



COMMITTEE REPORTS

FOR THE

CUPE BC CONVENTION

APRIL 2024

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Equity Committee Reports _____	4
Indigenous Committee _____	4
Persons with Disabilities Committee _____	7
Pink Triangle Committee _____	9
Racialized Workers Committee _____	12
Sectoral Committee Reports _____	14
Colleges Committee _____	14
Community Social Services Committee _____	17
K-12 Committee _____	22
Libraries Committee _____	28
Municipal Committee _____	32
Transportation Committee _____	34
Universities Committee _____	36
Standing Committee Reports _____	39
Education Committee _____	39
Environment & Climate Justice Committee _____	44
International Solidarity Committee _____	48
Free Them Now Report _____	50
CODEMUH Report _____	53
NOMADESC Report _____	56
SPTAPH Report _____	59
Occupational Health & Safety Committee _____	61
Pension Committee _____	63
Political Action Committee _____	65
Skilled Trades Committee _____	67
Women’s and Gender Rights Committee _____	69
Young Workers Committee _____	73

EQUITY COMMITTEE REPORTS

Indigenous Committee

The Indigenous Committee would like to acknowledge and extend our gratitude to Elder Sam George, who is from Səlílwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tseil-Waututh) and on whose unceded territory many CUPE BC members reside, as well as the territory of Sḵw̓xwú7mesh (Squamish) and xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) Nations. Elder Sam continues to provide us with wisdom and keep us grounded.

For this term, we have seventeen Indigenous workers on the committee and two Indigenous National Staff. Committee members are First Nations, non-status, Inuit, or Métis people and come from our home territories in British Columbia or are visitors from other parts of Turtle Island.

The committee met at the One Big Committee Meeting (OBCM) on October 11th, 2023. The committee was very excited to start planning the next two years. A member was elected for gender parity to the National Indigenous Council and Konrad Beston was the successful candidate. The committee went over protocols, reviewed the action plan from the previous term, and established a new action plan for this term. During the meeting, we reviewed the terms of reference and reviewed the committee budget. A photo of the committee was taken, and ideas were proposed for the Super Conference. The committee discussed that continuing to build relationships with the community and with Elder Sam is important to ensure that the good work continues to get done.

The committee held a full-day meeting on January 17th, 2024, and two evening Zoom meetings. The meeting on January 17th, 2024, was intended to be in person but due to weather and flooding at the British Columbia Regional Office (BCRO) building the meeting had to be shifted to virtual format. We had a young worker, Juno Diane from Local 1936, join the committee for the day, and it was a pleasure to have their voice at the table. Neil Adolph, the Political Action coordinator, arranged for a Guest speaker, Joan Phillip, an MLA for the Vancouver-Mount Pleasant riding. She is an Indigenous leader who was elected to her home territories. Joan shared her story and life experience in the political world and spoke about Indigenous land and holding our rights as Indigenous peoples.

The Committee is in the process of creating a one-page Indigenous Calendar with important dates that CUPE BC and locals should be aware of. This will assist

CUPE BC and locals in considering when to book meetings and create awareness statements, campaigns, articles, or information blasts. We will be meeting the Artist in February to discuss the art for the Indigenous Calendar.

The Committee met on February 5th & 12th, 2024 over Zoom to work on resolutions to the 2024 Convention, and began discussing the campaign for making June 21st, National Indigenous Day, a Statutory Holiday. The committee will continue to brainstorm to address this part of the action plan.

The Indigenous committee will provide Red Dress pins and the “Have You Seen Our Sisters” lanyards at convention to continue Educating members.

Events Members Attended or Acknowledged:

Elder Sam, along with CUPE BC and Donald Grant of Local 8911, laid a wreath at the National Aboriginal Veterans Day ceremony.

Committee members participated in or planned events and marches to honour and remember the MMIWG2S on February 14th. Some of the events included The Women’s Memorial March and the event at the Canadian Labour Congress Winter School. Debra Merrier assisted in organizing the event at Canadian Labour Congress Winter School.

Committee members attended events on October 4th – The National Day of Awareness and Action for the MMIWG2S - in their communities.

Upcoming Events:

- May 16, 2024 – National Moose Hide Campaign
- June 21, 2024 – National Indigenous Peoples Day
- September 30, 2024 – National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (Orange Shirt Day)

The Indigenous Committee would like to thank Karen Ranalletta, Trevor Davies, and the CUPE staff – Kiran Kooner, Maja Bohinc, Darci Schmid, and Morgan McCrystal – for all of their support and time.

I, Debra Merrier, would like to thank (Meegwetch) the Indigenous Committee members for all their hard work over the first year.

Respectfully submitted:

Debra Merrier, Chair
Taily Wills, Co- Chair
Kerra Michel, Recording Secretary
Konrad Beston
Shawn Bortolon
Nicole Dargent
Yvonne Desabrais
Jonathan Dyer
Simone Gauthier
Michael Gonzales
Karen Green

Lisa Gregory
Sherri Havig
Sarah Olson
Charity Spalding
Scott Sywake
Tracy Telford
Juno Diane, Young Worker Appointee
Deea Bailey, Staff Advisor
Greg Taylor, Communications Advisor
Darci Schmid, Administrative Assistant

March 2024

Persons with Disabilities Committee

With both returning members and new, the CUPE BC Persons with Disabilities committee has been finding multiple and unique ways to bring forward positive change for CUPE members and beyond. The committee invites you all to come visit us during convention – we have campaign information available at our committee table, along with awareness-raising buttons. Please wear and use these items as much as possible to spread the word about invisible disabilities.

We continue to build on our campaign that came out of a resolution at the 2022 Convention, “Not All Disabilities Are Visible”, and continue to liaise with the CUPE BC Transportation Committee to get BC Transit to reinforce accessible seating. We are also calling on all Employers and the B.C. Government to implement a Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) for workers with disabilities receiving long-term disability.

As new legislation is unrolling from the province via the Accessible BC Act, which will include further support and protections for workers with disabilities seeking accommodations on the job, we are looking for all members to work together to ensure that the rights of those with disabilities are being met. The mandate coming from the Accessible BC Act is to work together to identify, remove and prevent barriers for accessibility. This includes preventing barriers that are physical, cognitive, communicative, technological, attitudinal, and environmental for all.

We are also advocating for employers and locals to bargain the option for workers with disabilities to do remote work when possible, especially for medical accommodations. Lastly, we encourage all to consider that even in conference spaces such as Convention, accommodations can be diverse and not strictly limited to wheelchair space –sometimes it’s the standing desk, a spot close to speaker or close to exits, or many others. We invite everyone to remember when seeking accommodations: not all disabilities are visible.

We are grateful to the invaluable Darci Schmid for keeping us on task and reminding us of deadlines. Thank you to Karen Ranalletta and Trevor Davies for their support of the Committee and words of encouragement. Finally, thank you to the CUPE BC Executive, it has been an honour to serve with all of you.

While “No one stands alone in CUPE”, we are often reminded that the actions of One Impact us ALL, and “Not All Disabilities Are Visible”.

Respectfully submitted:

Laurie Whyte, Chair
Monica Brady, Co-Chair
Laura Hagar-Gaube, Recording Secretary
Allan Henricks
Lisa Hoang
Kyle Richardson
Azu (Azucena) Rudland

Deanna Sellers
Lisa Turpin
Brittany Wiesner
Sarah Cibart, Staff Advisor
Jessica Wilkin, Communications Advisor
Darci Schmid, Administrative Assistant

March 2024

Pink Triangle Committee

CUPE BC continues to support two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer members. The Pink Triangle Committee works for all CUPE members through lobbying on issues like gender identity and gender expression, as well as standing up to individuals or groups who spout hatred towards 2SLGBTQIA+ persons.

Our committee met in person on two occasions since our last report in April 2023. The first was at the One Big Committee meeting on October 11th, 2023, and again on January 10th, 2024. We reviewed the Committee Action Plan, possible resolutions to convention, and discussed the rise of hate and the far right as seen by anti-trans and anti-SOGI protests around the province. No one should be harassed, threatened, or subjected to violence because of their sexual orientation, gender expression, or gender identity.

This hatred is spreading across the country, and includes discriminatory policies introduced by governments in New Brunswick, Saskatchewan, and Alberta. CUPE has an obligation to rise in solidarity by educating our members and the broader community on promoting equity, safety, and anti-oppression in our workplaces and communities.

On October 10th, 2023, CUPE BC President Karen Ranalletta, GVP Tony Rebelo and myself, along with Candace Rennick, the Secretary-Treasurer from CUPE National, gathered with other groups, comprised of labour, faith, students, parents, and the broader 2SLGBTQIA+ community, at a rally on the grounds of the Saskatchewan Legislature in Regina, Saskatchewan. The rally was to show support for the trans community and to stand against the “Not Withstanding Clause” being used by the Moe government to shield the Saskatchewan government's controversial school pronoun policy from court challenges. The Parent's Rights legislation requires parental consent when children under 16 want to use different names or pronouns at school. This kind of legislation causes harm to trans, two-spirit, and non-binary youth and is similar to the New Brunswick government's Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Policy 713.

Since then, Alberta Premier Danielle Smith has unveiled sweeping changes to Alberta's policies disallowing students to identify as who they are by changing their names and pronouns, as well as limiting trans students from participating in sports and accessing gender affirming healthcare. Premier Smith admits that these changes were based on “concerns of what could happen” and are not based on current

evidence. Government-introduced policies such as this will lead to significant negative health outcomes for our members and the broader community, including increased risk of suicide and self-harm.

We will continue to work with CUPE National, CUPE BC and the BC Federation of Labour to educate our members on these issues and oppose hate at every opportunity.

Despite the threats of protests and the possibility of aggressive protestors, CUPE BC, District Councils and locals participated in Pride parades, picnics, and Dyke & Trans Marches across the province. We had a great turnout in Nanaimo, Victoria, Fraser Valley, Vancouver, Prince George, Quesnel, and Richmond's First Pride walk, to name a few. If your local is interested in getting involved in your local Pride event and need support, please reach out to your CUPE BC's Pink Triangle Committee or our CUPE Local Community Organizer.

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

Lastly, we would like to remind locals and district councils that we are transitioning from the term "Brothers/Sisters" and using more gender-neutral terms like "delegates", "friends", "folks", and "fellow-workers." Another step locals and district councils can take in making a more inclusive union is to create a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Representative position on their executive or a contact person within their membership to support not only members who identify as 2SLGBTQIA+, but for those who identify as Indigenous, racialized, or persons with disabilities.

Respectfully submitted:

Joyce Griffiths, Chair
Hailey Fielden, Co-Chair
Leslie Hilder, Recording Secretary
Sophie Bennett
Page DeWolfe
Zoey Froemgen
Shamus Halvorsen
Tabatha Ikonomou

Vivian Oosthoek
Claire O'Sullivan
Stevie Poling
Kate Sullivan
Cody Wilson
Matt Lensen, Staff Advisor
Jessica Wilkin, Communications Advisor
Darci Schmid, Administrative Assistant

March 2024

Racialized Workers Committee

Bula, Namaste, Salaam, Mabuhay,

Since the beginning of the October 2023 term to the present, the CUPE BC Racialized Workers Committee has been working on equity and inclusion issues, and advocating for the rights and interests of racialized workers, to foster more inclusive work environments within CUPE BC and beyond. A key focus of the Committee is raising awareness about systemic racism and doing what we can on the ground to break down barriers. The Committee's goal is to educate union members and the broader community about the challenges faced by racialized workers, address the importance of systemic barriers to equality, and do what we can to break down some of those barriers for workers.

In addition to raising awareness, the Committee has been engaged in advocating for policy change addressing systemic racism, equity, and inclusion in the workplace. For example, Alternate DVP for Racialized Workers, Cindy Ozouf, will speak on behalf of her local to the Labour Relations Code Review Panel this spring about improvements to the Labour Relations Code that would protect racialized workers, such as sectoral bargaining and the importance of maintaining card checks.

This term the Committee is also focusing on grassroots engagement with racialized members. All the individual members of the Committee are strong activists and leaders within their locals and are working to support their comrades with getting involved in the union and to represent labour in the larger social justice movement. Committee members attend Labour4Palestine on behalf of their locals, as well as bring a racial justice and workers lens to housing advocacy groups such as the Vancouver Tenant's Union and RentStrikeBargain. Multiple Committee members are also working on their Parent Action Committees (PAC) to bring attention to the CUPE BC Seamless Childcare Campaign and its racial justice components.

