the facilitation of group meetings. Three of these leaders disseminated this knowledge further in the community by facilitating four subsequent training sessions to 60 additional women maquila workers.
- Execution of a public awareness-raising campaign, Employment Yes, but with Dignity!, striving to denounce, stop, and prevent workplace violence and raise awareness among the general population and authorities around the causes, prevalence, and impacts of labour and human rights violations against women maquila workers. As part of the campaign, 5 leaders stepped up as spokespersons. The campaign achieved 3 radio spots and 3 short videos featuring workers' testimonials published in different social media platforms

Honduras is undergoing a critical period of change, which presents a host of both opportunities and challenges to progressive social organizations. In her inauguration speech, President Xiomara Castro, the first female head of state in Honduras, expressed her commitment to women and to human and labour rights. Since then, the Honduran government has repealed the 'hourly employment law', the result of effective lobbying and activism in which CODEMUH played an integral role. The repeal of this law resulted in the permanent employment of otherwise precarious workers and the extension of social security and labour rights to a wider range of workers. Since 2022, women's organizations have proposed draft bills to enshrine and enforce women's human rights. Nevertheless, as of March 2023, these proposals have failed to garner sufficient support among elected representatives and bureaucrats alike.

In 2022 alone, 20,000 maquila workers were laid off, due to company closures and general layoffs. Unfortunately, in order to shed legal and financial liability, maquilas have expanded the practice of closing and reopening operations under new corporate names. This issue is but one of several that CODEMUH has sought to have addressed by the Ministry of Labour.

In spite of both ongoing and new challenges, CODEMUH has succeeded in strengthening its capacity to influence a myriad of actors, including state and business bodies. Through persistent outreach to post-secondary institutions and embassies, moreover, it has seen the demands of women maquila workers advance in public discourse, traditional and social media, and stakeholder engagement. CODEMUH recognizes the role of international solidarity from its partners at CUPE BC, which has served to embolden CODEMUH and bolster its efforts to advance women's rights at work and in community.

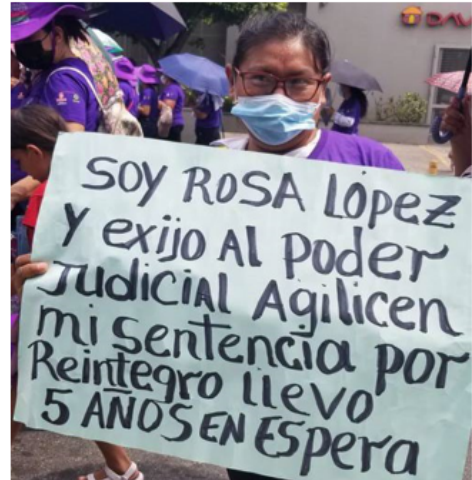


Photo: Rosa Lopez, maquila worker organized with CODEMUH, carrying sign reading, *"I am Rosa Lopez, and I demand that the judiciary expedite my sentence for reinstatement [at work]. I have been waiting for 5 years"*, Honduras, May 2, 2022

Maria Elena Cuadra Movement of Employed and Unemployed Women (MEC) – Nicaragua

CoDevelopment Canada Report to CUPE BC on International Solidarity Partner Activities (2022-2023)



EST. 1993

CUPE BC Partner since 1994

CUPE BC supports MEC's work with the mainly female workforce in the maquilas of Nicaragua, garment factories that assemble clothing for export to North America and Europe. MEC's work includes training of shop floor advocates, providing legal accompaniment for workers who file complaints with the labour tribunals, and providing a free legal clinic for women in marginalized communities. MEC is an explicitly feminist organization that carries out its labour and community organizing within the context of feminist struggle. The organization and its personnel have been experiencing acute political persecution from the Nicaraguan government under Daniel Ortega, most notably from 2018 to present. MEC's founder and Executive Director is Sandra Ramos.

Partner Activities

Since 2018, the Nicaraguan state has utilized all branches of government and state security forces to eliminate perceived threats posed by critics and opposition. During this time, the state has revoked the legal status of over 3,000 NGOs, over 40 percent of the NGO sector. In 2023, the Ortega regime, moreover, stripped 316 Nicaraguans of their citizenship and expelled them from the country. In cases of revocation of legal and citizenship status, the property of organizations and former citizens, such as office buildings and homes, have been expropriated.

