

APRIL  
2023

# THE MEMBERS' VOICE



THE NEWSLETTER OF LOCAL 15, VANCOUVER MUNICIPAL EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY WORKERS

## Let's show the Gathering Place some love!

**THE GATHERING PLACE IS A COMMUNITY CENTRE IN THE DOWNTOWN SOUTH AREA AND SERVICES THE NEEDS OF STREET KIDS, SENIORS, AND THE UNHOUSED.**

They are currently in desperate need, specifically for men's clothing donations including all sizes of pants, jeans, sweatpants, t-shirts, shirts, jackets, sweaters, shoes, boots, runners, belts, and good condition underwear and socks.

Let's show them the love from CUPE Local 15 by dropping off your donations at 609

Helmcken Street in Vancouver (corner of Helmcken and Seymour). For more information or to arrange a drop off, please call Jackie at 604-257-3853. Don't forget when cleaning out your drawers that there are many Vancouverites in desperate situations who need your help.

Consider purging your closets and drawers this weekend. All donations are gratefully appreciated by the citizens we serve.

Thank you for your generosity.



### Casual Office Assistance Work Available at the Union Office

From time to time CUPE Local 15 requires casual office assistance for short-term assignments, often with little notice. The union office is a fast-paced environment that requires the ability to work to deadlines with frequent interruptions and multiple demands.

This is clerical work of advanced complexity including word processing and data processing. Advanced knowledge of Microsoft Outlook, Microsoft Office

Word, and Microsoft Access is essential. Knowledge of standard business formats for a variety of documents is also a requirement and broad knowledge of the union is required to carry out the duties of the job. A strong commitment to trade union principles is essential.

If you are interested in being placed on the on-call list, please forward your resume to Tia Tang, CUPE Local 15 Office Manager, at ttang@cupe15.org.

The union cannot use your worksite email address  we need your email address

For legal reasons, the union does not use employer email addresses to send information to members. If you have previously provided us with an employer email address, it has been deleted from our database. Please call 604-879-4671 or email us at email@cupe15.org to provide us with a personal email address, so you can continue receiving information from the union.

### APRIL 2023 GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The General Membership Meeting will be held on April 26, 2023 using the Zoom platform. You will be sent an invitation by email if the union office has a personal email address on file for you. Details will also be posted at [www.cupe15.org](http://www.cupe15.org). If you do not receive emails from the union office and would like to attend this meeting, please call us at 604-879-4671 or email us at email@cupe15.org to update your information. There will be a draw at the end of the meeting and three lucky winners will receive a gift card (retailers TBA at meeting). Child and dependant care reimbursement is available as per eligibility requirements in Section 31 of the Local 15 Bylaws.

### IMPORTANT NOTE

Virtual General Membership Meeting Invitations

After registering for the Virtual General Membership meeting, please do not share your link with other members. If they did not receive the invitation and would like to attend the meeting, please ask them to contact the union office and provide us with their contact information directly. Once this is done, an invitation will be sent to them and they can register to receive their own link. This is important to facilitate accurate attendance records.

**APRIL 26, 2023**  
**5:30 p.m.**  
**via Zoom invite**

#### UNDER DISCUSSION:

- Committee and Staff Reports

### WE ACKNOWLEDGE...

We live, work and play on the unceded land of the Coast Salish peoples—Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), səlilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) and xʷməθkʷəy̍əm (Musqueam) Nations.



### We're open!

The union office is open and the boardroom and staff are available by appointment by calling us at 604-879-4671. Our office telephone hours are 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Return undeliverable  
Canadian addresses to:  
CUPE Local 15  
545 W. 10th Ave.  
Vancouver, BC  
V5Z 1K9



## Time Flies and Saying Good Bye is Never Easy

by Warren Williams, President

**O**n May 1, 2023, we will be reminded once again of the commitment many of our stewards have made to the members of CUPE Local 15 year in and year out.



WARREN WILLIAMS  
PRESIDENT

This reminder will come in the form of another retirement. As Michele Alexander rode off into the sunset (literally) last year, so too will Kamal Gautam this year. Both

were dedicated activists with enormous time, energy, and commitment to representing

the members of CUPE Local 15. They worked with dignity, honour, and integrity, whether performing their duties as stewards, City Sector Executive/Society Board Representatives, or the work associated with sitting on many Local 15, CUPE BC, and CUPE National committees.