Looking ahead, the Committee will continue to advocate for progressive policy change, support racialized workers, and raise awareness on the importance of addressing systemic racism in the workplace and in the community. The Committee aims to create a toolkit of resources that will help shape an equitable society where all workers are treated with dignity and respect, regardless of their race or ethnicity. We are also looking towards how best to advocate for the housing rights of our racialized members.

Finally, we are especially proud of the ongoing grassroots work of Committee members in their locals to build the capacity of racialized workers in the union. We aim to continue our focus on supporting those efforts moving forward.

In Solidarity.

Respectfully submitted:

Edward Parsotam, Chair
Cindy Ozouf, Co-Chair
Jaspreet Kaur, Recording Secretary
Shaneza Bacchus
Sharon Chu
Ravneet Dhillon
Sita Kumar
Brandon Nakasato
Sherry Ogasawara

Arielle Reid
Cynthia Schadt
Minakshi Sidhu
Mathews Tharakan
Morning Star Trickey
Anusha Balram, Staff Advisor
Greg Taylor, Communications Advisor
Darci Schmid, Administrative Support

March 2024

SECTORAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Colleges Committee

The CUPE BC Colleges Committee is composed of local presidents or designates from B.C. 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.

The Committee extends this solidarity and friendship to all CUPE BC Colleges and hopes that other colleges will come onboard for the next term. We also say thank you to our members who support our work.

What matters to this committee and why:

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (EDI&A)

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, accessible, and safe workspaces. Our members are active participants in EDI&A committees and are committed to effecting change in their workplaces.

Truth and Reconciliation

CUPE members in B.C. colleges are very conscious of the impact of Truth and Reconciliation. We are working together at our worksites to promote the decolonization of 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.

Engagement

We recognize the opportunity that comes from having a provincial government that is favorable to the post-secondary sector, and look forward to continuing to work together to make improvements that benefit our members and the public.

Post-Secondary Funding

The B.C. Government is in the process of reviewing the funding model for B.C.'s Post-secondary System. In July 2022, CUPE BC submitted a comprehensive proposal that outlines our vision for post-secondary funding in British Columbia. The current funding model has not been updated in 20 years, and this review has not produced any changes yet.

The urgency of the review, and the lack of improved funding, is felt in the rising cost of tuition, housing, and the affordability crisis for all people of British Columbia.

In Closing

Our committee is committed to educating our membership, employers, and the 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.

As a sectoral committee, our challenges are ongoing, and resolutions are difficult to attain in the short-term.

We continue to advocate for:

- the continued growth of CUPE members in the public post-secondary sector
- affordable and accessible public post-secondary education for current and future generations of workers and students
- the preservation of good, unionized jobs in the sector.

We hope you will support our resolutions lobbying the provincial government to increase funding for all public post-secondary institutions, and short-term support to address funding loss due to the cap on international students.

Respectfully submitted:

Tiffany McLaughlin, Chair
Kristy Brons, Co-Chair
Rose Palozzi, Recording Secretary
Shane Johnson
Michelle Waite

Leanne Yearley
Nick Angrignon, Staff Advisor
Greg Taylor, Communications Advisor
Maja Bohinc, Administrative Assistant

March 2024

Community Social Services Committee

The Community Social Services (CSS) sector has got your back. Workers in this sector are responsible for the care, support, and safety of our most vulnerable community members. However, it is a challenging time in the sector, and many of our own CSS workers are left feeling unsupported and unsafe themselves. A major focus of this term's committee discussions has been the safety of community members and clients, as well as our own CSS workers, and committee members have spent the year developing creative ideas to promote safety in the workplace for all.

Committee members are dedicated to raising public awareness of these challenges and to push for change. Recognizing this sector's capacity for resiliency, deep compassion, and tenacity among its members, this committee is fueled and motivated to continue to address crucial issues across the sector.

CSS Worker Safety

Due to critical and ongoing recruitment and retention issues, CSS employees are too often reporting overwhelming workloads leading to stress and burnout. Additionally, CSS workers can be faced with exposure to traumatic stories and the painful or fearful experiences of others due to working with marginalized, vulnerable, and at-risk individuals. This is known as vicarious trauma, and it is being observed at unprecedented rates. Furthermore, 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 verbal abuse or harassment to damage to personal property and physical and/or sexual assault.

The CSS committee has engaged in collective discussions to seek solutions and avenues of support for CSS workers that are feasible and manageable. Firstly, the committee has recommended that CUPE BC provide a platform for connecting executives and stewards from various CSS locals across the province. In this sector, an alliance of CUPE's CSS locals has not yet been established, and it is the committee's hope to change that. The proposed sessions would give CSS executives the opportunity to address ongoing recruitment and retention issues, high levels of stress and unsafe working conditions across the province and sector; this would also

be an avenue for sharing ideas, problem-solving, and giving locals a chance to collaborate towards improved working conditions for CSS workers.

Secondly, the committee has realized that it is difficult to provide meaningful and specific supports to CSS workers when there is a lack of concrete data on the day-to-day troubles that workers are facing. Gathering appropriate data from workers regarding workplace strengths, needs, gaps, and visions for optimal service will be critical in order to move forward with a specific, measurable, and reasonable plan to address these challenges. The committee has proposed that questions regarding safe staffing levels, workloads, violence, and other issues be included in pre-bargaining surveys, as well as other surveys that are being sent out to members.

Safety for at-risk and vulnerable community members

It is becoming increasingly obvious that many of our at-risk community members do not have access to safe housing or services that support basic human rights, such as water, electricity, sanitation, garbage services, etc. Unfortunately, the cyclical pattern of displacement is having a significant impact on vulnerable community members, particularly when the cruel practice of encampment teardowns is happening more frequently. Centralized resources supporting the basic human rights of vulnerable populations is essential; thus, committee members envision designated areas, in proximity to essential services, for unhoused and vulnerable citizens to reside.

The committee also recognizes that the lack of supports for those who seek addictions treatment is a significant barrier to recovery from addictions. Often, those who struggle to address addictions issues seek detox treatment only to be left waiting for weeks, and sometimes months, before being able to access long-term treatment. The committee is committed to creating resolutions that highlight the existing gap between detox and long-term treatment programs and to advocate for the development of additional treatment options to help close this gap.

In truth, we have been doing this for many years, but this year we have some very good news to report. This past year, our BC NDP Government, in conjunction with several partner agencies and organizations, has established and funded a one-of-a-kind pilot project called the Road To Recovery Initiative (see <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2023PREM0069-001909> and <https://www.bccsu.ca/road-to-recovery>). This program provides same-day service from initial assessment to detox, with seamless

transition to treatment and then second stage housing, care, and support as needed. For now, this is a pilot project in Vancouver that is being closely studied and continuously improved, but the intention is that this program will be mandated to run within every health authority in B.C. We applaud the government, Vancouver Coastal Health, including St. Paul's Hospital and the Regional Addiction Program, Providence Health's Indigenous Wellness and Reconciliation Team, BC Centre on Substance Use, the University of BC, and the Diamond Foundation. Very well done! However, we are also strongly urging that this initiative be multiplied across the province just as soon as it is feasible to do so. Lives are at stake!

Safe Spaces

The CSS Committee sees the potential for collaborations with other sectors to support the ongoing development of educational materials or tools to support worker safety. Without losing sight of the importance of violence risk assessment, a key focus this year has been “safe spaces”. Reviewing existing materials available through CUPE National and communications with other CUPE BC Committees will guide our committee's future discussions and help to identify any gaps.

Community Social Services Month

March is recognized as Community Social Services month. One of the goals of the Community Social Services Committee is to promote a richer understanding of the sector and its employees, as well as to raise awareness of key issues. In most other places in Canada, March is Social Work Month and tends to focus primarily on Social Workers as a professional group. We are proud of the fact that, in B.C., it is a recognition of the whole broader field of CSS rather than just professional social workers. This includes SO many more people that are also doing great social services work in our province. While social workers are very important, this sector includes other professional and paraprofessional workers in diverse fields such as child care, infant development, refugee and other immigration services, indigenous family and community services, transition houses, counselling for both children and adults fleeing violence, victims of crime support services, addictions and mental health counselling, crisis lines, referral services, residential and day programs serving those with developmental disabilities, employment services, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, recreational therapy, life skills training, emergency and supportive housing, and many varieties of outreach work.

Recommendations to the Executive Board

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:

- Recommendation: Committee members are hoping to provide an online platform to connect CSS sector locals to discuss current issues and share ideas and solutions about the challenges in the sector and issues members face, especially mental health, wellness, and violence in the workplace. CSS locals, unlike locals in some other sectors, are not currently connected formally.
- Recommendation: The committee would like to encourage the inclusion of questions about safe staffing levels on pre-bargaining surveys provided to all CSS members. It is also recommended to incorporate these questions into any other surveys that might be sent to locals outside of bargaining preparations. Questions could include information on staffing levels, client needs, workloads, and the expectations of workers.
- Recommendation: CUPE BC will support Canadian Drug Policy Coalition letter to Premier David Eby, Minister of Mental Health and Addictions Jennifer Whiteside, Minister of Health Adrian Dix, and the Provincial Health Officer Bonnie Henry, regarding PHEAT (Provincial Health Ethics Advisory) ethical analysis of Prescribed Safer Supply (PSS).

Additionally, the CSS committee offers support for other initiatives across CUPE BC; for example, this committee endorses the BC Seamless Childcare Campaign.

Committee Resolutions to Convention

In our resolution submissions to Convention 2024, the CSS Committee has prioritized two key areas discussed above: designated areas for encampments in proximity to basic, essential services, and addressing the gap that exists between available detox and treatment programs for vulnerable populations.

Respectfully submitted:

Lee-Ann Lalli, Co-Chair
Bob Crozier, Co-Chair
Gabby Cameron, Recording Secretary
Tiffany De Ruyter De Wildt
Valkyrie Hathiramani
Leaza MacGregor

Valeria Mancilla
Michelle Stephen
Mike Varga
Carmen Sullivan, Staff Advisor
Dan Gawthrop, Communications Advisor
Maja Bohinc, Administrative Assistant

March 2024

K-12 Committee

Who We Are

K-12 workers keep schools running. They include education assistants, clerical staff, custodians/caretakers, school librarians, Indigenous support workers, IT workers, child and youth care workers, Strong Start facilitators, early childhood educators, trades and maintenance, bus drivers, and many others. All K-12 support workers play vital roles in the public education system. Their dedication, care, and commitment contribute significantly to the well-being and development of students and families. They provide invaluable support, guidance, and resources that help nurture a positive learning environment for all learners. Recognizing and appreciating the efforts of these individuals is crucial for fostering a thriving educational community. K-12 workers do an important job ensuring the successes of children and families, as well as safeguarding the quality of public education for everyone involved.

Positive connections with direct student support workers, clerical staff, custodians/caretakers, and other support staff provide children with a sense of stability and trust. These connections can also serve as important sources of guidance, encouragement, and mentorship, helping children navigate challenges, develop resilience, and reach their full potential. When children feel valued and supported by their school community, they are more likely to engage actively in learning, participate in extracurricular activities, and build meaningful relationships with peers. This positive school environment contributes to their overall well-being and lays the foundation for academic success and personal growth. K-12 workers foster positive connections between members and students daily and this is essential for creating a nurturing and supportive school culture that promotes the holistic development of every child.

Member Organizing

As union activists, we know our greatest strength comes from standing together in solidarity to make change. To do that, we need to organize our membership to take action to tackle the most important issues we face as education workers. The K-12 Presidents Council recently passed a motion to submit a cost share proposal to CUPE National to organize members through member-to-member conversations about violence in the workplace and funding for public education.

We know that to address violence in the workplace, the public education system needs more funding to ensure every kid gets proper support in the classroom, and that workers aren't overloaded and burning out, that they are able to do their jobs safely. This member organizing campaign will include asking members to sign a letter to the government demanding increased funding to public education so that all members can do their jobs safely and effectively.

