

JANUARY
2021



THE MEMBERS' VOICE

THE NEWSLETTER OF CUPE LOCAL 15, VANCOUVER MUNICIPAL EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY WORKERS
We are on the unceded Coast Salish Territories of the x̱w̱məθkwəy̱əm (Musqueam), Sḵw̱x̱wú7mesh (Squamish), and Səḻílwətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh)

Notice of By-election

Member at Large –
City Sector Representative

This is for the balance of a three year term ending May 25, 2022. Only members from the City Sector are eligible to be nominated or to vote.

Please note!

The union office continues to be open to staff only and closed to members, executive, and other visitors. Union business is being conducted by telephone, email, video conferencing, conference calls, and outside the office when necessary.

Office telephone hours are 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

JANUARY

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The virtual General Membership meeting will be held on January 27, 2021 via Zoom. In addition, Special General Membership meetings to amend Local 15 bylaws have been scheduled on February 17 and March 18, 2021. All meetings will take place using the Zoom platform and 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 any of these meetings please call us at 604-879-4671 to update your information or email us at email@cupel5.org.

Under Discussion:

- By-election for City Sector Representative
- Committee and Staff Reports

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



Meet some of our awesome members!



Member Profile: Ryan Dunbar

Utility Maintenance Worker at
Britannia Rink and Pool

What do you love about your job?

I like working with my coworkers and I get to do a variety of jobs like driving the Zamboni.

Toilet paper: over or under?

LOL ...under.

When did something start out badly for you but in the end, it was great?

I booked two worksites on the same day but was able to do one job without penalty.

What is something you refuse to share?

I refuse to share my laptop at work.

Sweet or Savoury?

Savoury.

Member Profile: Taj Brar

Auxiliary Building Maintenance
Worker at Britannia Community
Services Centre

What do you love about your job?

I love making little children smile while driving the Zamboni.

Toilet paper: over or under?

Over.

When did something start out badly for you but in the end it was great?

I had trouble learning to drive the Zamboni and now I drive like a pro!

What is something that you refuse to share?

I refuse to share my ice cream cone.

Sweet or Savoury?

Sweet.



Welcome, 2021!

by Warren Williams, President



WARREN WILLIAMS
PRESIDENT

Hello Members,

Have you ever used the expression “out with the old and in with the new”?

Happy New Year CUPE 15 members, family, and friends. It's time to step away

from the old and embrace the new.

We have stepped up for our communities, our employers, and most importantly each other. It has not been easy and we all know it's been difficult for some more than others. We have rubber stamped public service and defined what it means to be a member of the Canadian Union of Public Employees.

We are public servants because we choose to be. We choose to lend a helping hand and we choose to service our communities by doing the work that a society needs in order to flourish. We know that in order for us to succeed we have to work for the benefit of all.

I could bemoan the year 2020 without any difficulty by pointing out the hardships many of us have endured from coast to coast to coast. This may be a new year with new challenges and some lingering old ones but it doesn't matter as public service employees we are up for the challenge. It's just what we do.

2020 provided us with many hard lessons; some learned, some understood, some questioned, but none ignored. Some created division, some created unity, and some were a cry for us to reassess our place in society to question ourselves and be questioned by each other. We have an opportunity to have

a role in making equity, compassion, and respect not just words but a lived experience for all.

2021 is our opportunity to keep our lessons front and center by continuing to push for better for all, not just the few. We can do it if we do what public service workers do which is choosing to put our communities' well-being front and center and moving forward. We can do this by not giving in to fear of difference but by embracing our similarities.

It's time to discard the old and embrace the new. We can't allow our society to ignore history and therefore repeat it. We can't settle as we are all far too important and are being given opportunities that if we are courageous will make 2021 a foundation year.

So CUPE 15 “out with the old and in with the new”. Happy New Year to you and yours.