It is hard work being a union activist for CUPE Local 15, never mind the extracurricular work that comes with representing our members at multiple affiliate tables, such as the Canadian Labour of Congress, the Vancouver and District Labour Council, the BC Federation of Labour, CUPE Metropolitan District Council, CUPE BC, and CUPE National.

The calls for support never stop. The need to represent is, without question, not out of some sense of self, but because it is a union tenet, "you make us stronger by working with us for the benefit of all workers".

Michele and Kamal picked up that union gauntlet and owned it with pride and they never wavered in their commitment to their union friends and family.

Over the years they have been asked many times "what has my union done for me?" What they understood and then acted on was, as members of CUPE Local 15, they are the union and with that they dedicated themselves to doing all they could for the rest of us.

Saying good bye is never easy and seems so final, like a door has closed. I prefer to say "see you later" which is my way of keeping the door open.

With admiration and thanks to Michele and Kamal, to all who have come before them, and to all who will forge ahead, we thank you for your commitment and hard work. It's not easy work, but it is meaningful and important.



### AT THE SPEECH COMPETITION FOR THE BLACK ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS SOCIETY

CUPE Local 15 is a proud sponsor of the Jr. Black Achievement Awards Society. The donation went to an educational retreat held March 10-12 where youth learned about trade unions and employment opportunities available with trades unions amongst many other topics. Local 15 President Warren Williams attended and was a speaker for both the panel and speech competition sessions.

## Secretary Treasurer's Report

by Debbie Mohabir, Secretary-Treasurer



DEBBIE MOHABIR  
SECRETARY-TREASURER

**Hello Everyone,**

### National Day of Mourning April 28th

April 28th of each year marks the National Day of Mourning, where we remember workers who have been killed or injured on the worksite.

Workers should always come home from their jobs, but unfortunately, this is not always the case. Employers are required to provide safe working environments for their employees. As workers, we need to continue to ensure the employer is kept accountable and call out anything that is unsafe or could cause harm to other workers. This includes toxic workplaces that are not dealt with, which often leads workers to go off on sick leave or WorkSafeBC. Mental health is often impacted as a result of inaction and can cause depression, anxiety, and stress to name a few.

As union members and workers, we all have a role to play. This could include speaking to someone on your worksite health and safety committee to report an issue or ask for guidance, contacting the CUPE 15 OH&S Committee with questions, putting your name forward to sit on your worksite OH&S committee, or educating yourself on your rights. I encourage everyone to visit the WorkSafeBC website for more information on the rights, roles, and responsibilities of employers and workers.

This year, delegates elected to represent Local 15 at the CUPE BC Convention will be in Victoria for the National Day of Mourning. All delegates at the convention will be attending a ceremony at the legislature in honour of this special day. It is amazing to see labour come together to commemorate a very important day where we mourn the dead and fight for the living.

### Bottom Line Conference

On March 9 and 10, 2023, myself and members of the CUPE 15 Health & Safety Committee attended the Canadian Mental Health Association Bottom Line Conference. The theme of the conference was Workplace Mental Health: Learning from Each Other. There were many keynote speakers who shared their expertise, thoughts, and experiences on various topics such as Indigenous Perspectives on Cultural Safety;



No Psychological Health without Equity; Diversity and Inclusion; Workplace Mental Health from Indigenous Perspectives; and Slowing Down & Showing up: Connecting with Full Presence.

All of the speakers were amazing. We were also fortunate to have Judy Darcy and Hon. Jennifer Whiteside share what they have done, and are continuing to do, politically to address mental health for all.

Participants from unions and employers from various organizations attended mini interactive sessions on various topics and there were some great discussions. We were able to network with other participants and connect with some great outside agencies that are doing important work on addressing mental health in different sectors.

We all walked away feeling empowered and with more tools in our toolbox to help support members in our various sectors. The CUPE Local 15 Health and Safety Committee would like to thank the membership for the opportunity to attend this amazing conference.