This campaign will not only rally members to take action on an important workplace issue, it will also help locals map their membership, create effective contact lists, and engage new activists. This work is key to making sure that come time for bargaining, our locals know who their members are, where they are, how to contact them, and whether they are ready to take action to demand safe, fair working conditions.

Bargaining

K-12 collective agreements are set to expire on June 30th, 2025. The 2019 – 2022 Provincial Framework Agreement for the K-12 Sector saw historic gains for K-12 workers, with 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, the highest public sector wage increases seen in decades.

The PFA also allocated significant monies to local bargaining tables, giving local bargaining committees the ability to make improvements to their collective agreements, including trade market adjustments, more hours for Education Assistants, wellness funds, and other benefits to support members.

With a provincial election between now and the next round of bargaining, it is more important than ever that we work together to organize our members so that we are ready to fight for a fair contract and address the many issues the K-12 sector needs to address.

Violence in the Workplace

The K-12 committee is passionate about the need to create a positive and safe place for all support staff in our schools. Whether you are a bus driver, clerical, custodian or Education Assistant, all of us have seen or experienced the increase of violence in our workplace. As a committee we are dedicated to ensuring everyone can go to work and feel safe. The surge in violence within the K-12 sector is an alarming trend that

demands immediate attention and comprehensive solutions. Over recent years, educational institutions, traditionally considered safe havens for learning, have witnessed a disturbing rise in violent incidents. These incidents not only jeopardize the safety and well-being of students and educators but also undermine the fundamental purpose of schools as nurturing environments for intellectual growth. As a committee we support the resolutions being brought forward by the Health and Safety Committee. These safety concerns are not just happening in our sector; they affect all CUPE members in one way or another. Throughout the committee's term we will continue to discuss this issue and help propose strategies to ensure our members' safety.

Recruitment and Retention

The recruitment and retention of support staff in the K-12 sector continues to be a concern. Whether our members are directly supporting students, cleaning and maintaining our buildings, ensuring district hardware and software programs are working and current, or working with district financial accounts or the general running of the school office, school districts are struggling to find and maintain a workforce. The contract that was negotiated for the 2022-25 did see our members have the best wage increase we have received in years – however, we are still not able to attract workers to this sector in numbers sufficient to adequately support our students and maintain our buildings.

Many of our K-12 members are working at below market rate and we lose them to other employment opportunities. We are now hiring workers who are underqualified at best, and the training and extra workload falls onto our members, resulting in burnout and workplace injuries. The Provincial Government needs to provide adequate funding which will result in better supports for students as well as safe and well-maintained worksites.

Provincial Job Evaluation

As reported in 2023, wages in the K-12 sector are inconsistent across the province, and within regions. The Provincial Job Evaluation Committee is working to address these disparities. The Provincial Job Evaluation Working Group has been meeting almost every week since June to speed up the process and so that we can move into the next phase: Data Analysis.

The vast majority of school districts have completed the matching, and the Committee is working on completing the rating of unique jobs, and when necessary, creating additional benchmarks. The next steps will include data analysis, the creation of a Maintenance Manual, and the development of an Implementation Plan.

Support Staff Education Committee

The Support Staff Education Committee (SSEC) is a joint provincial committee that provides support to locals and school districts for K-12 support staff training. The committee was thrilled to launch a new training module for Education Assistants called Inclusive Learning and Understanding Behaviour. The module is available online and takes approximately 4.5 hours to complete.

The Committee also facilitates locals and school districts accessing funds allocated to them for training on anything that helps support staff to do their jobs. This year the committee was happy to expand this per the Provincial Framework Agreement, to enable the provision of education opportunities to enhance and support the understanding, recognition and reconciliation process with Indigenous Peoples, and to enhance and support equity, inclusion and diversity as well as cultural safety.

Public Education Funding in B.C.

In order to address the many challenges facing the K-12 sector, we need the Provincial Government to increase funding for public education. From building more schools, to staffing them properly, to making class sizes smaller to accommodate all learning levels, to adding direct student support workers and other support staff, increased funding is key to making public education a place where workers can do their jobs safely while supporting students.

A lack of funding creates challenges for every worker in the public education system. We know districts are struggling to recruit and retain tradespersons to keep schools up and running. Clerical are overloaded in their work keeping school systems together. Strong Start and Early Childhood Educators are preparing kids for schools with limited time to prepare. Custodians are committed to keeping schools clean and healthy but with increasing numbers of students, the same amount of space takes longer to clean. Kids and families deserve a well-funded public education sector that allows every student to succeed and every worker to do their job safely.

Childcare

The K-12 Sector continues to participate in CUPE BC's Childcare Campaign to see 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. While several Districts across the province have gotten programs up and running quite successfully, there is still the need for the 0–5-year-old spaces, and the rest of the Districts need to work towards bringing the programs into their Districts as well.

Visionary districts like the Campbell River School District have listened to their local CUPE leadership and accessed government funding to build new spaces for before and after childcare, staffed with Education Assistants who will have full time hours, and who can deliver inclusive, accessible child care in their community.

We see real potential for school districts to address recruitment and retention of education assistants (EAs) by staffing before- and after-care programs with workers who wish to work additional hours on top of their regular part-time positions as EAs. We also see the potential of allowing Districts to offer childcare and before- and after-school care on Professional Development Days, during winter/spring break and during the summer. Being able to provide care when parents/guardians are working and not just when school is in session gives parents the opportunity of knowing that there is a well-regulated, educational program offered for the care of their children.

We urge members to support the K-12 Committee's resolution for CUPE BC to continue the Childcare Campaign, and sign on to CUPE BC's Childcare Campaign and to talk to their school districts and trustees about the importance of publicly funded, accessible childcare.

Respectfully submitted:

Amber Leonard, Chair
Dave Bollen, Co-Chair
Jennie Copeland, Recording Secretary
Dawn Armstrong
Jeanette Beauvillier
Rena Bens
Tammy Carter
Sharon MacKenzie

Jane Massy
Tammy Murphy
Denise Naef
Lindy Pinson
Jessica Teasdale
Kirsten Daub, Staff Advisor
Greg Taylor, Communications Advisor
Nancy Dhillon, Administrative Support

February 2024

Libraries Committee

The CUPE BC Library Committee is a multi-sector committee composed of public library workers (regional and municipal systems), colleges, universities, and K-12. The members of the 2023-2025 committee are a great mix of experienced returning members and members new to committee life. The populations we serve are very different, yet many issues are similar. The committee continues to advocate for more funding and support for all libraries across Canada, while also promoting the work of CUPE BC Library workers.

The committee's main action plan for the term focuses on issues that continue to affect all library workers. This includes undertaking a campaign to better promote October as Library Month, continuing to be involved with BCLA through participation in their annual conference and support of Summer Reading Club, and developing and promoting resources for Library workers regarding health and safety in the workplace.

Meetings

The Committee met for the first time in person for the One Big Committee Meeting in October 2023. The committee's second meeting was held virtually on January 16th due to the CUPE BC office flood. We were very grateful that our meeting was not cancelled, and that staff were able to shift to virtual mode so quickly. Many thanks to the amazing CUPE BC staff for making everything work through such a stressful time.

Prior to the COVID-19 shutdown, meetings were not possible to hold in a hybrid format. Committee members did not have the option to attend virtually and were often left in less-than-ideal situations when travelling during the winter months. New procedures have now given us the option to have all committee meetings (minus the OBCM) in a hybrid format. There are of course pros and cons to the new format. It is fantastic that we can offer the option to attend online if the weather does not permit safe travel, if someone had accessibility issues, and if childcare or pet care is an issue etc. On the flip side, we all know the challenges that arise from having a meeting with two formats: it adds another level of stress for people who don't enjoy or struggle with using technology, and it can be a less productive meeting if a suitable workspace is not available. There is also something to be said about having meetings purely virtual; it leaves less time for personal connection and can often seem isolating.

We thank CUPE BC for making this change as we believe it will make participation more accessible for everyone.

BC Library Association (BCLA)

The committee continues to foster a relationship with BCLA by way of CUPE BC's sponsorship of their annual BC Library Conference. The committee will have several members in attendance at this year's Conference, as well as a booth set up during the day. Unfortunately, this year's conference is taking place at the same time as our CUPE BC Convention, therefore we will not have as many members in attendance as we would like.

Summer Reading Club

2023 was another record-breaking year for Summer Reading Club (SRC) participation. The theme Journey Through Time (time travel) was very well received and we look forward to 2024's theme – World of Curiosities.

CUPE BC continues to be the proud co-sponsor of the BC SRC, the biggest free literacy program for children and families in our province. This program is estimated to reach over 200 communities across the province. SRC typically runs from July to August with over 163,000 children receiving medals featuring the CUPE BC logo. This program provides fun, free activities that promote literacy, celebrating and highlighting the very important work our members do in delivering these services.

B.C. is the only province in Canada that has their SRC sponsored by an entity other than the TD Bank, which is a massive achievement for the labour movement and CUPE BC.

October Library Month

A major focus of this term will be developing a plan with CUPE BC to promote October as Library Month. This includes further promotion of CUPE National's annual Library Month campaign and developing CUPE BC-specific resources. We seek to provide information for people to be able to better advocates for library services and funding through the appropriate channels.

Launched in 2006 by the Canadian Library Association (CLA), October is a time for libraries and library partners throughout Canada to raise awareness of the valuable role that libraries have for Canadians. It is also an opportunity for those not familiar with their local library to visit and experience all the free services available.

More than just a place to find books, libraries promote cultural awareness, engage in the community, provide educational programs, support freedom of expression and so much more.

Canadian Library Month also includes several other special days and weeks:

- Canadian Library Workers Day (third Friday in October) via the Canadian Federation of Library Associations
- Canadian School Library Day (fourth Monday in October) via Canadian School Libraries
- First Nations Public Library Week (first week in October) via Ontario Library Service
- Ontario Public Library Week (third week in October) via Ontario Library Association
- Semaine des bibliothèques publiques du Québec (third week in October) via Association des bibliothèques publiques du Québec
- Saskatchewan Library Week (third week in October) via Saskatchewan Library Association

OH&S

In the aftermath of COVID, many library workers have reported issues regarding increased violence in the workplace. Working alone, adequate staff levels and training play a large role in staff safety, which continues to be exacerbated by the lack of funding made available to libraries. The sector also continues to see an increase in issues involving recruitment and retention, staff burnout and workload.

The committee will continue to raise awareness about the ongoing OH&S concerns, as we believe this to be a crisis in our sector that has yet to be fully addressed. We eagerly await the changes that WorkSafe BC will be putting out regarding violence regulations, in order to develop our own plan.

The Committee would like to thank our staff advisors Harry Nott and Mitch Guitard, and admin staff Darci Schmid, for their invaluable help and support. We would also like to thank Tom McKenna for his outstanding expertise on OH&S issues that proved invaluable to the committee's action plan for the term.

Respectfully submitted:

Nicole Cabrejos, Chair
Fatima Ferreira, Co-Chair
Natalie Fouquette, Recording Secretary
Laurie Angus
Fiona Brady Lenfesty
Marty James
Wendy Jewell
Liza Saayman

Leah Stubbings
Helen Varga
Jasper Wong
Mitch Guitard, Staff Advisor
Harry Nott, Staff Advisor
Kathryn Davies, Communications Advisor
Darci Schmid, Administrative Support

March 2024

Municipal Committee

Ongoing Work and Priorities

The Committee continues to discuss ways that CUPE BC can promote Reconciliation across the municipal sector and engage with local governments toward fulfilling their responsibilities to implement the applicable recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Members are also continuing past work to have territorial acknowledgments enshrined in collective agreements, and to receive truth and reconciliation training from their employers.

The Committee maintains a strong focus on anti-privatization work, both in terms of strategies to prevent the contracting out of future work and bringing existing contracted out work back in-house. Equally, the Committee continues to examine ways CUPE BC could help address the high proportion of municipal workers whose work is precarious, which sees 2 of every 5 municipal workers without proper job security and benefits.

The Committee is also maintaining work on political engagement, encouraging locals to interact with progressives elected in the 2022 local government elections, and developing and implementing plans for ongoing political action as the next local government election nears.

