

JANUARY
2026

THE MEMBERS' voice



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

Election of Delegates to the CUPE BC Convention

The 2026 CUPE BC Convention will be held at Victoria Conference Centre in Victoria, BC commencing at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, April 29, 2026 continuing through until 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, May 2, 2026.

Delegate elections will be held at the General Membership Meeting on January 28, 2026.

In order to be eligible to stand as a CUPE Local 15 delegate, a member must have attended a minimum of 50% of the General Membership meetings in the last 12 months.

JOB POSTING

Temporary Staff Representative

CUPE LOCAL 15 – VANCOUVER MUNICIPAL, EDUCATION, AND COMMUNITY WORKER'S UNION IS ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR A TEMPORARY FULL-TIME STAFF REPRESENTATIVE I POSITION. THE TERM IS FROM THE DATE OF HIRE UNTIL THE END OF APRIL 2026, BUT MAY BE EXTENDED.

Applicants must have considerable union representative experience, a strong commitment to trade union principles, a thorough understanding of and experience in collective agreement interpretation and enforcement, and must understand all aspects of privacy legislation and occupational health and safety. The ability to deal effectively with members,

Executive, other staff, and outside contacts is essential.

The successful applicant will be assigned to assist the Staff Representative IIs in the City and Parks Sectors.

A valid BC driver's license is required. Conditions of employment and the Staff Representative I Class Specification are set out in the collective agreement between CUPE Local 15 and the BC Union Workers' Union.

Resumes must be received by 5:00 p.m. on January 30, 2026 at CUPE Local 15, 545 West 10th Avenue, Vancouver, BC V5Z 1K9 or emailed to email@cupe15.org marked to the attention of the Staff Advisory Committee.

While we appreciate your interest, only applicants selected for an interview will be contacted.

NOV

JANUARY 2026 GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The January General Membership meeting will be held in person:

Date: January 28, 2026
Time: 5:30 p.m.
Location: Trattoria Hall – Italian Cultural Centre
3075 Slocan St. (at Grandview Hwy)
Vancouver
(Free parking at the venue)

The agenda and other related documents will be posted at cupe15.org on or before 12:00 noon on January 28, 2026, and hard copies will be available at the meeting.

There will be a draw at the end of the meeting and three lucky winners will receive a gift card (retailers TBA at the time of the draw). Child and dependant care reimbursement is available as per eligibility requirements in CUPE Local 15 Bylaw Section 31.

UNDER DISCUSSION:

- Election of Delegates to the CUPE BC Convention
- Financial Statement
- Notices of Motion – See page 3
- 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 xʷməθkʷəyəm (Musqueam) Nations.

Mission and Vision Statements

Mission Statement – Serving our members' interests by advancing and defending their rights and the rights of all workers.

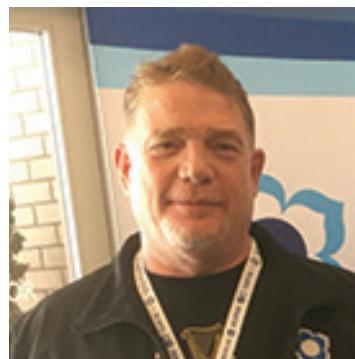
Vision Statement – A union founded on respect and advocacy that instills pride and a sense of belonging for the benefit of all.



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



2025: A Year of Challenge, Solidarity, and Standing Our Ground



SANTINO SCARDILLO,
ACTING PRESIDENT

by Santino
Scardillo, Acting
President

2025 was a demanding year for CUPE Local 15 members, our stewards, and our staff. Across multiple sectors, we faced layoffs, restructuring,

and employer-driven decisions that put job security at risk—all while continuing to bargain, organize, and support members on the ground.

One of the most serious challenges came from the City sector, where major layoffs were announced affecting members in the City, Parks, Ray-Cam, and Britannia. These layoffs, triggered under Section 54 of the BC Labour Relations Code, created uncertainty for hundreds of workers and set off bumping processes that disrupted lives, families, and workplaces.

What made this even more difficult was the timing. We had just concluded bargaining,

ratifying a collective agreement in September, only to be informed weeks later that layoffs were coming. These decisions were shaped by the employer's Zero Mandate—a policy choice that prioritizes budgets over people and pushes the cost of austerity onto frontline workers.