## Spring is finally here!

by **Debbie Mohabir, Secretary-Treasurer**

Spring is finally here, although with much of the weather we have been having, you can't tell. Every time I tell myself "it's time to put the winter jacket away", Mother Nature decides that it's not quite time. I also feel like I had a bit of a harder time turning the clocks forward an hour. Maybe it's age, or maybe it's the fact that I am not a morning person. Who knows? However, I am grateful for the extra light that we are able to enjoy in the evenings.

Now that the weather is warming up, there are many opportunities to be outside and participate in activities that will help with stress and anxiety. If you recall, I have written articles on the many health benefits of gardening as well as my gardening adventures with my nephew.

This time, I would like to write about other activities we can do to help us when we are feeling like this. While we do not have the ability to control things that happen in our lives or at work, we do have the ability to control how we respond to them. It is important that we find effective strategies to help us work through it.

### Here are a few strategies that I would like to share:

1. **Colouring** - This is something that is not just for the kids. You may have noticed there are colouring books specifically for adults now and engaging in this

activity allows us to focus on something specific and be in the moment. Doodling is another activity that helps with de-stressing and taking our mind away from whatever is bothering us.

2. **Play soothing music** - We all know that music can change our moods. I am sure we have all sang in our cars, the shower, or if you are like me, when I am cleaning and a great song comes on. Alternatively, listening to slow calming music allows you to relax and decompress.
3. **Dance with all of your heart** - Being active doesn't always look like going to the gym or to yoga; it can also be dancing. Some people may go to a Zumba class, or if you are at work or home, put on a song that you like and dance, dance, dance!
4. **Get moving** - Have you ever felt like there is not enough time in the day to get everything done? This can prevent us from making time to be active. Try going for a 15-minute walk at lunch or after work, send something to a different printer so you have to get up and walk, or try going to the pool for thirty minutes. Whatever you decide to do, it comes down to making the time to do it, and it doesn't have to be a long time.
5. **Knitting** - Who would have thought that knitting would be similar to mindfulness and help relieve tension, anxiety, and depression? There are a lot of videos to help with those who want to try this wonderful hobby. I had a great time making chunky blankets for presents and definitely found it relieved some stress.

### BURSARY THANKS



## Thank you!

A big thank you to CUPE 15 and the people who created this bursary program for providing this financial opportunity to me.

I am excited to have re-entered the skilled trades education system as a Heavy Duty Mechanic and am looking forward to this new experience.

Having access to this bursary funding has made day-to-day operations a little easier and it is much appreciated.

Tiffany McLaughlin

## DECISIONS

### BY THE EXECUTIVE

At the Executive and Society Board meetings on March 21, 2023, the following decisions were made:

- To approve the Staff Advisory recommendation to hire Cassandra Heighton to fill the permanent full time Office Assistant vacancy.
- To send Eduardo Rodriguez to the 2023 CICAN (College and Institutes Canada) Conference in Montreal.
- To uphold the decision of the Grievance Committee regarding a grievance in the K-12 Sector.
- To make a financial donation (amount to be determined) to the Vancouver and District Labour Council Labour Day Event.
- To appoint Lucia Rincon as the Health Sector Representative on the CUPE Local 15 OH&S Committee.
- To appoint Joe Oliveiri as the Primary Site Representative at Coal Harbour Community Centre.
- To appoint Justin Othman as the Primary Site Representative for the Citywide Joint OH&S Committee.
- To appoint Andrew Don as the Alternate Representative for the Citywide Joint OH&S Committee.
- To appoint Christie Tang as the Primary Site Representative at Evergreen Community Health Centre.
- To appoint Trevor Walsh as the Alternate Site Representative at Evergreen Community Health Centre.
- To appoint Sherry Wevill, Brenda Robbins, Jordan Lai, and Tarnjot Dhillon as the Primary Representatives for the City Parking Enforcement and Operations Branch.
- To appoint Linda Cojocariu-Chirciu, Wesley Go, Kevin Chang, and Hyein Lee as the Alternate Representatives for the City Parking Enforcement and Operations Branch.
- To appoint Veronica Monchini as the Primary Site Representative at Vancouver Civic Theatres.
- To appoint Shannon Plante as the Alternate Site Representative at Vancouver Civic Theatres.