Since 1994, MEC has been a leading voice of human rights defense and an effective political and social force among women in Nicaragua. Long having marked MEC a target, the Nicaraguan government revoked MEC's legal status in February 2022. As Sandra Ramos is a widely-recognized and vocal public figure in the area of labour and women's rights and maquila worker advocacy, more specifically, she has been the subject of state surveillance and intimidation. Despite this extraordinary organizational setback, MEC responded with urgency, agility, courage, and perseverance.

Despite heightened political risks, women maquila workers and community leaders continue to defend their women's human rights and labour rights in creative ways. In recognition of MEC's contributions to the field of occupational health and safety, the American Public Health Association awarded MEC the 2022 Leslie Nichols International Award in November 2022. While the upcoming fiscal year will pose ongoing political and social challenges to MEC, MEC has proven that its mission and mandate are more relevant and needed than ever and that they are up for the challenge, thanks in large part to the solidarity from their CUPE BC partners.



Association for Research and Social Action (NOMADESC) – Colombia

CoDevelopment Canada Report to CUPE BC on International Solidarity Partner Activities (2022-2023)



EST. 1999

CUPE BC Partner since 2003

NOMADESC is a Colombian human rights organization that works with Indigenous, Afro-Colombian, and peasant communities and labour organizations to defend and advance human rights in the southwest region of Colombia. CUPE BC supports NOMADESC's work to train rights defenders; assist community organizations to develop comprehensive plans to achieve peace in the conflict-ridden region; and pursue legal cases related to the killings and forced disappearances of rights defenders. Berenice Celeita is Founder and President of NOMADESC.



Honouring circle at a NOMADESC-organized meeting for truth and justice, February 2023

Partner Activities



Commemorative display at a NOMADESC-organized meeting for truth and justice, February 2023

In 2022, for the first time in its modern history, Colombians elected a progressive government, the first government from outside the long-dominant political parties. NOMADESC played a notable role in this historical achievement. Vice-President Francia Marques, from the Cali region, is an alumnus of the Intercultural University of the Peoples, which is run by NOMADESC and other partners. NOMADESC supported the local community during the

National Strike, which set the stage for the historic elections of 2022, by providing demonstrators and rights defenders with food, on-the-ground assistance, human rights watch, and legal support.

Following the 2022 elections in Colombia, social movements in Colombia took space to observe the first steps of the newly elected government, all the while working to keep their demands visible before a more receptive government. NOMADESC is deeply concerned that violence has escalated and that armed actors, mainly paramilitary groups, continue to terrorize the civilian population. The Colombian government has expressed a desire for peace and has started dialogue with armed groups. Violence, nevertheless, continues.

In Cali, paramilitary group terror has escalated. Union leaders have been murdered, and community organizations have been threatened and persecuted. NOMADESC itself received two threatening letters and, as a result, was forced to reassess and strengthen their security protocols. Nonetheless, NOMADESC's personnel live in fear and terror. In 2022-23, NOMADESC elaborated expansive programs and conducted actions that served to defend human rights in Cali and the surrounding region. With CUPE BC's support, NOMADESC was empowered to develop:

- Legal accompaniment for more than 100 cases
- Strategic litigation of 26 cases of serious violations that occurred in 2021
- Psychosocial accompaniment: psychological accompaniment, therapeutic accompaniment, and medical support to parents of murdered youth
- Research: reviewing technical evidence in the investigation process of those who executed and gave the orders to violate the rights to life, liberty, and tranquility of Colombians
- Organizational strengthening of the grassroots groups, Memoria Viva Colombia and Cumbre de los Pueblos
- An international symposium, hosting forums on the subject of territorial and other kinds of peace, with the participation of Indigenous, black, and peasant communities

- A series of academic and pedagogical activities, developed within the framework of the Intercultural University of the Peoples, to give visibility to the realities not covered by mainstream, corporate media and educational institutions
- Musical production to preserve historical memory denouncing cases of human rights violations. This is an important mode of knowledge and memory dissemination among diverse sectors.

Despite monumental advances made by the election of a new progressive government, Colombia's decades- long armed conflict has produced an empowered and militarized sector that proceeds to violate human rights and persecute community leaders. Faced with these threats, and bolstered with the solidarity of CUPE BC, NOMADESC continues to defend and work with community towards a future peace.