CUPE Local 15 made it clear: workers should not be paying the price for political and budgetary decisions.

Layoffs and instability were also felt at the Vancouver Art Gallery, Langara College, and Emily Carr University of Art and Design. Through collective efforts and those of our staff, we were able to minimize the impacts through voluntary severance packages, but the cuts were still felt by many and forced others into bumping situations, creating stress and uncertainty—especially for those with fewer years of seniority.

At the same time, we were in negotiations for a new collective agreement with the Vancouver School Board (VSB) and Langara College. Our members in the Health Sector had strike votes and we received mandates to strike, if necessary, at both the HSPBA and the CBA (Vancouver Coastal Health). In addition, members at the Vancouver Art

Gallery and Emily Carr University are currently in preparation for negotiations.

Through it all, the union was truly running on all cylinders and 2026 will be another busy year.

None of this work happens without the dedication of our staff representatives, stewards and lead stewards, national representatives, and office staff who handled an extraordinary workload in 2025. From layoffs and grievances to bargaining preparation and member support, their commitment ensured that members were not facing these challenges alone.

While 2025 tested us as a union, it also showed our strength.

As we head into 2026, we know the challenges are not over. Employers will continue to push austerity as the economic growth slows, and the announced City layoffs remains an unresolved threat to job security. CUPE 15 will continue to fight—for better wages, stronger job protection, and saving jobs wherever possible, while continuing to work with employers at the bargaining table and beyond.

Secretary-Treasurer's Message



CYNTHIA SCHADT
INTERIM
SECRETARY-TREASURER

by Cynthia
Schadt, Interim
Secretary-
Treasurer

At the November 2025 General Meeting, our membership fell short of the standards we set for ourselves.

We welcomed a special guest—a former CUPE Local 15 member, now

retired, who joined us to share information on an important topic. She waited patiently as members signed into Zoom, greeting familiar faces with kindness. Before the meeting was called to order, our Acting President introduced her. Unfortunately, instead of being met with courtesy, she was met with open expressions of displeasure from some members who objected to her presentation.

This is not the behaviour we expect from CUPE Local 15 members. I want to take a moment to remind everyone of our Equality Statement:

Our local union solidarity is based on the principle that all members of CUPE Local 15

are equal and deserve mutual respect at all levels. Any behaviour that creates conflict within our local prevents us from working together to strengthen our union.

As members of CUPE Local 15, mutual respect, cooperation, and understanding are our goals. We should neither condone nor tolerate behavior that undermines the dignity or self-esteem of any member, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment for them.

We believe that discriminatory speech or conduct which is racist, sexist, transphobic, or homophobic hurts and thereby divides us. So too, does discrimination on the basis of ability, age, class, religion, language, and ethnic origin.

Sometimes discrimination takes the form of harassment. Harassment means using real or perceived power to abuse, devalue, or humiliate. Harassment should not be treated as a joke. The uneasiness and resentment that it creates are not feelings that help us meet the needs of our members or grow as a local union.

Discrimination and harassment focus on characteristics that make us different and they reduce our capacity to work together on shared concerns such as decent wages, working conditions, and justice in our workplaces and society, and in our union.

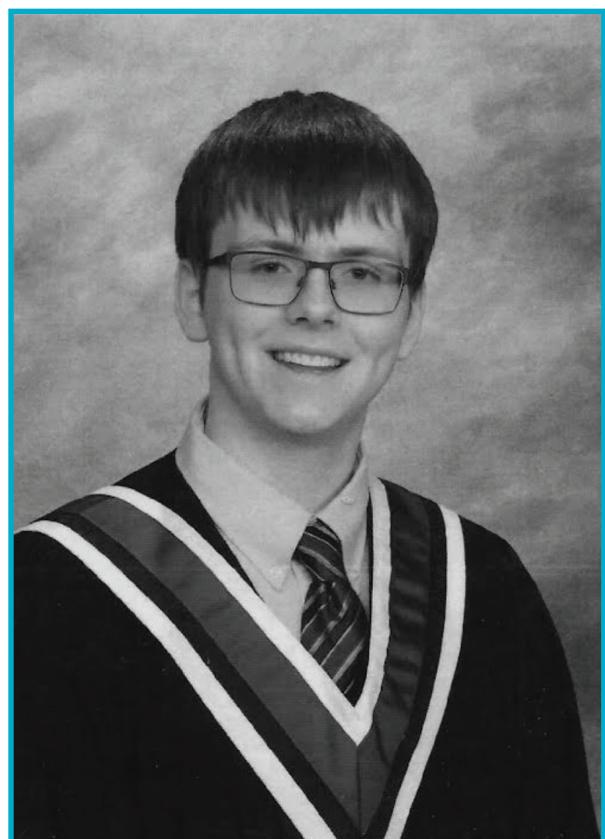
CUPE Local 15 policies and practices must reflect our commitment to equality. Members, staff, and elected officers must be mindful that all members deserve dignity, equality, and respect.