### BY THE MEMBERS

At the General Membership meeting on March 22, 2023, the members in attendance made the following decisions:

- To receive the Financial Statement ending January 31, 2023.
- To elect Aaron Cook, Chris Brown, Stephan Nielsen, Starla Bayley, Rose Palozzi, Henry Lee, Cynthia Schadt, and Steve Anderson as delegates to the Vancouver and District Labour Council (VDLC).
- To elect Aaron Cook, Chad Lum, Chris Brown, Lilianna Gut, Henry Lee, Cynthia Schadt, Vanessa Mani, and Sophie Bennett as delegates to CUPE Metropolitan District Council (CUPE Metro).
- To endorse Karen Ranalleta for CUPE BC President, Trevor Davies for CUPE BC Secretary Treasurer, Tony Rebelo, Dal Benning, Sheryl Burns, and Amber Leonard for CUPE BC General Vice Presidents, and Debbie Mohabir for CUPE BC Trustee.

**NEXT GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING IS ON APRIL 26, 2023 via Zoom**

**NATIONAL DAY OF MOURNING**



**APRIL 28  
DAY OF MOURNING**

April 28th is the National Day of Mourning for Workers Killed or Injured at the Workplace. Every year, CUPE members across the country organize events to mark the National Day of Mourning in recognition of CUPE members and all workers who were injured, made sick, or killed at work. This past year has been especially challenging for many of our members as they worked to provide frontline services through the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Day of Mourning offers us an opportunity to stand together with the world's workers to remember those who have died on the job, and to reflect on what needs to be done to prevent more deaths and injuries.

**On April 28th:**

- We remember all workers stricken with workplace illness, suffering injuries, or killed on the job.
- We remember children left without a parent and families facing hardship and deprivation.
- We remember young workers who are injured and killed at a much higher rate than mature workers.
- We remember women workers whose hazards are often unrecognized or ignored by health studies.
- We remember the working wounded who are forced to continue to work because they are denied fair compensation.
- We remember families and friends who have to nurse or care for ill or injured workers.

The Day of Mourning was born of the values of the union movement. It was created by working people in their constant fight for decent, safe working conditions. Remembering the union struggles helps us obtain laws and protections to make workplaces safe:

- We vow that "an injury to one is an injury to all".
- We demand the enforcement of health and safety laws.
- We denounce those who place profits before workers' health.
- We proclaim our right to safe workplaces and respect on the job.



**Some of the awesome team of Evans Yard!**

**A message from 1st VP, Santino Scardillo**

**Hello Local 15 Members,**

I have been continuing to visit worksites to reach out and meet the members.

One of my most recent visits was to the REFM (Real Estate and Facilities Management) Maintenance Department at Evans Yard. The members at this worksite service the City of Vancouver and Park Board. It was a privilege to meet them and I now have an insight into some of their everyday duties, responsibilities, and concerns.

Some of the work these members perform include looking after the indoor/outdoor pools throughout the many Vancouver parks, monthly fire alarm testing throughout the city which includes the firehalls, Vancouver Police Service buildings, and Single Room Occupancy (SRO) housing, and much, much, more.

If you see these members around doing this work, please take a moment to say hello

to them. These are the people who keep the majority of the city buildings operating smoothly, and the employees and public who are working or visiting them safe.

I would like to give a special mention and say thank you to those who volunteered who had their photo taken for this issue of the Members' Voice. It was a lot of fun meeting all of you.

I look forward to heading through the other sectors and meeting more of you, and would like to say how very important all the work is that our 8,000 members do throughout our city. You keep it running!

If you are interested in a union visit at your worksite, or becoming a shop steward or site contact, or even if you just have general questions, please contact the union office and leave a message for me. I'm always happy to meet with the members and help out any way I can.