Plans of Action and Recommendations

The Committee has spent significant time discussing the value of the Environmental Operators Certification Program as a basic requirement for those serving in applicable roles across the sector. Certification for those working in water, storm and wastewater, and other related functions would level the playing field, making it more difficult for employers to contract out this important work.

Also on the topic of contracting out, the Committee has considered the value of the Living Wage for Families Campaign, and endeavours to have all municipal governments become living wage employers. As a living wage employer, a local government could not have any employees making less than the living wage for their area, nor could they use a contractor that paid its employees less than the living wage. Accordingly, having a municipality adopt the Living Wage for Families would not just

help any CUPE member whose wage fell below a living wage, it would also make it more challenging, or lucrative, for municipalities to contract work out.

The Committee has recommended that the Executive Board make more space at conventions for sectors to discuss their issues, share experiences and undertake sector-specific training. The Committee is also recommending that the Division work with the National Union to arrange regular all-president meetings for the sector.

Future Work

Downloaded senior government responsibilities, rapid population growth, increasing service and infrastructure demands, and an ongoing lack of revenue generation options continue to cause financial stress across the sector. This financial stress manifests in various ways, but will surely affect CUPE members as governments continue to seek expense-side remedies to revenue-side problems. The Committee will look into ways CUPE BC can support the ongoing work by the Union of BC Municipalities to strengthen municipal funding, and lend the voice of CUPE's 100,000 members in B.C. to the call for more financial support for municipalities.

Respectfully submitted by:

Dan MacBeth, Chair
Bruce Campbell, Co-Chair
Karen Welch, Recording Secretary
Monika Dean
Ryan Doman
Alexander Jacobs
Dustin LePage

Scott McIntosh
Brian Warman
Ross Whalen
Cassie Deezar
John Gibson, Staff Advisor
Kathryn Davies, Communications Advisor
Maja Bohinc, Administrative Assistant

March 2024

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. This committee works on issues of importance to CUPE members who are transit operators and supervisors, SkyTrain workers, school bus drivers, freight train operators, and flight attendants. The Committee continues to work on the following areas of focus and concern within the transportation sector, both regionally and provincially:

- The Committee supports CUPE BC's initiatives around the concern about private "for-profit companies" running public transit in parts of B.C. We remain committed to removing these companies and have public transit operated and maintained by a public entity.
- The Committee remains focused on supporting the expansion of public transportation across British Columbia. This includes supporting the provincial transit campaign to create a system of rural and intercommunity transit and increase funding for suburban rapid transit.
- The Committee is also working to raise awareness of safety issues in the transportation sector, ensuring workers are safe, and that those who experience workplace injuries are properly accommodated and supported.

Conclusion

CUPE members in the Transportation Sector encounter various persisting and emerging challenges. The Transportation Committee eagerly anticipates collaborating with CUPE BC members to address these significant issues. Our dedication to highlighting the crucial contributions of transportation sector workers in our communities remains unwavering. We are excited about the upcoming efforts and will persist in supporting transportation workers through engagement in campaigns and advocating for their interests with politicians at all levels of government, both provincially and nationally.

Respectfully submitted:

Paula Bass, Chair

Tyler Mace, Co-Chair

Shannon Levinsky, Recording Secretary

Tracey Barrette

Lorne Beaude

Steve Favero t

Chad Machin

Elizabeth Roux

Crystal Hill, Staff Advisor

Greg Taylor, Communications Advisor

Maja Bohinc, Administrative Assistant

March 2024

Universities Committee

The Universities Committee comprises Presidents or their representatives from ten local unions. These include Locals 116 and 2950 (University of British Columbia); Local 3338 (Simon Fraser University); Locals 917, 951, and 4163 (University of Victoria); Local 3799 (University of Northern British Columbia); Local 3886 (Royal Roads University); Local 4879 (Thompson Rivers University); and Local 2278, representing members at both UBC and UNBC. This Committee serves as the coordinating body for CUPE workers across these universities, fostering collaboration and communication.

The Committee convened on October 12, 2023, and January 15, 2024, focusing on developing strategies to address key issues in the sector. Presently, our efforts center on advocating for increased public funding to B.C.'s universities and reversing the trend of outsourcing work to third-party, for-profit entities. Additionally, the Committee is exploring ways to enhance public outreach to underscore the broader value of a university education.

Considerable attention is devoted to making union materials more inclusive, with discussions on translating key documents into various languages. The Committee also aims to better showcase the diverse work of CUPE members in the sector.

Local Updates

CUPE 917: Local 917 has implemented a newly negotiated job evaluation plan and as it is entering negotiations with the University Club of Victoria, they are anticipating challenges.

CUPE 951: The local is involved in the 'Better Data Project' survey to enhance support structures, addressing diverse needs. Concerns arise from federal government announcements affecting the 2024/2025 budget. On a positive note, the local is experiencing an increase in new members and continues an ongoing effort to support members on LTD.

CUPE 116 and 2950: These locals are addressing payroll issues and hybrid/remote work challenges at UBC, with consultations underway.

CUPE 2278: The local eagerly welcomes Graduate Academic Assistants into the local, initiating bargaining for the first contract this spring. Additionally, they await the Labor Relations Board's decision on whether Graduate Research Assistants are UBC employees, with potential ramifications for organizing drives at CUPE 4163.

CUPE 3338: Local 3338 is engaging in discussions with the employer regarding job eliminations as SFU has served a 'Notice to Restructure'. 3338 will be bargaining in the summer/fall with the SFU Student Society. They are also dealing with concerns around investigations and implementing the hybrid work from home program. Two working groups are in progress: Job Evaluation and Involuntary Transfer. Engaging with Unit 4 of the local, BEST (custodial services), is an ongoing challenge due to shift work and language accessibility.

CUPE 3886: Local 3886 is focused on working conditions and keeping work in-house. The local represents about 75 workers who maintain the Royal Roads campus's award-winning gardens, deliver trades and technical support, and provide custodial and housekeeping services.

CUPE 3799: The local is actively working to bring UNBC's custodial staff into their local, with a feasibility study underway. Bargaining efforts also include a study on transitioning from a Defined Contribution Pension Plan to a Defined Benefit Pension Plan. The Other Work Location Program (OWL-P) is in a pilot phase, ready for implementation across the university.

CUPE 4163: The local launched a campaign to unionize Graduate Research Assistants at the University of Victoria, following successful campaigns at UBC and SFU.

Local 4879: The local anticipates potential reductions to staffing levels due to the new international student visa restrictions and the unknown ramifications of the legislation.

Summary

Concerns over legislation limiting international student visas should prompt the call for increased base public funding for post-secondary institutions. Recruitment and retention challenges contribute to high workloads, impacting employee well-being. Negotiated remote work language aims to address these challenges but falls short in ensuring equitable access for all employees. Overall, our report underscores the need

for collaborative efforts to address sector-wide issues and enhance the working conditions of CUPE members in the university sector.

Thanks

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

Respectfully submitted:

Lois Rugg, Chair	Joyce Henley
Greg Melnechuk, Co-Chair	Kirk Mercer
Chloe Martin-Cabanne, Recording Secretary	Shane Randall
Shaneza Bacchus	Nikki Seymour
Emily Cadger	Micha Pesta, Staff Advisor
Sam Connolly	Greg Taylor, Communications Advisor
Roger De Pieri	Nancy Dhillon, Administrative Assistant

March 2024

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

Education Committee

The CUPE BC Education team has had a busy start to 2024, as there have been over 32 different workshops, both in-person and virtually scheduled, in the BC Region for Jan-Feb. There are an additional 24 workshops scheduled over the next couple of months as well.

Some highlights from the past few months:

CUPE had a very strong presence at the 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.

Planning for Spring School is well underway, with registration open. The school will take place May 26th to 31st at the Coast Hotel in Kamloops. The courses being offered are: Advanced Grievance Handling, Financial Officers, Steward Learning Series, Local Executive Training, 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 8th to 12th. The courses will be Advanced Bargaining, Local Executive Training, and two streams of the Steward Learning Series.

Fall school is in the planning stages.

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 Justin Schmid 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 B.C. and other provinces and 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 Anita Early.

Vancouver Island District Council (VIDC) – *Tara Knight*

The Vancouver Island District Council is currently planning a two-day Educational Conference to be held at Vancouver Island University (VIU) in Nanaimo from July 24th to 27th, 2024. Delegates will experience the fun of campus life complete with dorm-style accommodations, meals, and social activities on and off campus. Each course bundle will include 12 hours of education and participants will receive a certificate upon completion. This is the first of three to be offered in our region over the next two years. The Council recently provided Naloxone training to delegates with great success, providing knowledge and skills to support members in our communities.

Northern Area District Council (NADC) – *Jennie Copeland*

Since the last convention, the NADC has hosted two in-person weeklong schools, with great success. The Fall school was held in November 2023 in Prince Rupert, a beautiful location. The NADC Executive booked a tour bus to pick up members from all the locations between Quesnel and Prince Rupert. This allowed for locals to send more members to the school without having to be concerned about travel costs and having members on the road at late hours. All travelers truly enjoyed this option and look forward to a future tour bus option.

The Executive of NADC and CUPE BC representatives then spent time after the school on the Tour of the North to engage with the locals in and around Prince Rupert. The second school was held at the beginning of April in Prince George, which is a more centralized location for the locals within the council to reach during better road conditions. The school scheduled Monday for travel, with a social that evening, education between Tuesday to Friday morning, and return travel on Friday afternoon. This was greatly appreciated by the locals, as the executive and stewards within the local are often volunteers in their local and this format did not take away their time with their families on the weekends.

As our District Council covers a vast geographical area of the province, we have also seen that many locals are accessing the virtual component of CUPE Education to enable their new executives and stewards to gain the necessary knowledge in

between the schools. Thanks to a resolution that was passed at a recent CUPE BC Convention, the internet accessibility in the area has improved substantially, allowing for improved access to the virtual education. They do still find that in-person education is extremely necessary for understanding the material, and the networking with other locals to help them understand their roles within their local and how to deal with issues that may arise.

Southern Interior District Council (SIDC) – *José Van Berkel*

The past year has been an adventure for our council as we have officially changed our charter name from Okanagan Mainline District Council to Southern Interior District Council.

Some education highlights include the development of in person workshops being offered at no cost to locals and moving the venues throughout our region. This is allowing for some great networking and member engagement opportunities. Looking ahead, the plan is to continue developing this regional program of education with locals identifying what types of courses they are looking for to help support their needs.

The council also recognizes the importance of education and has highlighted each of our council meetings with a theme, providing links, articles and showing videos during the meeting breaks. This has given our delegates an opportunity to learn and better understand various topics.

A few locals have hosted workshops and extended the invitation to other CUPE locals in the area. We are always encouraging and looking for ways to better serve our locals when it comes to education, knowing that knowledge builds power and solidarity.

Metro Vancouver District Council – *Dennis Donnelly*

The Metro District Council has now implemented their bursary program with four recipients receiving up to \$1000 each to attend CUPE-sponsored education events last Fall. A second group of bursaries will be awarded this Spring.

Metro recognizes that not all its member locals are equal in size, accessibility, and financial capabilities, and will continue to aid locals in funding education proposals. Although geography is not as large a barrier as in other District Councils, there are

difficulties for some locals, and the Council will continue to subsidize such locals' education projects.

Metro plans to sponsor additional courses and seminars both through CUPE and other labour and community organizations such as area Labour Councils and the Metro Vancouver Alliance.

Larger locals are utilizing and adapting the CUPE education modules both online and in-person to train their stewards and activists.

Kootenay District Council (KDC) – *Michelle Bennett*

Good news first, Local 1285 has once again become affiliated with the Kootenay District Council and we are so happy to have them back!

Since our last report, the Kootenay District Council has struggled. We seemed to be in a COVID coma. So, we decided that in November of 2023 we would bring our affiliates together to brainstorm what they want the council to do. Overwhelmingly we were told that they wish for us to do education twice a year and bring back the Presidents-only meetings.

Starting in May of 2024 we will be offering a Presidents-only meeting while we hold education. The focus of our education offerings will be chosen by our membership and, so far, it seems to be more focused on the one-offs such as secretary-treasurer and trustee education, bargaining, and advanced arbitration, as well as mental health – the courses that locals cannot really bring in for just themselves. With smaller locals in our area, it seems that this will be the perfect fit with our council.

