

JUNE
2022

THE MEMBERS' VOICE



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

WE ACKNOWLEDGE...

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



Notice about our Office Hours:

The union office is gradually re-opening. Boardroom bookings and staff are available by appointment only, so please call us at 604-879-4671. Our office telephone hours are 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.



@ we need your email address

Use of Employer Email Addresses

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.

Anniversary of the Kamloops Residential School Discovery

by *Debbie Mohabir, Secretary-Treasurer*

It has been one year since the discovery of 215 children at the Kamloops Residential School. Being in Kamloops for a week has been a mixed bag of emotions for me. During the plenary at CUPE Spring School, Elder Evelyn Camille and three youth from the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc First Nation welcomed us. Elder Evelyn Camille, who is a residential school survivor, shared a statement that resonated with me "we are all one Nation" and spoke about teaching our children this history. She spoke about those who made peace with what they experienced during their time in the residential schools and those who are still struggling with the trauma. I appreciated her sharing these difficult stories that I am sure re-opened some wounds.

I have also heard the stories of families who were forced to send their children away and never knew why they didn't come home. Every time these experiences are being shared, I get very emotional. I think about how it would feel to not have my child return and not ever know what happened. I think about those children who had their culture ripped away and not learning the various skills that mothers and fathers teach their children. I think about the children who weren't allowed to speak to their own siblings and were essentially strangers to each other. I think about the children who were never shown love that should have been shown to them. My heart aches for the children who are yet to be found and to those families who will never know what happened to them.



There is much work that still needs to be done in regards to Truth and Reconciliation and we all need to be a part of that work. Whether it is wearing orange, using bargaining language that supports Indigenous workers (territorial acknowledgements, targeting hiring and job postings, leaves of absence, etc.) or allocating a position on the Executive for an Indigenous person, we all need to continue our commitment to reconciliation. We need to walk the talk.

June 21st is National Indigenous Peoples Day and many events will be happening all over the province to honour this day. We encourage all of our members to show their commitment to Truth and Reconciliation by taking the time to learn something new, attend an event or read a book to increase your knowledge on the injustices that were done.

JUNE 2022 GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

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. 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 Local 15 Bylaw Section 31. Please note – there are no General Membership Meetings in July or August.

**JUNE 22, 2022
5:30 p.m.
via Zoom invite**

UNDER DISCUSSION:

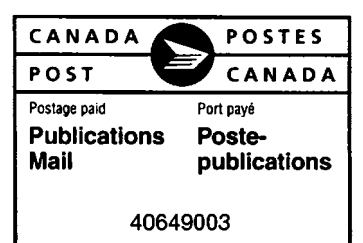
- By-election - Trustee
- Staff and Committee Reports

IMPORTANT NOTE

Virtual General Membership Meeting Invitations

After registering for the Virtual General Membership meeting, please do not share your link with fellow 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.

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



Cost of living is getting out of control

by Warren Williams, President



WARREN WILLIAMS
PRESIDENT

I don't know about anyone else, but I am at my limits with the price of gas, a haircut, a loaf of bread, eggs, milk, produce, cereal, meat, etc.

So much for the federal government saying they won't allow price gouging because of COVID. Let's not point

the finger at inflation; let's point it at where it belongs, which would be at the companies taking advantage of all of us and acting like it's not their fault, but that it is just the price of doing business.

Unfortunately, world governments are allowing them to get away with it, including our own, even though Prime Minister Trudeau said he wouldn't allow it. Never in my lifetime until recently, has the price of diesel been more expensive than regular gasoline. The constant fluctuation in price on the same day, every day, is ridiculous. How does the government explain that?

You have probably heard the saying, "if it looks like a duck, quacks like a duck, and walks like

a duck, then it's a duck." Aside from inflation, in this case, the duck is price gouging, using COVID, the war in Ukraine, and a shortage of workers as reasons for the rising cost of everything. I might be naïve, but I'm not stupid. I know when I'm being taken advantage of, so what can I do about it? I can write a complaint to my Member of Parliament, Member of the Legislative Assembly, and Member of City Council, not as President of CUPE Local 15 (I'm being told that would be lobbying as a third party with rules to follow), but as a citizen and so can you.

It's up to all of us to let the government know that more of the same is not okay. It's one of the perks of living in a democracy that people are allowed a voice, so let's use our voices.