**PARKS SECTOR UPDATE**



by Henry Lee, Parks Sector Representative

Here is a short list of some of the things that are happening around Vancouver Parks and Recreation:

- Currently, several of the ice rinks, including Trout Lake, Killarney, Kerrisdale, and West End are shutting down for the spring and summer months.
- The REFM maintenance team and Parks are starting the process of prepping for the opening of the outdoor pools, such as Second Beach and Maple Grove.
- Wading pools and spray parks are also on the maintenance preparation list. Look for them to open during the summer months.
- The 70th annual Park Board Staff Golf Tournament will be taking place on Friday, June 2, 2023. The tournament will continue to raise funds for the Len Cederholm Youth and Jody Taylor Scholarship Funds.
- Peter Fox, Manager of Recreation Services, is retiring at the end of April. His last day will be Friday, April 28, 2023.

As your Parks Sector Representative, please feel free to contact me with additional updates and other news and I will report them in future issues of the Members' Voice. Just leave a message for Henry at the union office.

**OH&S CORNER**

**OH&S Bulletin Board Tips**

By Henry Lee, CUPE 15 OH&S Representative

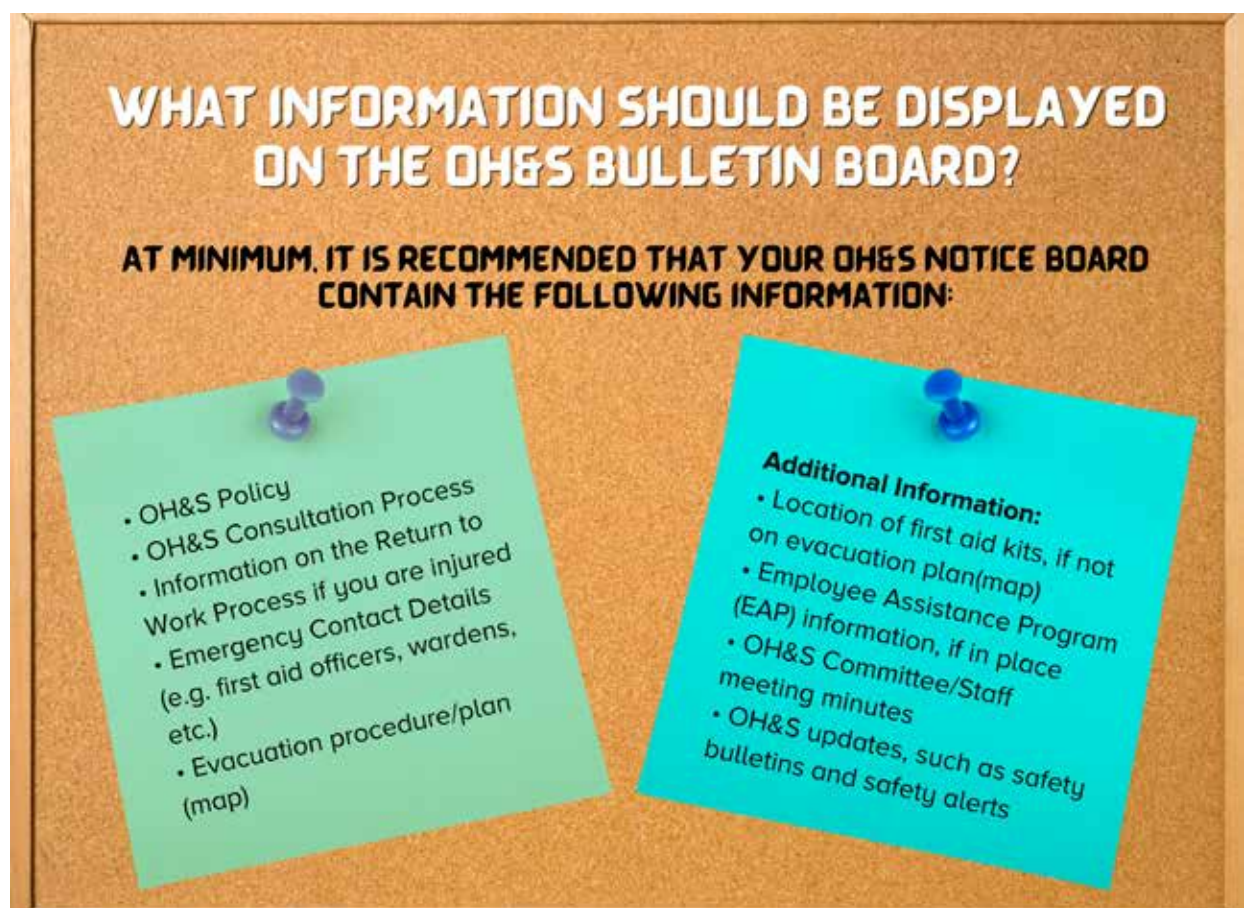
Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) bulletin boards are a requirement under the Occupational Health and Safety Act. The Act says that specific information is to be displayed on the workplace health and safety board. Do you know if your worksite has one? If not, please reach out to the CUPE Local 15 OH&S worker representative at your site.