What the Equality Statement makes clear is this: Union solidarity depends on equality, dignity, and mutual respect. Behaviour that creates conflict or division weakens our ability to work collectively. Respect, cooperation, and understanding are not optional—they are essential values for every member.

The behaviour displayed at that meeting was dismissive and discriminatory. Our guest was there to share information about the retirement organization she represents—information relevant to many of our members. Discrimination of any kind, including racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, ageism, classism, religious discrimination, or discrimination based on language or ethnic origin, divides us and harms our union.

To disregard or silence a guest is disrespectful. It undermines the purpose of our meetings and the professionalism of everyone present.

As we move forward, I ask all members, staff, and elected officers to recommit to treating every individual—guest or member—with dignity, equality, and respect. This is how we build a stronger, more united CUPE Local 15.



Bursary Thanks

I would like to thank CUPE Local 15 VMECW for selecting me to receive bursary funding for the 2025-2026 school year.

This funding will aid me in paying the tuition for my Associate of Science program at Langara College, which I am pursuing to find a career in accounting or actuarial science.

The care CUPE Local 15 shows to its members and their families is demonstrated by their generous assistance to my education and future goals.

Thank you again.

James Lovering

Notices of Motion

1. Additional Delegates – 2026 CUPE BC Convention

The Executive recommends approving three additional delegates to attend the 2026 CUPE BC Convention.

Rationale

Bylaw 25.1.1 allows for sending additional delegates to conventions upon providing Notice of Motion to the members. As per the budget amendment at the November 2025 meeting, Line 5460 (Conventions) was increased by \$10,000 in support of sending three additional delegates to the 2026 CUPE BC Convention. (See convention article elsewhere in this issue.)

Bylaw 25.1 reads:

The President, 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President and Secretary-Treasurer will have first preference to the CUPE National and CUPE BC Conventions. Additional delegates will be elected by the membership as follows:

City Sector – 2 delegates

K-12 Sector – 2 delegates

Parks Sector – 2 delegates

Health Sector – 2 delegates

College and University Sector – 1 delegate

Cultural Sector – 1 delegate

Young Worker – 1 delegate (A young worker is defined as a person age 30 or under.)

25.1.1 If there are extra credentials available over and above the 15 referenced in 25.1, additional and/or alternate delegates will be elected at large by the membership upon the moving and passing of a notice of motion in compliance with these bylaws.

25.1.2 Eligibility to stand as a CUPE 15 delegate will be attendance at a minimum of 50% of the General Membership meetings in the 12 months prior to the convention.

DECISIONS

BY THE EXECUTIVE

At their Executive and Society Board meetings on November 18, 2025, and two e-votes conducted on December 16, 2025, the following decisions were made:

- To receive the Financial Statements ending September 30, 2025.
- To amend the draft 2026 CUPE Local 15 Budget and the draft 2026 Society Capital Budget prior to presenting to the members.
- To refer proposed bylaw amendments to Section 18 – Bargaining Committees, Section 23 – Policies, and Section 32 – Membership Engagement, to the Policy and Bylaw Working Group. Note: Starla Bayley, Sophie Bennett, and Anna Bondartchouk requested that their opposition be published.
- To donate \$1,000 to CUPE Local 830 in support of Charlottetown Utility Workers who have been on strike since July.
- To donate \$500 to CUPE Local 2269 in support of Squamish Municipal Workers who recently reached a mediated settlement after being locked out for several weeks.
- To refer Bylaw 9.2 to the Policy and Bylaw Working Group to bring it into compliance with the CUPE National Constitution.
- To appoint Tommy Luong as the Alternate OH&S Representative for the Park Rangers.
- To defer discussion on members attending Executive Board meetings.
- To donate \$300 toward the Vancouver Municipal Regional Retirees' Association Christmas lunch.
- To donate \$500 toward the CUPE Local 15 Emily Carr University Festive Party.