Have a safe and happy summer!

by Debbie Mohabir, Secretary-Treasurer



DEBBIE MOHABIR
SECRETARY-TREASURER

Hello everyone,

Spring School

CUPE BC offers two Union Education schools a year, Spring School in Kamloops and Fall School in Nanaimo. These week long schools are essential in giving stewards

more in-depth tools for their tool box to support members in their sector. Participants spent the week learning with other stewards and activists from all over BC about important information on various topics such as Health and Safety, Human Rights, Intro to Stewarding, Stewarding Learning Series, Local Executive Training, and Mental Health First Aid. CUPE 15 sent two



"Parks Sector Representative Henry Lee, Secretary-Treasurer Debbie Mohabir, and the Regional Vice President for the Kootenays, Vice President of Local 748 and Vice President for the Kootenay District Council, Anita Early, facilitating Health and Safety at Spring School.

stewards to this year's Spring School and Henry Lee, Michelle Alexander, and myself facilitated. It was a great week!

Bargaining

We are now coming up to the time when many of our sectors start preparing for bargaining. Many of our bargaining committees have been meeting over the past few months to have discussions and come up with proposals to make working conditions better for our members. A lot of work goes into proposals presented to members for ratification. Stay tuned for more communications in the future. Please make sure that the union office has your personal email address so that you will receive notifications.

Welcome New Executive Board Members

I would like to welcome our new and returning Executive Board members Bernie Dionne - Parks Sector Representative, Paul Chohan - City Sector Representative, Rose Palozzi - College/University Representative, Eduardo Rodriguez - College/University Representative and Carley Romas - K-12 Representative. We look forward to working with all of you!

As this is the last Members' Voice until September, I would like to wish you all a happy and safe summer!



Happy Retirement, Michele Alexander!

On behalf of the Executive, members, and staff we would like to wish long-time member, course facilitator, steward and Executive member, Michele Alexander, a happy retirement. We want to thank you for your amazing advocacy and dedication in supporting those in the City sector as well as your roles on the CUPE BC Executive and CUPE National Executive.

Time to apply for our 2022/2023 bursaries

Member Bursaries – Full and Part-Time

Ten full-time studies bursaries and ten part-time studies bursaries are available annually to CUPE Local 15 members. Full-time bursaries are to a maximum of \$1,200 of tuition only and part-time bursaries are to a maximum of \$600 for tuition only.

Dependant Bursaries – Full-Time Only

Ten dependant full-time studies bursaries are available annually to dependants of CUPE Local 15 members. Dependant bursaries are to a maximum of \$1,200 for tuition only.

Application process

The application forms are now available on the CUPE 15 website at cupe15.org.

Please read the Bursary Policy on Page 2 of the form to determine whether or not you are eligible before submitting the form. Complete the application in full and forward it to the union office via email, fax, or mail. Application forms for both Member and Dependant bursaries must be received at the union office by June 30, 2022.



Donation thanks

On behalf of CUPE BC, I wish to extend our thanks for your contribution to the CUPE BC Disaster Relief Fund. The support of CUPE Locals throughout British Columbia and across Canada allowed us to provide direct aid to hundreds of CUPE members during an unprecedented series of natural disasters that severely affected their homes, families, and livelihoods.

Additionally, because of your contribution, we donated the remaining funds to support the BC SPCA, the Canadian Mental Health Association, the Migrant Workers Centre, and the United Way as they continue to provide specialized support to those still recovering from the crises.

The compassion and resilience displayed throughout the province during these unprecedented events was a testament to the strength that can be found in our communities. It is times like these that we are honoured to be a part of CUPE and proud of what we can collectively achieve.

In solidarity,
Trevor Davies
Secretary-Treasurer, CUPE British Columbia



Trustee

This is a three-year term ending May 28, 2025. In order to be eligible to accept nomination, a member must have attended at least 50% of the General Membership meetings in the last 12 months. All members are eligible to vote.

EXECUTIVE ELECTIONS

Executive election results are in

After the nomination process closed, Warren Williams was acclaimed as President, Ravina Lal was acclaimed as 2nd Vice President, Bernie Dionne was acclaimed as Parks Sector Representative, Roxshanna Shankar was acclaimed as the HSSCBA (Community Health) Sector Representative, and Courtney Gillen was acclaimed as the Cultural Sector Representative.

There was an election in the City, K-12, and College/University Sectors. Paul Chohan was elected as the City Sector Representative, Carley Romas was elected as the K-12 Sector Representative, and Rose Palozzi was elected as the College/University Sector Representative.

As one of the Trustee positions was not filled, there will be a by-election at the June General Membership meeting. See more information on this page.

VSB JOB SHARE OPPORTUNITIES

SSA at Hastings Elementary

looking for a job share partner to work two days a week, Mondays and Tuesdays or Thursdays and Fridays, starting September 2022. If you are interested, please contact Charlene at charlenelevan@gmail.com.