CUPE BC, thank you for all of the support that you offer the Kootenay District Council and all of our locals.

Respectfully submitted:

Anita Early, Chair
Jennie Copeland Co-Chair
Jennifer Tass, Recording Secretary
Michelle Bennett
Dennis Donnelly
Tara Knight

José Van Berkel
Tina Meadows, Staff Advisor
Justin Schmid, Staff Advisor
Steven Beasley, Communications Advisor
Morgan McCrystal, Administrative Assistant

March 2024

Environment & Climate Justice Committee

The Environment and Climate Justice 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, protect 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 engage CUPE members in climate justice by inspiring emergency-level environmental interventions. 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 considers the climate emergency as humanity's most urgent priority. The earth is on track to reach dangerous levels of planetary warming within decades. Not enough has been done to cut greenhouse gases and carbon emissions that cause climate change. British Columbians have been affected by droughts, floods, fires, and other environmental emergencies that have caused the devastation of ecosystems and the loss of human lives. CUPE BC members can help by communicating the severity of the situation to workers, allies, and governments in order to advocate for solutions that make emission reductions mandatory.

The Committee recognizes that climate change disproportionately affects Indigenous communities, especially those in environmentally sensitive and remote areas who face heightened risks from climate-related events which disrupt traditional ways of life. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples includes the right to maintain, control, protect and develop cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and cultural expressions that are being directly impacted by climate change. Limited access to resources and infrastructural support further exacerbates their vulnerability, making adaptation and recovery efforts more challenging and leaving these communities on the front lines of climate change impacts in Canada.

CUPE BC members can help mobilize to demand better climate protections through emergency programs that help build sustainable and equitable communities.

Objectives for 2024 – 2025

The Committee focused their discussions on environmental issues that aim to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This included initiatives like training members to become politically active on climate issues, funding public transit, bargaining transportation subsidies for workers commuting sustainably, the BC Climate Emergency Campaign, divestment from fossil fuels, and coalition-building in the labour movement and beyond.

The Committee considered the role of CUPE BC as the province's largest labour union, and the position that our division could take on advocating for environmental issues and stronger emission budgets. 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.

Guiding Document: CUPE's National Environment Policy

The Committee's work continues to be informed by a review of the National Union's Environmental Policy, found at <https://cupe.ca/environment>. This policy has 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 2023 – 2024

Committee Meetings

The Committee first met on October 12th at the One Big Committee Meeting, where introductions were made and the work of the committee began. The committee met again virtually on January 16th, where plans for the work of the committee were solidified.

Sustainable Practices

The Committee discussed strategies to make CUPE BC's operations more sustainable. Members recognized that addressing the climate emergency requires a unified approach. Members are interested in exploring an eco-audit that reduces the wasteful aspects of union activities and rewards members for choosing sustainable

solutions. Members felt that some aspects of Conventions were wasteful, and discussed some of the ways that environmental impacts could be mitigated. The committee was interested in developing a Climate Action Plan for best practices that would enable members to take concrete actions to reduce fossil fuel usage and waste in internal union activities.

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 to make it a viable option for more users.

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 B.C. 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.

Focus on Climate Justice

The effects of climate change will not be borne equally, with the likelihood of 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, prompting 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, just transition, and environmental 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 us with grace and kindness through the operations of our Committee. Without them this report would not be possible.

In Solidarity,

Respectfully submitted:

Chloe Martin-Cabanne, Chair
Andrea Craddock, Co-Chair
Sarp Yalcin, Recording Secretary
Alice Joe
Matthew Koch
Shannon MacKay

Dalton Owen
Max Thaysen
David Wieler
Caitlin Gilroy, Staff Advisor
Steven Beasley, Communications Advisor
Maja Bohinc, Administrative Assistant

March 2024

International Solidarity Committee

The 2023-2025 IS Committee is made up of new and returning members who care about justice for workers at home and around the world. Our Action Plan for this two-year term is focused primarily on educating. We want all CUPE members in B.C. to know what International Solidarity work is and why they should care about it, as well as introducing them to the international organizations we have partnered with and support. We also want to be open to new collaborations and partnerships with organizations and in areas where we may have or can build relationships of solidarity.

The committee feels that there is a role for us in showing the connections between the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the work of the International Labour Organization (ILO) so that it is clear why workers and union members in B.C. are called upon to engage in international solidarity work. The kind of work that will continue to be done here as a result of the Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA) and how it impacts all workers, especially Indigenous workers, is a signal to remind us of how the struggle for human and labour rights are connected and ongoing everywhere.

Over the next year we hope to provide you with opportunities to read about and engage with our comrades in CUPE BC's partner organizations. At the end of this section, you will see reports from some of those partners: **Free Them Now** (the campaign to free jailed workers in Iran), **CODEMUH** (Honduran women's collective), **NOMADESC** (Association for Research and Social Action in Columbia), and **SPTAPH** (the Havana Province Division of the National Union of Public Administration Workers in Cuba).

We leave you with some reflections from committee members on why they serve on the CUPE BC International Solidarity Committee:

- Why did I get involved to take an active role in my union and International Solidarity? Because of abusive employers...Canada is no different to my country, the only difference is that here at least union activists are not being killed by the employers (like it happened to my uncle). Here we – employees – are mentally tortured, our employee records tarnished (so if we go and get another job with a different organization – good luck) and we get fired...My local has helped me to fight the injustices of the employer without success. I always

- kept a strong voice to defend our members' and my rights. Hence the reason for being an active member and getting involved in as many committees I can.
- I am drawn to the International Solidarity Committee because it enables me to contribute to global solidarity efforts, advocate for human rights, and promote social justice on an international scale. I am inspired by the opportunity to collaborate with individuals from different backgrounds and cultures to address systemic issues and create positive change across the world. Joining the International Solidarity Committee aligns with my values of empathy, solidarity, and a commitment to building a more equitable world for all.
 - The reason that I am interested in the International Solidarity Committee for CUPE BC is to show support for those who need it the most. Stand up for those that do not have a voice. Bring those together in solidarity and global movements.
 - The reason I joined the International Solidarity Committee for CUPE BC was to learn and give support to the work that CUPE BC does internationally.

Respectfully submitted:

Sarah Bjorknas, Chair
Craig Chapman, Co-chair
Deanna Fasciani, Representative of
CoDevelopment Canada
Amandeep Cheema
Nykita Downie
Juan Hernandez
Tara Knight
Elinor Morris

Phoebe Lo Patigdas
Lisset Peckham
Ranjit Singh
Dylan Webb
Tahmineh Yazdanyar
Carissa Taylor, Staff Advisor
Steven Beasley, Communications Advisor
Maja Bohinc, Administrative Assistant

March 2024

Free Them Now Report – February 2024

With the end of the Iranian year of 1401 (2021) the turbulent year of “Woman Life Freedom” revolution and the suppression of protests in the streets by the most violent acts of the government, the people of Iran continued their fight against the Islamic tyranny nationwide in other forms. One of the main issues of struggle was and is the Islamic Hejab (Islamic veil), which is in reality the banner of controlling society by the regime.

Meanwhile, various sections of the workers have played an important role in keeping the political atmosphere active through their daily protests. Retirees protest and rally and chant every day in many cities and play an important role in promoting the protest momentum in the society.

Different sections of important and key oil industry workers are on strike and protest every day. Teachers and nurses have also protested a lot during this period.

Not only workers, but other sections of the society like women activists, justice seekers (the families of those who have been killed by the government), youth, political prisoners and so on, are struggling in different forms to push back this Islamic killing machine and maintain a humane and just atmosphere and society. In short, the protest movement has been alive and very strong throughout the country since last year’s uprisings.

People want to live free, prosperous, and modern lives, and they rightly regard this government as an obstacle to human life.

The government, which sees danger to its survival, resorts to wider repression and executions.

Many teachers have been sentenced to prison, fired, or forcibly retired. Some protesting teachers have been exiled, without the right to work or any financial support.

Currently at least 20 teachers and 15 workers activists are in prison. Among them, Abbas Deris, a worker who was detained in 2019 and witnessed the massacre of Mahshahr by the regime’s armed forces, is at risk of execution.

The campaign against executions in Iran has gained momentum, with various sections of the people, including different labor unions and retired workers, playing a significant

role. Globally, a campaign against executions has begun and met with widespread social acceptance and support.

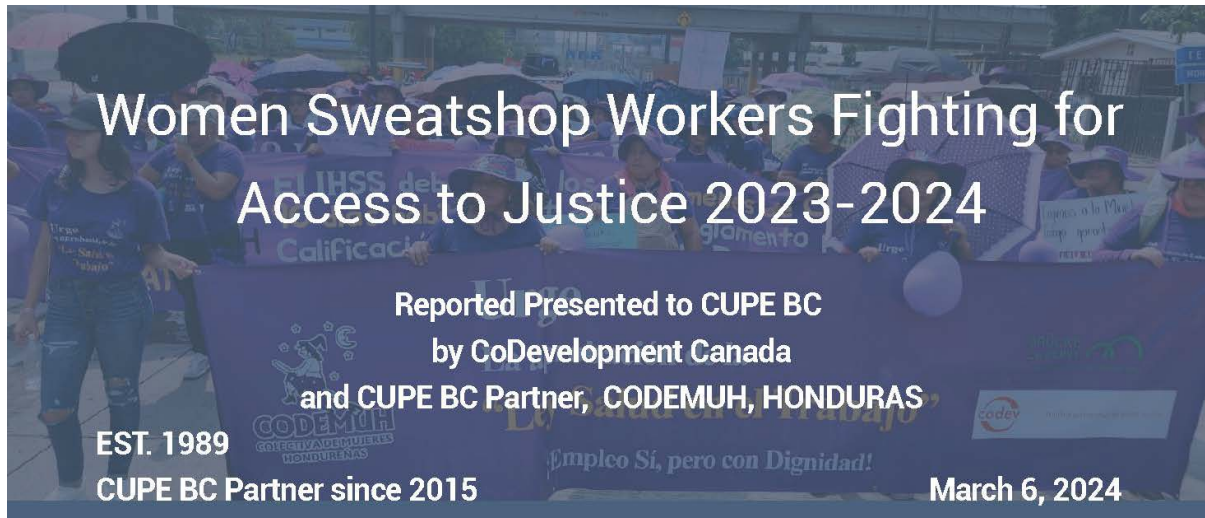
Thus, today the movement against executions is underway to save human lives, preserve the achievements of the women's revolution, and push back against government suppression, advancing the revolution to end the hell of the Islamic regime.

Free Them Now (FTN), the campaign to free jailed workers in Iran, is a part of this global campaign against executions. The action and efforts of Free Them Now has gained widespread support from labor unions worldwide in support of this protest movement to save human lives and push back the Islamic regime. Other activities by Free Them Now in the past year include:

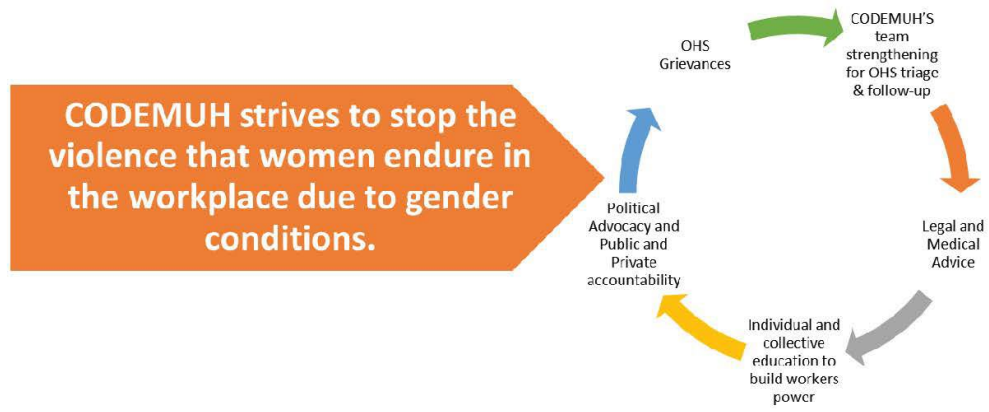
1. Widely reporting on the government's repressive actions, including workers and teachers' summons, arrests, and exposing pressures in prisons on detainees, as well as providing support for the families of imprisoned workers and teachers.
2. Publishing the news of imprisoned workers and teachers and all detainees, translating the news into English, and informing labour unions. Publications are available on Free Them Now's weekly TV program and on the Free Them Now and LabourStart website.
3. Assisting and supporting some labor activists and teachers and their families who have been fired from their jobs due to government repression or went into hiding to avoid arrest.
4. Assisting some workers' families who have fled to Turkey due to security reasons. Some of them are listed for deportation to Iran by the Turkish government, or are at risk of kidnapping or terror by the Islamic regime's agents in Turkey. We have to support these activists and their families, because they cannot go to work. These families have no financial support, no access to medical care, and are sometimes threatened with death. Fortunately, four families were able to come from Turkey to Europe.
5. Joint campaigns with other human rights organizations against executions and for the freedom of political prisoners, including with the International Committee Against Executions (ICAE) and the Campaign to Free Political Prisoners in Iran (CFPPI). These collaborations included the campaigns declared by three organizations to save the lives of Ahmad Reza Jalali, a dual-nationality researcher, and the Joint Campaign to Save the Lives of Detainees from the November 2019 Protests, as well as the Joint Campaign against Executions.