**What is the purpose of an OH&S Bulletin Board in the workplace?**

The purpose of the board is to develop and enhance the management of occupational health and safety, and minimize the risk of injury and disease to persons in the workplace.

**What should be on the OH&S Bulletin Board?**

The board must display the following the name and work locations of the Joint Occupational Health and Safety members, the organization's health and the safety policy, and the organization's workplace violence and harassment policy.



For a further example of information that can be placed on an OH&S bulletin board please contact me by leaving a message at the union office.

**OH&S REPORT**

**Bottom Line Conference**

by Henry Lee, CUPE 15 OH&S Representative

I would like to thank CUPE Local 15 members for sending me to the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) Bottom Line Conference on March 9 and 10, 2023. This year's theme focused on "Learning From Each Other".

The purpose of this conference is to bring together business leaders, workers, union representatives, policy makers, and researchers to share real experiences, successes, ideas, and expertise on improving mental health in Canadian workplaces.

I have to say that it was a "wow" experience! I had the opportunity to attend several workshops and listen to some really great speakers such as Judy Darcy (Former Minister

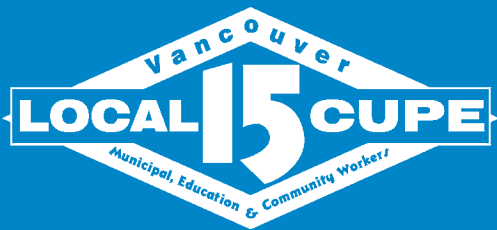
of CMHA BC division), Stacey Ferguson (Indigenous Community Development – Qayqayt First Nations), Tanya Houghton (Director of Special Care Services WorkSafeBC), and Honorable Jennifer Whiteside (BC Minister of Mental Health and Addictions).

Some of the workshops I attended included Intersectional Approaches to Understanding Mental Health, Workplace Mental Wellness from Indigenous Perspective, Leadership Perspective on the Importance of Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace, and Recognizing 10 Years of National Standards of Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace.



In short, I have a renewed passion to continue to advocate for a Psychological Health and Safety workplace for all workers in their workplace.

Thanks again.



The Members' Voice is published nine times a year for members of CUPE Local 15 - Vancouver Municipal, Education and Community Workers. The deadline for submissions is 9:00 a.m. on the first Wednesday of each month. All submissions may be edited for brevity and clarity. Signed articles and letters do not necessarily reflect the views or policy of CUPE Local 15.

**CUPE Local 15**

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Web: www.cupe15.org

Local 15 is a chartered affiliate of the Canadian Union of Public Employees and is also affiliated with the CUPE British Columbia Division, CUPE Metro District Council, the Vancouver & District Labour Council, and the BC Federation of Labour. CUPE 15 is a member of the Canadian Association of Labour Media (CALM).