DECISIONS

BY THE EXECUTIVE

At the Executive and Society Board meetings on May 17, 2022, the following decisions were made:

- To recommend to the members to receive the 2021 Union Audited Financial Statement.
- To recommend to the members to receive the 2021 Society Audited Financial Statement.
- To recommend to the members that Fairhall Zhang & Associates Ltd. be appointed to conduct the 2022 Union Audit.
- To recommend to the members that Fairhall Zhang & Associates Ltd. be appointed to conduct the 2022 Society Audit.
- To approve sending Seagrin Worster and Sherri-Ann Chisholm to CUPE Spring Weeklong School as per the recommendation from the Education Committee.
- To appoint Patrick Wong as the Alternate OH&S Representative for Fitness Attendants on the Parks OH&S Committee.
- To appoint Larry Turko as the Alternate OH&S Site Representative at Hillcrest Community Centre.
- To appoint Dilpreet Parmar as the Temporary OH&S Site Representative at Kensington Community Centre for one year.
- To appoint Luke Vasaka as the Alternate OH&S Site Representative at Mount Pleasant Community Centre.
- To approve a half page colour ad in the Legion BC/Yukon Command Military Service Recognition Book.
- To provide a letter of support to Langara College regarding the Human Rights Special Program Application.
- To designate all washrooms in the union office as gender neutral.

BY THE MEMBERS

At the Annual General Membership and Annual General Society meetings on May 25, 2022, the members in attendance made the following decisions:

- To receive the 2021 Union and Society Audited Financial Statements as presented.
- To appoint Fairhall Zhang & Associates Ltd. to conduct the 2022 Union and Society Audits.
- To receive the Union and Society Financial Statements ending March 31, 2022.
- To organize a meet and greet/open house for Parks Sector members working in Aquatics.
- To defeat a motion calling to remove support for COVID-19 vaccines.
- To defeat a motion to amend the start time of General Membership meetings to 6:30 p.m.

NEXT MEMBERSHIP MEETING IS ON JUNE 22, 2022 via Zoom

Congratulations on your retirement, Rosemary!

ZOOM! ZOOM!

I will always be grateful for the many days that Rosemary and I would sit in her cozy little office and share stories of our kids, clothes shopping and camping expeditions!

However, the most memorable memories I will always have of Rosemary is her sharing with me where all the traffic speed cameras are along Kingsway Avenue in Vancouver! I am especially grateful to her for sharing her secret list with me! Thank you, Rosemary!

Congratulations again Rosemary on your well-earned retirement. You certainly more than earned it these last few years! What a ride it's been!

All the best and I look forward to stopping by on our visits to Vancouver Island.

Happy Trails Sister!

Kind Regards,
Kathie Currie, Staff Representative

Rosemary, I will miss you! You have been a mentor, a good listener, an awesome resource person, and a great friend! Have a happy and relaxing retirement! Take care and be safe. All the best to you and your family!

Sincerely,
Henry Lee, Parks Sector Representative

It has been almost 31 years that I have been with VMREU/CUPE 15.

Rosemary has been like sunshine in the union office environment and I could hear her laugh as soon as I came through the entrance of the building.

She has been of tremendous assistance and will surely be missed.

All the very best in your retirement, Rosemary, with good health, wealth, and happiness.

Cheers,
Kamal Gautam, City Sector Rep

CUPE Local 15 has had the pleasure of having our Office Manager, Rosemary Matheson, for 32 years! She has supported many Presidents, Secretary-Treasurers, and Executives over the years, which was not an easy job.

She has been much more than just the Office Manager to many of us, she has been the ear to listen when we needed to vent and gave advice when we needed guidance. She is essentially the Mama Bear of the union office.

The institutional knowledge that she carries has guided many in their elected roles and helped remind them of the history behind many decisions. Her dedication to this Local has always been unwavering. For me personally, Rosemary has been someone that I have had great respect for in my role as a Steward, Chief Shop Steward, Executive Member, 2nd Vice President and now Secretary-Treasurer. She has taught and guided me in so many ways in the different roles I have had and I have really felt so lucky.



Working with her has truly been an honour. I will miss our morning chats, funny family stories, and venting sessions. Thank you for all that you have done for us! I wish you all of the best in your well deserved retirement!

Sincerely,
Debbie Mohabir, Secretary-Treasurer



Learned from the best

I have always been very fortunate to have great bosses in my working career and Rosemary is part of that lineage. She is an excellent supervisor who dedicated over three decades of her life immersed in this office.