Father of murdered youth in NOMADESC-organized event honouring victims of state and paramilitary violence and their families, February 2023

National Union of Public Administration Workers – Havana Province Division (SPTAPH)

CoDevelopment Canada Report to CUPE BC on International Solidarity Partner Activities (2022-2023)

EST. 1961

CUPE BC Partner since 1995



SPTAPH numbers 49,000 members, mostly women, in 43 Locals and 1,600 units across the Province Havana. Its national union, SNTAP, counts over 275,000 members across Cuba.

CUPE BC's four-year project with SPTAPH, the Havana Province Division of the National Union of Public Administration Workers in Cuba (SNTAP), builds on a 28-year history of international solidarity and exchange between CUPE BC and SPTAPH. SPTAPH's four-year project with CUPE BC comprises three chief components:

1. Shipment of urgently needed supplies which SPTAPH and SNTAP require to represent and service its members and which are not readily available due to the U.S.-imposed blockade;
2. Workplace health and safety training for shop stewards from among Havana's municipal workers;
3. Facilitation of learning exchanges between CUPE BC and SPTAPH and SNTAP to promote the exchange of tools for carrying out transformative work in the workplace and community.



Left to right: Yaisel Osvaldo Pieter Terry, Secretary General of SNTAP; Sharon, CUPE delegate; Karen Ranalletta, CUPE BC President; Cheryl, CUPE delegate; Arisleidy's Hidalgo Leyva, Secretary General of SPTAPH, Havana, October 2022

Although the COVID-19 pandemic and coinciding supply chain crisis significantly delayed the project over the course of 2020 and 2021, medical supplies and automotive equipment, including two used vehicles, finally reached our partners in Cuba in October 2022!

Prior to October 2022, SNTAP had only a single aging vehicle with which to service its 275,000 members across the country. Now, thanks to CUPE BC and CUPE National, SNTAP has two vehicles, while SPTAPH finally has a vehicle with which to service its 49,000 members in Havana Province. With this vehicle, SPTAPH's Secretary-General, Arisleidys Hidalgo Leyva, will finally learn to drive!

Component one of the project complete, the project proceeded with the first of two CUPE BC- SPTAPH exchanges. In October 2022, a delegation that included CUPE BC and CUPE National travelled to Havana, Cuba, to meet with SPTAPH and SNTAP leaders and with local presidents -who are predominantly women – as well as rank-and-file members of the Havana Province Division. Delegates, including CUPE BC President, Karen Ranalletta, visited SPTAPH's training centre and municipal worksites, including those of outside workers in the area of sanitation. Delegates met with workers to learn about the issues they face in the workplace and exchanged information and experiences about their union structures and labour relations models in their respective countries.

With new equipment and resources in tow, SPTAPH is continuing with health and safety and union leadership training for shop stewards and Local unit presidents. This training will resume in the newly renovated SPTAPH training room.



Foreground: SPTAPH, SNTAP vehicle
Background: Cuban partners, delegates from Canada, Havana, October 2022



Photo: Just some of the medical supplies that delegates brought to a medical facility in Havana, October 2022



Photo: Local Presidents of SPTAPH, Havana, October 2022

CUPE BC's visit to its partners in Cuba and the solidarity that flows come at a most critical time for our Cuban partners, who face incredible hardship and scarcity due to the impact of over 240 restrictive measures imposed on Cuba by former President Trump in 2017 and maintained by

President Biden to date. This is on top of the existing 60 year-plus blockade – the most enduring regime of sanctions in modern history. As a result of these punitive measures, Cubans are deprived of access to essential medicines and medical equipment, basic school and office supplies, like paper, electronics, and auto parts. Through these challenges, CUPE BC and SPTAPH's partnership is as strong as ever, and Cuban workers persevere with dignity and courage.



*Photo: Mural with message that reads, **"The harassment and the measures against Cuba are inhumane and persist. This has to stop #NoMoreBlockade"***

Fact Sheet: Pensions and Retirement – CUPE BC Pensions Committee

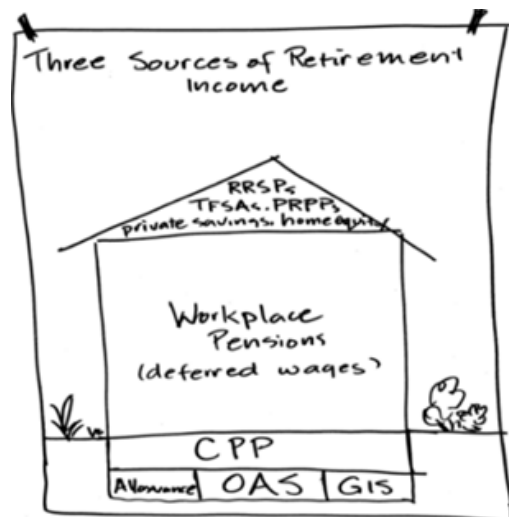
All workers need and deserve a secure retirement. Over the years, CUPE efforts have resulted in positive moves on retirement security but, we cannot stop now. We need to continue to strengthen existing legislation to help workers and every Canadian enjoy a dignified and secure retirement at the end of their career.