BY THE MEMBERS

At the General Membership and General Society meetings on November 26, 2025, the members in attendance made the following decisions:

- To receive the Financial Statements for the Union and Society ending September 30, 2025.
- To approve the 2026 proposed CUPE Local 15 budget as presented.
- To increase line 980 (Member Activities) in the proposed VMECW Society budget, and approve it as amended.
- To approve the Society Capital budget as presented.
- To defeat a motion to amend Bylaw 25.1.2 – Eligibility to Stand as a CUPE 15 Delegate.
- To conduct a survey of all members regarding the date, time, and format of General Membership meetings, and publish the results in the Members' Voice.
- To direct the President to submit a monthly activity report to the members.



SCAN TO LEARN MORE!

2026 Event Dates
February 14th – 28th

The Year of the Horse gallops in with fierce energy. Horses charge forward even in the face of a storm, guided by instinct and resilience. Inspired by this noble spirit, LunarFest initiates a call for courage: a challenge to each of us to move forward through life's turbulence with grace, conviction, and openness.

LETTER

First and foremost – Happy New Year! Wishing you and your family all the best for the months ahead with love, laughter, and beneficial opportunities. The New Year always signifies an opportunity to look at things differently, to make small changes that can have big impact. A time to reflect on what worked well and what could maybe have been done differently. January, for me, is a time to set my compass and chart my course for the next twelve months as I am never satisfied being stationary and need to be moving forward. This year is no different, so I keep setting my next goal and building the steps to get me there. Moving forward does not need to be in leaps and bounds, sometimes it is small incremental changes that can make all the difference in the world.

Today I am going to try and help members understand some of the tools that are available to deal with decisions made by those who hold various appointed and elected positions in the Local. Previously I mentioned how our bylaws are the rules that govern us. However, our bylaws are sandwiched between the National Constitution and our policies.

- National Constitution – over-arching rules that govern us—much like the Federal Government
- Bylaws – are unique to our Local but need to follow the rules set out in the National Constitution
- Policies – set out how the Local is to interpret our bylaws and specifics on operations

So, the question becomes, what happens if an elected or appointed member does not operate according to those rules? What can the average member do to address what has happened to them or the Local while operating in the union?

In my opinion (and yes this is only my opinion), if an elected or appointed individual does something on behalf of the Local contrary to the constitution, bylaws, or policies, the first step would be to have a conversation with the individual. After all, we are human and do make mistakes. If that does not resolve the issue, you would move to the next level. In our Local that level might be to seek support from your sector representative or the President and Table Officers. If this does not address your concerns there are additional steps you can take.

The first such action is called redress. This process is found in Section 21 of our bylaws (<https://cupe15.org/bylaws/>) and is a tool you can use to challenge a decision of an elected or appointed official. We all know who our elected officials are, but who are

these appointed officials? Appointed officials would include shop stewards, members of our various committees or individuals who have been appointed, by the Local, to employer committees such as Joint Health and Safety or Labour Management. Appointed officials are held to higher standard within our Local and are required to operate within the rules set out in our National Constitution and our Local's bylaws and policies.

The redress provision allows you to bring your concern forward to the entire Executive Board and ask that a previous decision, made by an appointed official, be overturned so a new decision may be made. If the decision of the Executive Board remains the same, the member then has the right to appear before a committee of three ordinary members endorsed by the general membership who will hear the appeal and make their decision. This committee decision will be initially provided to the member who has asked for the redress first, and then the findings will be reported to the next General Membership Meeting.