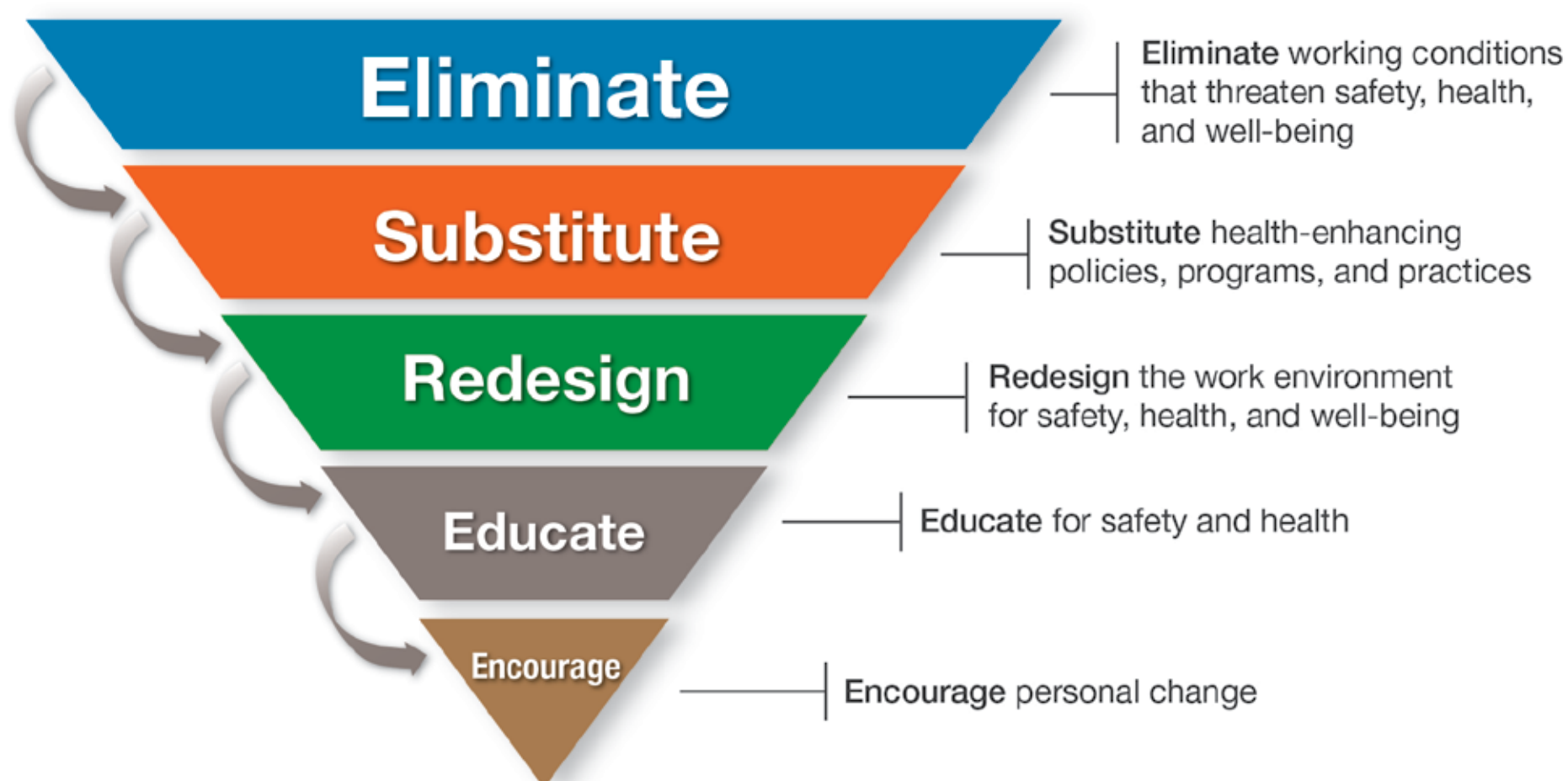
Among her many strong qualities, I admire her consistent work ethics the most. Even on her last day on the job, Rosemary was working after hours tending to the ratification voting

meeting. Despite her professionalism and careful attention to detail, she also possessed a wicked sense of humour. Several times I found myself laughing out loud at her jokes so hard that I burst into tears and was close to peeing in my pants! Rosemary will be sorely missed in our office.