WHAT IS A PENSION PLAN?

A pension is your deferred wages – a portion of payroll is put aside to provide us with income when we retire – we've earned it! Pensions are one of the most important benefits that unions get for workers.

WHAT ARE THE SOURCES OF RETIREMENT INCOME?

There are three sources of retirement income. Using an analogy of a house, the foundation is the Canadian Retirement System which include the Canada Pension Plan (CPP), Old Age Security program (OAS) and the Guarantee Income Supplement



program (GIS). Most of us will have access to this amount upon retirement, whether we were unionized or not. The main floor of the house are workplace pensions. They are many types of workplace pensions such as Defined Benefit plans (DB), Defined Contribution plans (DC) and hybrid plans such as Targeted Benefit Plans (TB). Most unionized workers have some form of workplace pension. Non-unionized workers often don't have access to a workplace pension plan. The attic represents the personal saving plans such as Registered Retirement Savings Plans (RRSP) and Tax-free

Savings Accounts (TFSA). These are individual's private saving plans, for people who are able to put money aside for retirement, which is only a very small proportion of the population.

PUBLIC AND WORKPLACE PENSION PLANS

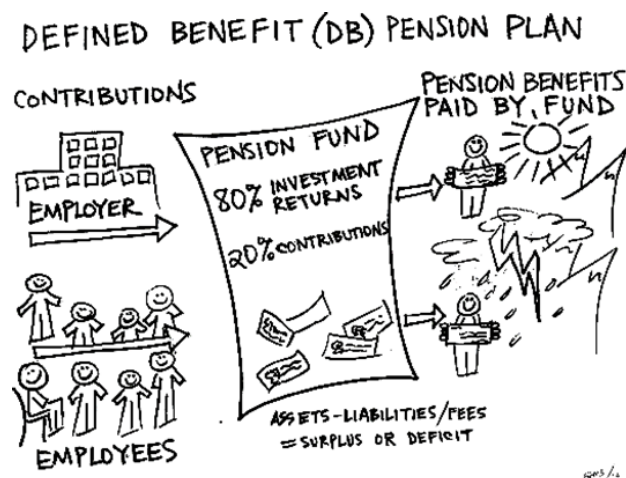
Canadian Retirement System

Canada Pension Plan (CPP) – This is a monthly benefit paid to workers who have contributed to the plan. Recent expansion of the CPP will provide a better public pension thanks to the labour movement's successful campaign to expand the CPP. The CPP is secure and fully indexed to keep pace with increases in the cost of living. The plan is portable across jobs throughout your working career. Employers can't opt out or change the plan's rules.

Old Age Security (OAS) & Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) – Individuals qualify for OAS by simply living in Canada. Canadian seniors from age 65 onwards receive just over 687 dollars per month from the OAS program. GIS is a sub-program of OAS specifically designed to eliminate senior poverty.