6. Active participation in protests outside the country against executions and government repression, and setting up informational tables.
7. Campaigning to expel the Islamic Republic from ILO, the International Labor Organization, supported by more than ten unions so far.
8. Efforts to gain support for the struggles of Iranian workers, including supporting widespread labor protests in the oil industry and rallying support for the women's revolution of freedom, and regularly publishing their news in English to gain more international solidarity.
9. Holding protest actions in front of the International Labour Organization's annual conference in Geneva against representatives of the Islamic Republic.
10. Participation in the annual conference of LabourStart in Georgia, presenting a workshop there, and informing the global unions about the situation of workers in Iran, imprisoned workers, and the Woman Life Freedom Revolution.

CODEMUH Report



CODEMUH Mission and Methodology



Defending Maquila Workers' Human and Labour Rights

The Honduran Women's Collective (CODEMUH) has more than 35 years of experience working with maquila (assembly-for-export) workers in Cortes province, the hub of international apparel operations in Honduras. CODEMUH provides legal and technical advice and accompaniment to maquila workers with cases of occupational health and safety. They also advocate to improve policies and state mechanisms by which to protect labour rights.

Over 2023 -2024, CODEMUH accompanied more than **240 workers** with their occupational health and safety-related cases. This support includes :

- Worker advocacy before the Honduran Institute of Social Security to press for occupational health assessments for workers
- Advocacy around requests for workplace accommodation and compensation
- Legal advice and representation.
- Psychological and humanitarian support for workers and their families.
- Street actions demanding that companies and state institutions comply with the labour code.
- Advocacy before the Ministry of Labour
- Individual and group meetings with workers

Worker Education

CODEMUH delivers an ongoing series of workshops on labour rights, illness and injury prevention, and courses of action in cases of violence against women.



After an 8-year legal battle, in March 2023, the Supreme Court of Honduras ruled that the Canadian company, GILDAN, must reinstate five workers that GILDAN had unfairly dismissed while they were recovering from work-related injuries. These workers, from GILDAN's San Miguel factory, were legal advised by CODEMUH.



Actions against Factory Closures (2023- 2024)

Long 11.5-hour workdays and high production targets have left many maquila workers with occupational injuries and diseases, which makes them further vulnerable to unfair dismissals. CODEMUH argues that, in order to avoid dealing with injured and ill workers, assembly-for-export companies close factories. In September 2023, only months after a Supreme Court ruling favorable to its workers, **GILDAN closed its San Miguel Factory, leaving 2700 workers without jobs and more than 300 workers with work-related injuries unprotected.**

Prior to and following the closure of GILDAN San Miguel, CODEMUH

1. Followed up on actions taken by the company to lay off workers with injuries and illnesses.

2. Legally advised those workers.
3. Alerted the labour authorities to the issue.
4. Issued public statements to inform authorities and the public on the issue.
5. Ran a campaign about the closure in traditional and social media, in Honduras and in Canada, through CoDev.
6. Identified and informed injured-workers of San Miguel Gildan
7. **Advised 165 injured-workers** on labour actions and legal actions against the company.
8. Contacted the company and requested meetings to discuss the situation of injured workers.

Advocating for Compliance with Human and Labour Rights



In 2023 - 2024 CODEMUH published **four statements** denouncing the occupational health and safety issues experienced by maquila workers and produced more than **five videos containing testimonials** from injured workers laid-off from GILDAN San Miguel. Canadian unions participated in the campaign developed in Honduras and Canada, sending emails to the company and posting message of solidarity on their social media.

CODEMUH met with the

1. Honduran Vice Minister of Labour
2. Labour Ministry branch in San Pedro Sula.
3. Honduran Institute of Social Security in San Pedro Sula.

”

Maquilas Close and Open Without Control by the Authorities, Playing with the Lives of Working Women

- Maria Luisa Regalado,
CODEMUH founder and
Executive Director

4. San Pedro Sula Court of Justice judges
5. Canadian Ambassador for Costa Rica, Honduras, and Nicaragua.

CODEMUH organized the following events in 2023:

- International Working Women's Day Rally and Forum.
- Forum on Economic , Social and Cultural Rights of Women and on Access to Justice
- Event for the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women

NOMADESC Report

Integral Defense of Life, Territory, and Culture: Prevention and Comprehensive Attention to the Forced Displacement of Indigenous, Afro-Descendent, Peasant, and Urban Communities 2023-2024

Report Presented to CUPE BC
By CoDevelopment Canada
and CUPE BC's partner, NOMADESC, COLOMBIA

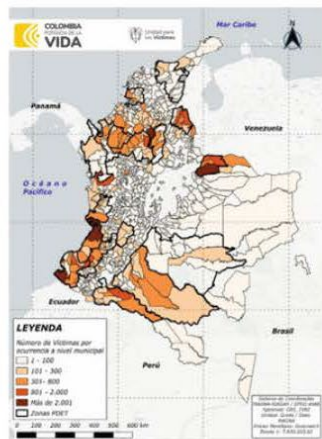
EST. 1999

CUPE BC Partner since 2003

March 6, 2024

Forced Displacement in Colombia and NOMADESC's work

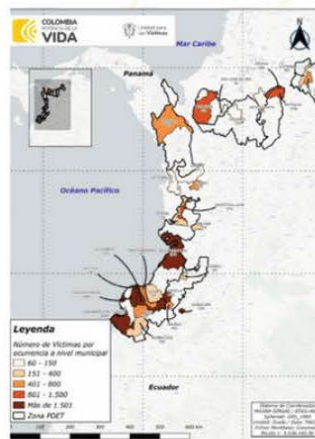
Victims of Individual Displacement



- 4 of 10 victims of the individual displacement left the Pacific region. In addition, Antioquia, Bolivar, and Cordoba account for 25% of the victims.
- 55% of the victims who were displaced from the Pacific region did so from Buenaventura, San Andres de Tumaco, El Charco, and Quibdó.
- 13.6% of the victims were displaced from Buenaventura.
- Cali, Sincelejo, Medellín, and Bogotá were the municipalities that received the largest number of displaced victims.

The Association for Research and Social Action, **NOMADESC** works primarily in southwestern **Colombia** (Pacific region). This region is among the most heavily affected by the ongoing social and armed conflict in the country. (See forced displacement report for the second half of 2022). NOMADESC was founded in 1999 in the midst of a social and humanitarian crisis caused by the internal forced displacement of two million people in Colombia.

Victims due to the occurrence of massive displacement by municipality



- 8 out of 10 victims of massive displacement lived in the Pacific Region, and the rest were grouped in Bolivar, Cordoba, Norte de Santander, and Antioquia.
- The municipalities where the greatest number of mass displacement have occurred, such as Buenaventura, Olaya, Herrera, La Tola and El Charco are mostly territories where Afro-descendant community councils are located, which represents a high level of risk for the population.

NOMADESC's acronym is derived from **Nomad** (one who moves from one place to another) and **DESC** (Spanish abbreviation for Economic, Social and Cultural Development). NOMADESC defends human rights and guarantees comprehensive, intercultural, and creative support through its focal areas of education, research, social & legal representation, communications, and network-building.

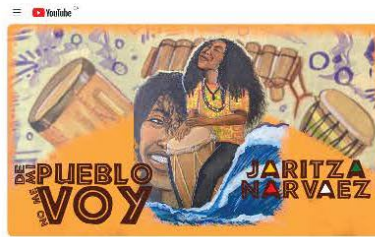
Strengthening Communication and Strategic Litigation



NOMADESC develops its integral defense of life, territory and culture through cultural struggle. This involves the amplifying of voices of the impoverished and forcibly displaced communities that live in territories facing social and environmental conflicts.

In August 2023, the **Documentary *Vandal, Epic for Dignity*** was selected for screening at the Film Festival FINCALI. The documentary describe the lives of young activists injured by the police during the General Strike of 2021. The title, *Vandals*, questions the mainstream media and politicians that criminalized the protest by referring to protestors as *Vandals*.

Other communications outputs include songs, publications of ethnographic studies, and theatre performances.



De mi Pueblo No Me Voy - Jaritza Narvaez
Asociación Nomadesc

Strategic Litigation

NOMADESC legally represents **50 cases of victims and survivors of State violence**, which covers sexual abuse, mutilations, and extra judicial execution, as well as **Indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities in the court cases, T462A and T550/15**, in which mega projects, like the Salvajina dam and Buenaventura pier, threaten to displace these vulnerable and historically oppressed populations.



People have become more rebellious in Colombia. Despite the fear of violence, they are taking to the streets and protesting. They are organizing, and when they do that they seek out NOMADESC for advice and training.

Berenice Celeita,
NOMADESC's founder and President, during an interview given during the CUPE National Convention Quebec 2023

Psychosocial Humanitarian and Pedagogical Accompaniment

In 2023 - 2024, NOMADESC accompanied survivors and families of the young activists assassinated and injured by State Security Forces during the Colombian General Strike of 2021 and the Buenaventura Civic Strike of 2017, through the provision of psychological and therapeutic support. NOMADESC has supported the families in creating organizations through which to seek justice and in providing psychological care. An example of this initiatives is **Memoria Viva Colombia**. From despair families and communities have transitioned to political reflection to identify the roots of the violence and become leaders for peace and social justice.

NOMADESC also accompanied communities in Valle del Cauca and Cauca which have been threatened by illegal armed groups

Actions taken by NOMADESC:

- Identify risk factors and take precautionary measures to protect social leaders and communities.
- Design escape routes for social leaders at risk
- Host leaders in protected areas in the country and internationally.
- Accompany delegations to areas at risk.
- Press the State for precautionary measures to protect leaders and communities.
- Initiate processes before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.
- Provide legal advice and follow-up



Memoria Viva Colombia and NOMADESC organized events in which the families informed the public about the State's crimes and honoured the lives of their loved ones. In contrast, mainstream media in Colombia tends to justify the killing of activists, social and union leaders by branding them criminals.



Food sovereignty is a challenge for permanence in the territory.

The Pedagogical Accompaniment

developed by NOMADESC focused on:

- Intercultural Exchanges
- Diploma on Alternative Development and Life Plans

Both activities were developed through the Intercultural University of the People (UIP in Spanish), which is led by NOMADESC. the UIP gathers more than 30 associations and works to educate new generations of social leaders. Students hail from Indigenous, Afro-Colombian, peasant, women's, youth, LGTBQ2IA+, trade union, and cultural organizations.



In December 2023, the third student cohort completed its 3-year diploma in alternative development and life plans. The final assignment comprised of research that the students shared with their communities. The diploma has a strong methodology based on popular education and transformative communication. The main topics of research were:

- Social-environmental conflicts and popular agriculture
- Preservation of collective memory to resist forced displacement.
- Defense of territory from a human rights perspective

SPTAPH Report

Strengthening Solidarity between Canadian and Cuban Public Sector Workers

Report Presented to CUPE BC
By CoDevelopment Canada and CUPE BC'S Partner
Provincial Union of Public Administration Workers
- Havana Division (SPTAPH), Cuba
March 6, 2024

Est. 1961
CUPE BC Partner since 1995



The Provincial Union of Public Administration Workers - Havana Division (SPTAPH), is a provincial division of the National Union of Public Administration Workers (SNTAP). It represents workers in municipal services, the judiciary, banks, customs, infrastructure, and other public sectors.