For larger and more complex issues and concerns, a process is available through our National Constitution. The Constitution is updated every two years after our National Convention. The current edition online is the 2025 Constitution (<https://cupe.ca/cupe-constitution>). This document has a number of references regarding how members are required to behave and directions for what should happen if they are not following the rules. Some of these rules are:

Section B.1.4 Conduct of Members and Officers state that all members must uphold the oath of membership and all officers must uphold the oath of office. Conduct that violates the oath of membership or oath of office is an offence against the Constitution and punishable under the Trial Procedure. (p.54)

Section B.8.4 – Oath of Office (p.68)

Appendix D – Equality Statement (p.74)

Appendix E – Code of Conduct (p.75)

The Trial Procedure is a stand-alone process found in Appendix F (p.81) of the Constitution and is handled by the National body of our organization. A complaint of this nature will only be investigated after a formally written complaint is submitted to our Local's Secretary-Treasurer. The Secretary-Treasurer must forward this complaint to the National body responsible for trials. The National Organization will not accept a complaint unless it is sent in by the Secretary-Treasurer. This is the serious protocol for dealing with big issues that affect our Local. Issues such as

dishonesty, spreading false information, acts of harassment or bullying and other items as outlined by the above sections. This process is more formal than our Local's Redress and is designed to deal with major issues that can have lasting effects which can harm our Local, our membership and our reputation, as a whole. It is "not to be used for political gain or to resolve interpersonal conflict that does not have a foundation in one of the offences outlined in Article F.1". It also states that members are "expected to attempt to deal with issues prior to resorting to file a complaint".

A benefit of this process is that the complaint being investigated is taken outside of the Local, which allows a fresh set of eyes, with a strong understanding of policies, bylaws, and the constitution to review all the facts and determine the merit of the accusations. In other words, whether the complaint valid or unfounded. By using an external person to review the complaint, it removes the factions that can develop over time. It also helps to prevent further harm to individuals or parties who feel wronged while also giving an opportunity for those who are being accused to state their side of the story in front of a neutral decision maker.

The Trial Procedure is private but not confidential. Which means that while someone is a respondent, the details of the charges claimed are not shared openly, those details remain private unless the respondent chooses to share. Should the charges against a member be founded, a trial is initiated with trained members who will hold a similar process to our Redress. Once a decision is made from this trial, the decision is recorded at the next General Membership meeting—hence, not confidential.

I know this year has the potential to be bumpy for many of us, my hope is that by engaging more people and getting more people interested in the processes and applications of our Local, we will build on our union solidarity. I believe the more people feel comfortable and confident with understanding how our Local works, more people will be willing to get involved and help steer the direction of our movement.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter.

In solidarity,
Starla Bayley

SEE EDITORIAL COMMENT NEXT PAGE.

EDITORIAL COMMENT ON LETTER FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

**Editorial Comment
from Santino
Scardillo, A/President**

On behalf of the entire Executive Board, I would like to thank Sister Bayley for taking the time to prepare this article and for encouraging members to engage more deeply with democracy of our Local.

Much of what is outlined in this article is consistent with long-standing CUPE Local 15 practices, and we appreciate the opportunity to reinforce that information for the broader membership.

We would like to assure members that the Local places a strong emphasis on compliance with the National Constitution, our Local bylaws, and adopted policies. On the specific matters brought up, the Local has already prepared the necessary amendments to align with the National Constitution which will be presented to the Executive Board at the January 20th meeting. As well, we have prepared suggestions on member-initiated bylaw amendments, which we thank the members for, aimed at accomplishing the same goals, while aligning them with the existing internal processes. For example, the proposal on the policies is to make them available to all members upon verification of membership which we hope to achieve once the Executive Board considers the matter.

Where concerns are raised, the Local's first priority has always been, and remains, early resolution through respectful discussion and clarification. Experience has shown that most issues arise not from intentional

misconduct or malfeasance, but from misunderstandings about roles, scope, or process, and these are best addressed directly and constructively.

As outlined in the article, formal mechanisms such as redress and constitutional trial procedures exist to safeguard members' rights. These tools are important, and the Local takes them seriously. At the same time, the Executive Board agrees with the principle that these processes are intended as safeguards of last resort, not substitutes for dialogue, or instruments for political disagreement or interpersonal conflict. We wish to stress that our expectation is that once an election has concluded, and the members have elected their representatives and officers, that this be respected for the term of office, and that these mechanisms not be used for continuous politicking, campaigning, and subversion of the Local leadership. Campaigns and politics have their time and place and the existing redress, trial procedures, and other mechanisms should not be used to advance personal ambitions.