Workplace Pension Plans

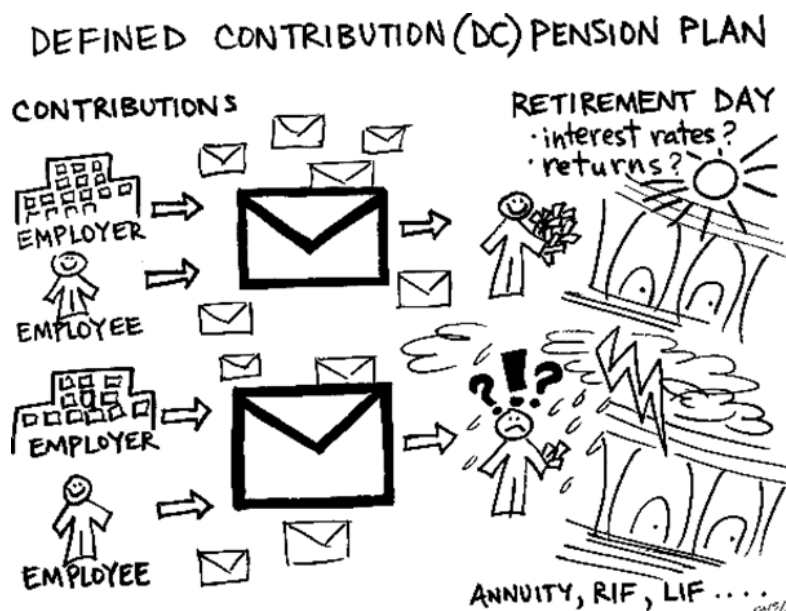


Defined Benefit (DB) plans – Defined benefit plans are the best way to provide a secure and predictable retirement income. These plans have been established and built up through many rounds of hard bargaining and have a proven track record of working. In a DB plan, your contributions go into a larger pension fund. The funds are invested, and the pension fund grows. Investment returns make up about 80% of the pension fund. On retirement, you will receive a pension

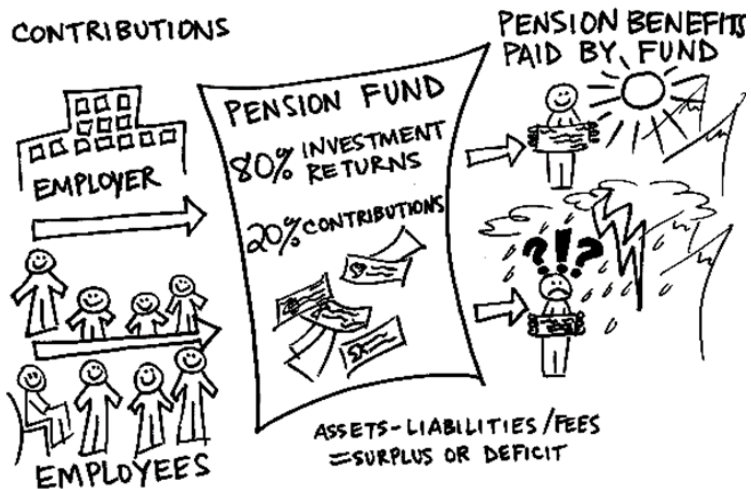
benefit based on a formula. This makes your retirement income guaranteed and predictable. DB plans are required to do a tri-annual valuation. If there is a shortfall, employers and sometimes active members will have to make additional contributions. Risk is borne by the plan.

Defined Contribution (DC)

Plans In a defined contribution plan, workers will make a defined contribution to individual accounts within the plan. Workers are not pooling their funds. Their contributions are invested separately, and it is unknown how much money you will have when you decide to retire. All the risk is borne by the member. This makes retirement planning very hard.



TARGET BENEFIT (TB) PENSION PLAN



Target Benefit (TB) Plan – A

target benefit plan is a hybrid of a DB and a DC plan.

Similar to a DB plan, your contributions go into a larger pension fund. Those funds are invested for you and when you want to retire you will receive a “target” pension.

This pension is not guaranteed. It will depend on the funds available in the plan. During poor market times, if the plan loses money, there is a chance that your pension will be reduced. There is

no responsibility for employers or plan members to make up any shortfalls. The risk is borne by the member.

PROTECTING MEMBERS WORKPLACE PENSIONS

Bringing pensions to the bargaining table

Often our pension plans are not part of our collective agreements, but this does not mean that pensions cannot be brought into some kind of collective bargaining or negotiation process. Pension plans are an important part of our members' compensation and employers should not be making unilateral plan changes. Collective agreements can also be amended to include language that effectively gives the union a veto over all plan changes.

Make use of CUPE pension resources. CUPE has many researchers and representatives with pension expertise, along with two pension specialists in the National Office who are able to assist with pension issues. CUPE has also relied upon external legal and actuarial advice when needed.

Grow your pension plan

As we continue to strive for pension improvement, we must also ensure all workers have dignified and secure retirement. We must continue to work on expanding coverage in our pension plans to provide access to precarious, part-time, casual, and temporary workers. Continue education for young workers and understanding the value and importance of a good pension plan.



Know your plan

Navigate your pension plan by visiting the plan's website. Review your annual pension statement, pension plan handbook and ask for help if you don't understand it. Take the CUPE Pension workshop to learn about pensions. Financial literacy is key to understanding and learning about your retirement income. There are many resources available to CUPE members. Contact your local executive and your National Representative.