**CUPE Local 15 Executive Board Table Officers:**

President: Warren Williams  
Secretary-Treasurer: Debbie Mohabir  
1st Vice President: Santino Scardillo  
2nd Vice President: Ravina Lal

**Sector Representatives:**

City: Kamal Gautam, Paul Chohan  
College/University: Eduardo Rodriguez  
Rose Palozzi  
Cultural: Courtney Gillen  
Health/HSSCBA: Roxshanna Shankar  
Health/HSPBA: Mia Nickel  
Parks: Bernie Dionne, Henry Lee  
K-12: Chris Brown, Cynthia Schadt

**Trustees:**

Aaron Cook, John Kaptein, Vanessa Mani

**Staff Representatives:**

Kathie Currie, John Geppert, Steve Salsman, Gail Johnson, Joy Tullos,

**Office & Administrative Staff:**

Mark Gloumeau, Accounting Coordinator  
Nancy Strider, Accounting Assistant  
Tia Tang, Office Manager  
Nadia Thibault, Office Assistant  
Michelle Yim, Office Assistant  
Cassandra Heighton, Office Assistant

**Building Service Worker:**

Elaine Duan

**CUPE National Representatives:**

Andrew Ledger, Bryan Bickley (on leave),  
Sung Wong (temporary), Michael Reed (temporary)

IT'S ALMOST TIME FOR YOUR LOCAL ELECTION

**2023 Executive Board Elections and voting information**

by Tia Tang, Office Manager

All voting for the upcoming 2023 Annual Executive Board Elections will be conducted online.

There will be an election for Secretary-Treasurer, 1st Vice President, City Sector Representative, College/University Sector Representative, and K-12 Sector Representative. The Park Board Sector Representative, HSPBA Sector Representative, and Trustee positions have been filled by acclamation.

All members are eligible to vote for the Secretary-Treasurer and 1st Vice President positions. Only members in the City, College/University, and K-12 sectors are eligible to vote for positions in their sector. Members will receive voting instructions and a Personal Identification Number (PIN) in the mail. This PIN will allow you to cast your vote for the Secretary-Treasurer, 1st Vice President, and the candidate in your sector if applicable. As per Bylaw 12.5 (Sector Votes) a member may vote for a candidate in one sector only.

Voting will open by electronic ballot at 8:00 a.m. Pacific Standard Time on May 16, 2023 and will remain open until 11:59 p.m. on May 23, 2023. Polls will be accessible 24 hours a day. Results will be announced at the Annual General Meeting which convenes at 5:30 p.m. on May 24, 2023 via Zoom.

Simply Voting has been hired as the independent third-party election provider. All PIN issuance and voting is maintained and monitored by them. If you do not receive a PIN in the mail, please contact the union office and after verification of your membership, we will instruct Simply Voting to send you one. The deadline to request a PIN is 10:00 a.m. on May 23, 2023. No exceptions.

If you have any questions regarding the administrative process, please contact Tia Tang, CUPE Local 15 Office Manager. If you have other concerns about the election, please contact the Returning Officer (TBA), by leaving a message at the union office.



The following members have accepted nomination for a position on the Executive Board. Watch for candidate statements on the election website and in the May issue of the Members' Voice.

**Secretary-Treasurer**

Debbie Mohabir (Incumbent)  
Starla Bayley

**1st Vice President**

Santino Scardillo (Incumbent)  
Rose Palozzi

**City Sector Representative**

Aaron Cook  
Seagrין Worster

**Parks Sector Representative**

Henry Lee (elected by acclamation)

**College/University Sector Representative**

Eduardo Rodriguez (Incumbent)  
Sophie Bennett

**K-12 Sector Representative**

Cynthia Schadt (Incumbent)  
Lilianna Gut

**HSPBA (Paramedical) Health Sector Representative**

Mia Nickel (elected by acclamation)

**Trustee**

Vanessa Mani (elected by acclamation)

**VSB JOB SHARE OPPORTUNITIES**

1. SSA looking for a job share partner to work at Templeton Secondary Life Skills two days a week beginning September 2023. Please contact Denice at deeava@telus.net if you are interested.
2. SSA looking for a job share partner to work at John Norquay Elementary on Thursdays and Fridays beginning September 2023. Please contact Sheila at sheilafarrales3@gmail.com if you are interested.
3. SSA looking for a job share partner to work two days a week at Tecumseh Elementary School starting September 2023. It's a lovely school with really nice students and the staff are very kind and supportive to each other. Please contact Joanne at jross@vsb.bc.ca if you are interested.
4. SSA looking for a job share partner to work at David Livingstone Elementary on Thursdays and Fridays beginning September 2023. Please contact Veronika at vpathak@vsb.bc.ca if you are interested.