Over the past year, the Local has already taken steps to provide greater transparency and accountability, and further engage the membership. This includes reviewing and updating policies (and will be making the policy document available to all members); increasing access to information and education about union processes; and widening alternative ways to participate. We are also investing in additional communication infrastructure—such as document management software (Paperless) and implementation of Action Network software. This will

enable us to communicate more rapidly with the members who opt-in, such as SMS updates and more rapid email communication. We have continued publishing a monthly newsletter, and increased the frequency of our member updates on all topics. We have engaged in greater cooperation and coordination with all our partners, including Locals 1004 and 391, the Vancouver and District Labour Council, and our other many stakeholders. We have increased the number of committees to provide even more opportunities for direct member governance participation, increased site visits, and will be recommending further initiatives to increase member engagement both virtually and directly.

We welcome continued member interest in how our Local functions, and we encourage all members to participate through General Membership meetings, committees, education sessions, and direct engagement with their elected representatives.

We welcome member suggestions and feedback—and commit to improvements on all fronts. We have also heard the members loud and clear that they would like the Local to consider more alternative ways to participate, such as having ratification votes be held electronically; we are exploring how and if this can be done, but at this time are bound by requirements of the Labour Relations Code.

In that spirit, we thank Sister Bayley again for contributing to this discussion.

In solidarity,
Santino Scardillo, A/President



CUPE Local 15 welcomes submissions and photos from members.

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

545 West 10th Avenue
Vancouver, BC V5Z 1K9
Phone: 604-879-4671
Fax: 604-879-7582
Email: email@cupe15.org
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
Interim Secretary-Treasurer: Cynthia Schadt
1st Vice President: Santino Scardillo
2nd Vice President: Henry Lee

Sector Representatives:

City: Aaron Cook, Susy McKay
College/University: Sophie Bennett (Langara College)
Mark Somo (Emily Carr University)
Cultural: Anna Bondartchouk
Health/HSSCBA: Edith Hole
Health/HSPBA: Lucia Rincon
Parks: Bernie Dionne, Starla Bayley
K-12: Vanessa Mani, Cynthia Schadt

Trustees:

Steve Anderson, Sheri Nielsen, Ravina Lal

Staff Representatives:

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

Office & Administrative Staff:

Mark Gloumeau, Accounting Coordinator
Nancy Strider, Accounting Assistant
Mei Wu, Accounting Assistant
Tia Tang, Office Manager
Michelle Yim, Office Assistant
Geneviève Dubuc, Office Assistant
Justin Wong, Office Assistant

Building Service Worker:

Elaine Duan

CUPE National Representatives:

Rachna Singh, Dan Todd, Kevin Rose



by Bernie Dionne, Parks Sector Representative/Shop Steward

I am deeply appreciative of the valuable learning and insights I gained through the Summary of Learning and Appreciation workshop series. Each session offered practical knowledge and tools that will greatly enhance my ability to support and advocate for members in my role as a steward.

Through Handling Discipline and Discharge, I developed a stronger understanding of key legal concepts and the steward's role throughout investigations, disciplinary actions, and grievance processes. The Conflict Skills for Stewards session helped me recognize the sources of workplace conflict and apply effective communication strategies to resolve issues constructively.

Learning about Disability and Ableism in the Workplace and Creating Accommodation-Friendly Workplaces provided me with a deeper awareness of accessibility, inclusion, and the legal duty to accommodate—skills that are essential to ensuring fair and equitable workplaces.

The session on What Stewards Need to Know About Arbitration clarified the arbitration process and the important responsibilities stewards have before and during hearings. Mediating Member-to-Member Conflict gave me hands-on practice in conflict coaching and mediation techniques that will help maintain solidarity and respect among members.

Popular Economics for Stewards broadened my understanding of how economic inequality affects workers and reinforced the importance of union advocacy in addressing these challenges. Finally, Understanding Mental Health taught me how to better support members facing mental health issues, reduce stigma, and foster a more compassionate workplace culture.

Overall, I am very grateful for the opportunity to take part in these sessions. The knowledge, strategies, and confidence I've gained will not only strengthen my effectiveness as a steward, but also help me contribute to a more inclusive, fair, and supportive work environment for all members.

YEAR-END CITY/PARKS SHOP STEWARD LUNCHEON



Left – Adrian Tan, Bernie Dionne, Andrea Mah, Brian Do; Mid – Brad Ferguson; Right – Henry Lee, Chad Lum, Seagrin Worster, Karla Cristales