CUPE BC AND SPTAPH has been
international solidarity partners since 1995.

Effects of Illegal US Embargo Against Cuba



SPTAPH's members, and all Cuban workers, presently face mounting hardship and scarcity. The over 60-year old, illegal U.S. embargo against Cuba, the longest lasting regime of sanctions in history, has blocked ready access in Cuba to essential medicines and medical equipment, basic school and office supplies, like paper, computers and computer equipment, automotive vehicles and parts, assistive technologies for persons with disabilities and the elderly, and more. The administration of former President Trump added Cuba to the State Sponsors of Terrorism List (SSOT) and imposed a further 240 restrictive measures on Cuba. The administration of President Biden has maintained Cuba on the SSOT and most of the restrictions. These punitive measures have exacerbated conditions for workers and have prompted local and global actors to respond in an extraordinary display of unity. In fact, around the world, the blockade against Cuba is resoundingly opposed. In 2023, for the 30th year in a row, the U.N. General Assembly called on the U.S. to end the blockade. Today, Cuba suffers the worst economic and humanitarian crisis in its contemporary history – a direct result of cruel and inhumane U.S. policy.

International Soliarity 2023-2024

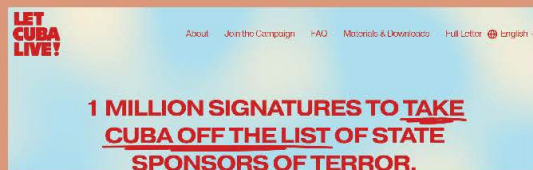


- In October 2023, CoDev conducted outreach among CUPE BC members at the One Big Committee Meeting around the dire situation of our Cuban partners.
- CoDev participated in the Let Cuba Live campaign, shared to us by our Cuban partners, to help collect 1 million signatures to pressure the U.S. government to take Cuba off the List of State sponsors of Terror: www.letcubalive.info/
- Arisleydis Hidalgo Leyva, Secretary General (President) of SPTAPH participated as a special guest at CUPE National Convention 2023. You can read more about Arisleydis's experience among CUPE members at www.codev.org/news
- Over 2023-24, CoDev arranged for several smaller shipments to Cuba (via air and freight) of special supplies urgently requested by SPTAPH.
- Over 2023-24, CoDev has been preparing the Cuba Solidarity Container 2024, the fourth Container project for SPTAPH within the past ten years. This 40 ft shipping container will contain urgently-needed medical, hygiene, electronic, automotive, school, and office supplies that SPTAPH has identified as items that they need to live, work, and resist. For more on the Container, visit www.codev.org

For the Union Makes Us Strong

Despite the challenges, SPTAPH continues to consolidate the bases of the Union Movement through ongoing training, educating their members, and improving their labour conditions to make their workplaces safer and fairer. They are also expanding the meaning of equity and equality. Delegations of CUPE BC members to Cuba and of SPTAPH members to Canada strengthen the ties of solidarity and enable deep reflections on the international front of the union movement.

An Injury to One is an injury to All!



Occupational Health & Safety Committee

The appointed CUPE BC Occupational Health & Safety Committee met on October 12th, 2023 and January 10th, 2024. Both meetings were held in person with the option to join via Zoom.

We have focused on workplace safety for members dealing with the Violence in the Workplace, Psychological Health and Safety, the continuing impacts of COVID-19, and Young and New Worker Safety. With many changes to WorkSafe BC, we are monitoring the impacts to workers and will look for solutions to support all workers. We know that education is important and feel more education needs to be more readily available for all workers.

The 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 be a strong voice for all our members when any new regulations and policy changes that may impact us emerge. We advocate on behalf of our members to apply pressure to WorkSafe BC and the Provincial Government to ensure the continued support of injured workers in the province, as well as to change the WCB 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 actively watch and ensure that there is a continued commitment to improve the working conditions for CUPE BC members and all workers in B.C.

Establishing a safe working environment in our worksites through a Psychological Health and Safety plan continues to be a focus for the committee. We will work to advocate and lobby WorkSafe BC and our Provincial Government for legislation to focus on safer working environments and conditions.

Mental Health (psychological injuries) is still an ongoing issue with all locals across the province. The lack of frequent education for our members is becoming an issue. We continue to hear that education needs to be more readily available. More advanced education workshops would be ideal for members who are seeking more continuing education. The CUPE National Health and Safety branch has introduced a Mental Health tool kit which has eight modules, and we encourage all locals to order these kits.

Violence in the workplace remains to be an ongoing and important issue, especially in the K-12 sector. The problems they face are intensified by the lack of reporting from members, because they are being discouraged by employers. Further support is also needed to address the lack of tools to deal with the increased complexity of students' needs and the increased volume of students.

Violence has also increased in the Transit and Library sectors due to the lack of resources for societal/community issues for which staff are poorly equipped to deal with because of the lack of training. There will be numerous changes coming to WorkSafe BC's Violence in the Workplace regulations in the late spring of 2024.

The biggest change to Workers Compensation Claims in 30 years has occurred with the introduction of duty to accommodate through Bill-41 requirements for accepted claims. There is ongoing discussion on the impacts of how the new requirements will affect workplaces. The committee will continue to monitor these changes and will hopefully have more to report next year.

With everything that the committee is doing, we also sent two members of the committee to the Western Conference on Safety. We believe in sending two members every year as part of the continuing education of our members.

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

Respectfully submitted:

Tony Rebelo, Chair
Henry Lee, Co-Chair
Martha Higgins, Recording Secretary
Palvinder Singh Bindra
Susanne Bonny
Scott Bruce
Marty Cox
Cody Dillabough

George Hardy
Amy Issel
Paolo Pasqua
Amanda Thielen
Tom McKenna, Staff Advisor
Steven Beasley, Communications Advisor
Nancy Dhillon, Administrative Assistant

March 2024

Pension Committee

The CUPE BC Pension Committee actively participates on the Municipal Employees' Pension Advisory Committee and promotes member involvement in related advisory committees and joint pension trustee structures. The Pension Committee mission includes enhancing pension literacy and advocacy through education. The Pension Committee strongly recommends the, "What stewards need to know about pensions" course offered by CUPE Education to all members. Education on pensions and financial matters is essential for members and their families, ideally beginning as early as high school to prepare young adults for their careers and eventual retirement. It's a fundamental principle that increased contributions and years of participation in a pension plan lead to better retirement outcomes. Locals are also encouraged to negotiate for a Defined Benefit (DB) Pension Plan. With a defined benefit pension plan, retirees receive a specific, predetermined benefit amount based on factors such as salary history and years of service. This provides retirees with a predictable income stream in retirement. There are various types of pensions including defined contribution, hybrid, or targeted plans. For those unfamiliar with these types of pensions, CUPE BC's ["Pension Fact Sheet" \(2021\)](#) provides detailed information.

While education on pensions is crucial, it's imperative that locals actively negotiate collective agreement language that removes barriers to pension enrollment for part-time, precarious workers and other groups such as young workers, racialized workers, women, and intersectional workers. The Pension Committee is committed to collaborating with relevant committees to identify and address the specific needs of these groups regarding pension education, pension coverage and advocacy. The Municipal Pension Plan 2023 – 2026 Strategic Plan acknowledges this challenge and highlights the importance of expanding membership, reviewing eligibility rules for non-full-time employees, and encouraging enrollment among eligible individuals. This strategic approach aligns with the Pension Committee goals and steadfastly supports their work to ensure our members receive the benefits they deserve, regardless of where they are in their career or pension journey.

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
- UBC Staff Plan
- CUPE 873 Paramedics
- Southern Rail
- The Multi-Sector Pension Plan

Respectfully submitted:

Jeanette Beauvillier, Chair
Kyle Clark, Co-Chair
Roberta Ciaraulo, Recording Secretary
Tracey Dahlin
Luke Fletcher
Tiffany Gustafson
Ireneusz (Eric) Jaworski
Dave Leary
Kevin McPhail

Darcy McPartlin
George York
Dawn Zemoura
Bailey Van Der Meer,
Young Worker Appointee
Karl Fultz, Retired Member
Gary Yee, Staff Advisor
Steven Beasley, Communications Advisor
Maja Bohinc, Administrative Assistant

March 2024

Political Action Committee

Political action is fundamental to the work of our union. CUPE BC, in partnership with CUPE locals and our National Union, engage CUPE BC members in political action, including electoral politics.

The decisions and actions of all levels of government impact our lives. Although much of what a union achieves for its members happens in bargaining, some victories we seek for our members and workers everywhere cannot be won at the table, including the improvements to the Labour Code and WorkSafe BC regulations, the expansion of public services, health care and childcare, and more funding and measures to address the rising cost of living. These are just some of the goals we have that locals cannot negotiate with their respective employers.

With over 100,000 members across B.C., we have a critical mass of voters we can mobilize to effect political change.

Since the last convention, our Committee has welcomed a full time CUPE National Political Action Coordinator for the BC Region while commencing a multi-year strategy for CUPE BC's political campaign planning, which is now being actioned. Some other highlights have included:

- Sending 15 CUPE members from across the province to a campaign development training program at Winter School in January, and several more to a two-day training program in Nanaimo in April.
- Beginning a digital engagement improvement plan so that CUPE members can be better engaged in a wide variety of campaigns run by CUPE, as per resolution 65 from 2023.
- Conducting the CUPE BC Political Engagement Survey, as per resolution 49 from 2022.
- Attending the 2023 BC NDP Convention, and passing party resolutions focused on two priorities for the membership, including:
 - Seamless Childcare integrated into the public education system
 - Securing publicly run public transportation across the province, with an expansion of transit service in rural and remote communities and between communities.

2024 Provincial Elections

As a committee we are focused on the upcoming Provincial Election, taking place on October 19th, 2024, and are meeting on a more regular basis to assess the political landscape throughout the province and to engage our members.

In closing

Our committee continues to lead in the area of political action, both internally within our Union, and externally in our collaboration with unions via the CLC, BC Federation of Labour and District Labour Councils.

We are stronger and more successful when we work together to achieve change, but there is still much work ahead. If we work together to engage our members in political education and political action, we can improve the conditions within our workplaces, our communities, and our society.

Respectfully submitted:

Dal Benning, Chair
Denice Bardua, Co-Chair
Kim Doucette, Recording Secretary
Tiffany De Ruyter De Wildt
Carmel Edmonds
Kasandra Gibson
Tyrone Kennedy

Frank Lee
Shawn Melnyk
Leanne Yearley
Cody Beyer, Young Worker Appointee
Neal Adolph, Staff Advisor
Steven Beasley, Communications Advisor
Nancy Dhillon, Administrative Assistant

March 2024

Skilled Trades Committee

With a new committee ready to further advance skilled trades in B.C., 2024 brings motivation and innovation.

The committee has focused on advancing skilled trades in British Columbia with a strong emphasis on reconciliation, equity, diversity, and inclusion, particularly supporting women in trades.

Lisa Scott played a pivotal role in organizing and leading two youth trades training camps in Quesnel, B.C., targeting girls and Indigenous youth aged 9 to 13 in 2022. While that was a strong year for the committee, Lisa then went on to organize six more camps in 2023. These camps aimed to introduce youth to various trades and occupational health and safety principles.

Lisa recently attended the North America's Building Trades Unions (NABTU) 13th International Tradeswomen Build Nations conference, Dec 1 to 3, 2023, in Washington DC. This was the largest gathering of its kind in the world. More than 4000 tradeswomen from the United States and Canada gathered to show solidarity with their fellow tradeswomen and to learn about different opportunities happening across North America and in the industry.

The conference featured two main plenary sessions and a dozen workshops covering topics critical to tradeswomen in the workforce, including leadership, recruitment, retention, conflict resolution, childcare, and occupational health and safety. There were breakout rooms, networking events, and the epic and amazing banner parade. Lisa had never felt more empowered and supported! The energy and excitement were amazing, and the tradeswomen from British Columbia represented our province and were noticed throughout the conference.