Sincerely,
Tia Tang, Office Manager

The Hierarchy of Controls for Workplace Hazards

Hierarchy of Controls Applied to NIOSH *Total Worker Health*[®]



by Dylan McGill, Union OH&S Committee

How do we approach a hazard in the workplace? How do we decide what measures will control a hazard most effectively? As you may realize, there are many ways to “control” the same hazard. Over time, categories have emerged and shown different levels of efficiency in controlling a potential hazard. This has been named “The Hierarchy of Controls” (see accompanying graphic). To demonstrate how this applies to hazards, let us consider COVID-19 as a workplace hazard.

The first and most effective of these controls is to eliminate the hazard. For this, we can consider what is associated with the hazard. How can we eliminate COVID-19 as a hazard in the workplace? This category is where working from home fits in as a strategy to control the hazard.

Next, where elimination is not possible, substitution is considered. If the purpose of the hazardous item is necessary, can

something less hazardous be used for the same purpose? Obviously, this is difficult to apply to COVID-19. However, in the chemistry lab we look at a corrosive or toxic chemical used for an experiment and determine if a less toxic alternative exists that could lead to the same result.

After these controls have been considered, we accept that the hazard cannot be reasonably removed from the functioning workplace.

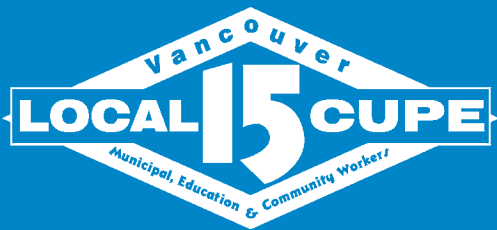
After these controls have been considered, we accept that the hazard cannot be reasonably removed from the functioning workplace. Given this, how can we isolate

the worker from the hazard through an engineering control? With respect to COVID-19, these controls include plastic or plexiglass dividers and partitions as well as improved ventilation.

Another method of reducing a worker’s exposure to a hazard is implementing administrative controls and changing the way they work. This includes social distancing and staggered work schedules.

The last and least effective category for controlling a hazard is personal protective equipment (PPE). At this level in the hierarchy, it is being accepted that the worker will interact with the hazard. Regarding controlling COVID-19, PPE includes masks, face shields, and gloves.

When deciding on a control to implement, there are often other factors to consider. However, considering all the options and how they fit into this Hierarchy of Controls is an important step in approaching any workplace hazard.



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: Carley Romas, Cynthia Schadt

Trustees:

Donna Petersen, Aaron Cook, Vacant

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
Kristi Bounegru, Office Assistant (Temp)

Building Service Worker:

Elaine Duan

CUPE National

Representatives:

Andrew Ledger, Bryan Bickley (on leave), Logan Lamerton (temporary)

CUPE BC Convention 2022



By Debbie Mohabir, Secretary-Treasurer

This year CUPE BC held its first in-person convention since 2019. It seemed as if many were excited to see their CUPE friends and family as there was a record number of delegates attending from locals all over the province, even at reduced capacity.

In the three and a half days of convention, we heard from many speakers.

Premier John Horgan spoke about the issues that are affecting workers provincially, such as the economy, education, and health care.



Federal NDP Leader, Jagmeet Singh, spoke about the new federal dental program, Pharmacare, housing affordability, and how he appreciates the labour movement for the support to be able to push through initiatives that will benefit working people.



Desmond Cole, author of "The Skin We're In: A Year of Black Resistance and Power", spoke about uncomfortable topics. He pushed many of us outside of our comfort zones to shift our thinking to create change and stand with



Indigenous Peoples as they fight to get their land back.

BC Federation of Labour President, Laird Cronk, spoke about how the recent achievements of the labour movement has helped all workers provincially, such as the five paid sick days for all workers, not just unionized workers, and the continued work that we all have to do collectively.

Delegates marched to the Legislature on April 28th for the National Day of Mourning ceremony to remember workers who have been injured or killed on the job. Flags were raised and speeches were made.

Over the course of convention, we also heard committee reports and discussions around the work that was done in the last year. Delegates passed all resolutions that hit the floor with the majority being unanimous! With the resolutions came stories of experiences, some positive and some negative, and some with tears. There were emotional moments where we were all trying to keep it together



as Indigenous delegates shared their family stories and the injustices that they suffered. There were also smudging ceremonies every morning.

I've attended many conventions and this was the first time I have seen so many new delegates who went to the microphone to speak on various topics, which was quite refreshing. CUPE 15 delegates also spoke to resolutions on behalf of the Local and we had one first time speaker from our local.

One of the key takeaways is that we all still have a lot of work to do in our unions, and the continued commitment shown by everyone was amazing.