Lisa is honoured and excited to be part of this amazing community, and the friendships she has made along the way. "Thank you again for always having confidence in me and in the endeavors I take on, and for sending me to attend this unforgettable conference. I will be forever grateful for the support my local, CUPE 4990, CUPE BC Skilled Trades Committee, and CUPE BC have given me. You all helped me find my voice and my place in the trades industry. You have helped to give me more confidence and determination to keep pushing forward to be a better mentor, advocate, and leader in the skilled trades. I have learned and grown so much in both

my career and personal life from all of the experiences and education I have been fortunate to be part of.”

On January 30th, 2024, both Chair Kirk Mercer and Co-Chair Lisa Scott spoke at the CUPE Ontario Skilled Trades Conference, talking about the effective work of the CUPE BC Skilled Trades Committee over the past 10 years, highlighting our collaborations with groups such as the BCFED apprenticeship and skill training working group, BC Center for Women in the Trades, BC Building Trades, and Skilled Trades BC.

We look forward to attending the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum conference in Calgary, June 2 to 4, 2024, where diverse topics will bring Canada’s apprenticeship community together to highlight promising practices and innovative solutions in apprenticeship training.

Finally, our Chair Kirk Mercer was invited to speak during the last week of the CLC winter school on a political panel with Honourable Harry Bains, Minister of Labour and MLA for Surrey-Newton, on the subject of Skilled Trades in B.C. Questions included areas that need to be built back to have a fulsome red seal program in Canada, and what trades folks think the B.C. Government should focus on encouraging with apprenticeships and training more red seals. This was a great opportunity to talk with private sector unions and share the concerns we have as public sector tradespeople.

Respectfully submitted:

Kirk Mercer, Chair
Lisa Scott, Co-Chair
Shannon McKenzie, Recording Secretary
Steven Clarricoates
Desirae Cunningham
Joseph Fadel
Eduardo Gomes
Ted Harrison

Sonya Jenssen
Andrew Madden
Guy Malaka
Leah Murray
Frank Warwick
Liam O’Neill, Staff Advisor
Steven Beasley, Communications Advisor
Nancy Dhillon, Administrative Assistant

March 2024

Women's and Gender Rights Committee

The CUPE BC Women's and Gender Rights Committee is comprised of member activists from diverse backgrounds and regions in the province. All members of this committee are dedicated to the advancement of women and gender rights in their community, their province and beyond.

The CUPE BC Women's and Gender Rights Committee has continued in its ongoing commitment to Truth and Reconciliation by educating themselves about the particular challenges facing Indigenous women and gender-diverse people. At each meeting, they read one Article from the 94 Calls to Action, an Article from the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP), and have committed to reading the Red Women Rising Report: 231 Calls to Justice. Committee members have attended the Annual Red Dress Event at Bear Creek Park in May and the Red Dress Gathering in October to honor the missing and murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two-Spirited People.

Each year, various communities host a Memorial March in honor of missing and murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two-Spirited People on February 14th. A number of our committee members attended these marches throughout British Columbia to join with our Indigenous comrades as they mourn the loss of loved ones to colonial violence.

At last year's convention, the Women's and Gender Rights Committee submitted a resolution to convention recommending a name change for the Sergeant-at-Arms Committee in recognition of the colonial violence experienced by our Indigenous comrades at the hands of law enforcement and the military. The language used in the Sergeant-at-Arms Committee title is triggering and offensive to many in our union including Indigenous, black, racialized, 2SLGBTQIA+ members and members living with disabilities. The Women's and Gender Rights Committee recommends that this committee title be changed to the Membership Verification Committee to better reflect the role of the committee and to remove the colonial language that has been offensive to Indigenous and other equity-deserving members.

December 6th is the annual National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women event, in commemoration of the deaths of 14 women who were killed at École Polytechnique (now Polytechnique Montréal) in 1989 in an act of gender-based hatred. In recognition of the ultimate sacrifice made by these 14 young women

and a desire to ensure future gender-based acts of violence such as this do not occur, a number of committee members attended such candlelight vigils throughout our province.

Our committee is concerned by the rise in hate in our communities, and by the sentiments expressed in Anti-SOGI rallies. The Women's and Gender Rights Committee wishes to actively ally with members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, particularly trans members, by engaging in counter-protests and through education. The committee wishes to ensure the safety of our members when attending Anti-SOGI protests as allies to trans and gender diverse members. In order to equip members to attend these counter protests, other rallies and to participate on picket lines, the committee is recommending that an Activist Workshop be created and that a similar workshop be provided at the SuperCon Conference. The committee is also working on the creation of Fact Sheets to help keep our members informed when engaged in any rally or on a picket line.

The Women's and Gender Rights Committee is grateful for the new CUPE BC Policy which recognizes that sex work is work and that sex workers should be entitled to health and welfare benefits along with health and safety protections equivalent to those of workers other sectors. To this end, the committee is committed to demystifying stereotypes relating to sex workers through education that specifically honours the voices of sex workers themselves.

In addition to this committee work, individual committee members have participated in other Women's and Gender Rights related activism through their own locals, Federations of Labour, or provincial committees.

For example, CUPE 5523, representing over 550 support staff for School District 22, reports that they have their own Women's and Gender Rights Committee. This committee has doubled in size and has renewed commitment to support and participate in local events in 2024. Members had the opportunity to attend the "Kelowna International Women's Day 2024" event on March 8th, which recognized the accomplishments of local and international women. The Committee continues to support HOPE Okanagan, which is a local outreach organization that supports identified women who are homeless and exploited.

CUPE 3799, representing over 400 support workers at the University of Northern British Columbia, participated in the Prince George Pride Parade in 2023. Also in

2023, members attended anti-SOGLI counter protests, and five members attended the CUPE National Women's Conference. Members participated in and supported the workshops and events of Inspiring Women Among Us with the President of the local hosting a 90-minute interactive information session entitled "Why Microaggressions Aren't Really Micro: Exploring the Intersection of Mental Health and Racism."

CUPE 7000, representing over 1100 workers at the BC Rapid Transit Company and the Southern Railway Company of BC, also had three members attend the CUPE National Women's Conference. Members also volunteered at the Vancouver & District Labour Council Labour Day BBA and supported the BC Federation of Labour at their Holiday Dinner.

CUPE 728, representing over 5000 support workers for School District 36, will be hosting their 3rd annual Red Dress event on May 4th, 2024. The Women's and Gender Rights Committee applauds the local's ongoing commitment towards reconciliation as they recognize the impact missing murdered women, girls, and two-spirited people has on the Indigenous community.

The Committee Chair co-facilitated a four-day workshop, along with CUPE Member Brittany Weisner, at the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour Prairie School for Union Women, called "Women, Work and Ability," in June 2023. This workshop explores the impact of ableism along with intersecting forms of oppression based on gender, race, class, sexual orientation, or gender identity. This class explored the history of disability along with strategies for providing political and social supports to members with disabilities along with general information about the legal duty to accommodate.

The chair of the Women's and Gender Rights Committee continues to participate as a member of the Provincial Accessibility Committee and the Provincial Employment Accessibility Technical Standards Committee. These committees are tasked with implementation of the Accessible BC Act and the elimination of barriers in the areas of service delivery and employment for people living with disabilities.

In preparation for the 2024 CUPE BC Convention, the Women's and Gender Rights Committee has agreed to purchase five books to be raffled off. The committee opted to purchase books that relate to committee priorities in order to educate other CUPE BC delegates.

The committee has submitted four (4) resolutions to convention. In priority order they are:

- Provincial 10-Days Paid Leave for Survivors of Sexual and/or Intimate Partner Violence
- Activist Training
- Provincial Guaranteed Provincial Supplement for Senior Women
- Bargaining Trans and Gender-Affirming Care Leave

The Women's and Gender Rights Committee would like to thank CUPE staff Tuesday Andrich and Kathryn Davies, and CUPE BC staff Nancy Dhillon, Maja Bohinc, and Morgan McCrystal for their invaluable support.

Respectfully submitted:

Sheryl Burns, Co-Chair
Theresa Pidcock, Co-Chair
Bridget Barker, Recording Secretary
Harjit Birdi
Sharon Halcro
Danica Hansen-Huges
Joyce Henley
Janice Kovacs

Sian Nalleweg
Harmony Raine
Becky Sanderson
Charlene Turnbull
Kasahra Atkins, Young Worker Appointee
Tuesday Andrich, Staff Advisor
Kathryn Davies, Communications Advisor
Nancy Dhillon, Administrative Assistant

March 2024

Young Workers Committee

The CUPE BC Young Workers Committee continues its work to engage and develop activists aged 30 years or younger by providing training, mentorship, and unique opportunities to promote inclusion in our union.

This term, the Committee has identified several priority areas, including but not limited to connecting with other CUPE BC Committees, reconciliation, political action, empowering young workers, and increasing mentorship and leadership opportunities within all union structures.

Connecting with Other Committees

The current Young Workers Committee members are very active in their local, with experience ranging from being a shop steward to being the president of their local. Part of the responsibilities outlined for the Young Workers Committee are appointments wherein committee members attend all the meetings held over a two-year term for the Municipal, Pension, Political Action, and Women's and Gender Rights Committees, as well as appointing committee members in a shadow capacity to attend one meeting during the term for other CUPE BC committees. CUPE BC Young Workers Committee members can also be appointed to other roles, such as the BC Federation of Labour Young Workers' Committee, or as Young Worker Representatives on the CUPE BC Executive Board.

These shadow roles allow committee members to gain insight into CUPE BC's activities and experience how CUPE BC works. During each Young Workers Committee meeting, members report back what they have learned and what activities they have participated in during their appointments. They get to collect a wide variety of experiences, from learning about the work of each committee to providing insight back to committees about a young worker's perspective.

Political Action

With the upcoming provincial election, there has been an extra focus on contributing to CUPE BC's efforts in preparing for the election, registering to vote, getting out the vote, and learning how to be involved in politics and political campaigns.

During the term, the committee met with Parliamentary Secretary Brittany Anderson and discussed her role in government, including her role as the Premier's Special Advisor for Youth, as well as pressing issues for young workers such as housing, mental health, health care, affordability, barriers to unionization for young people, involvement of young people in government, and more.

The committee heard presentations from the Political Action Coordinator about CUPE BC's plans to prepare for the upcoming provincial election, and how CUPE members can get involved.

CUPE BC Super Conference

The Young Workers Committee encourages there to be space for Young Workers at the upcoming CUPE BC Super Conference and promotes the use of these opportunities to invest in the development of future union leaders. As part of this, the committee will send two young workers to the conference to get exposure to conference discussions, conference sessions, networking opportunities, and mentorship that can inspire and prepare young members to take on leadership roles within their union.

Empowering Young Workers

From August to September 2022, CUPE National conducted a survey and produced a report titled Engaging Young Workers. This report indicated that 25 percent of young workers believe their locals promote youth engagement in their union. Further, the survey indicated that young workers comprise 18 percent of CUPE's membership nationwide.

A great first step to engaging young workers is to ask, "How is my local engaging young workers?" and consider what pathways or processes exist within your local for young workers to become more engaged. Getting young workers involved can look like creating a young worker committee, or examining how training is allocated within the local to develop and train future union leaders.

The Young Workers Committee has been actively working on creating space for young workers at the table. Part of that has been ensuring there are young workers at the upcoming Super Convention and encouraging young workers and district councils to create processes for young workers to get involved at their local and district councils.

Conclusion

We offer our sincere thanks to our staff advisor, David Fleming, the CUPE BC Executive Board, and the much-appreciated efforts of Kiran Kooner, Maja Bohinc, and the CUPE BC office staff, which allow our Young Workers Committee to successfully advocate for young workers across the province.

Respectfully submitted:

Donny Grant, Chair
Juno Diane, Co-Chair
Cassie Deezar, Recording Secretary
Kasahra Atkins
Cody Beyer
Hannah Christo
Sam Connolly

Emma Inman
Sydney Sullivan
Luke Tetrault
Bailey Van Der Meer
David Fleming, Staff Advisor
Kathryn Davies, Communications Advisor
Maja Bohinc, Administrative Assistant

March 2024