Happy New Year and Welcome to 2021

by Debbie Mohabir, Secretary-Treasurer



DEBBIE MOHABIR
SECRETARY-TREASURER

Hello Everyone,

I hope everyone enjoyed the holidays with your family although we all recognize that it looked a little different this year for everyone due to COVID. For me the holidays are about spending

time with loved ones, being thankful, and of course eating lots of yummy food!

If there is one thing 2020 has taught me, it has been to slow down and appreciate all the things that I have taken for granted. I realized that something I really value is human interaction and social connections.

In the summertime my bubble of six friends would meet at a local park with our own food and drinks for some good conversation which of course always included a lot of laughs! Once the new restrictions came into effect we were no longer allowed to interact like this and so came the Friday night Zoom happy hours. While it wasn't the same as seeing each other face to face it worked and the laughs continued.

I think the pandemic has taught all of us to take some time to think about what we value in our lives and I think it's a good thing. I've seen many people start new businesses, new

hobbies, and new interests that they never had time to put their mind to.

Now that this is becoming our new reality, I am looking forward to a new year with new ideas of how to creatively navigate the way our local does things. The Social Committee will soon be meeting to start some 2021 planning and I am really excited about some of the ideas that have already been shared. One of the new things that we tried for the first time in 2020 was the Halloween Pumpkin Contest which was a great success!

The judges had a lot of fun judging and the CUPE 15 kids were so creative with their entries. The committee is looking forward to planning upcoming events.

Local 15 has been working really hard to get the future stewards who are on the waiting list signed up for the Intro to Stewarding Training Parts 1 and 2. It has been great to see so many members from different sectors who want to become involved. If you are interested in becoming a steward or just have questions about what it is all about, please don't hesitate to reach out to me at dmohabir@cupe15.org and I would be happy to answer your questions. We have also been able to sign stewards up for the Notetaking and Challenging Racism courses as well as various other courses offered through the Vancouver and District Labour Council. Education is key to helping our stewards gain



the necessary knowledge to help support and represent members.

We have sent out our first Stewards' Mailing of the year to all of our sites. Site Reps please make sure to put this information on your CUPE 15 board. The mailing includes a calendar of upcoming events along with some helpful information from the OH&S Committee on how to become an OH&S Site Representative. Please contact the union if there is other information that you would like us to send to put on the board as well.

On a final note, I would like to remind everyone to continue to do their part to keep everyone safe by wearing your mask and continuing to follow the restrictions set out for all of us.

Bursary Thanks

I would like to thank CUPE Local 15 – VMECW Society for the support and opportunity that this bursary represents.



I currently attend SFU in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, on my way to becoming a teacher. Attending SFU looks a little different this year as I am attending classes online but I do look forward to attending the campus as soon as possible. Education and becoming an educator is very important to me.

Thank you very much.
Rebecca Ballard

Bursary Thanks

I would like to thank CUPE Local 15 for awarding me the VMECW Society Dependant Bursary to help with my full-time studies at Simon Fraser University.



This bursary will definitely relieve some of the financial expenses, and will allow me to focus on my studies to obtain my Bachelor of Arts degree.

Thank you once again, CUPE Local 15 for your continued support with my studies!

Sincerely,
Grant Jepson

Thanks for the Support

Thank you so much for supporting the Hope in Shadows project and providing meaningful work for over 175 low-income vendors.

Kirsten,
on behalf of the Megaphone Team



VSBC Job Share Opportunities at Norquay Elementary

1. SSA looking for a job share partner to work at Norquay Elementary two days a week starting in September 2021. If you are interested please contact sdelbianco@vsb.bc.ca.
2. SSA looking for a job share partner to work at Norquay Elementary Thursdays and Fridays starting September 2021. If you are interested please contact Sheila at sheilafarrales3@gmail.com.

Donation Thanks

Thank you for your generous donation of \$1,000 to our sisters and brothers at Dominion Stores who were on strike for twelve weeks. Your donation, along with the many others we received, was distributed to our Dominion members who are very appreciative of your support.

We are all stronger with the help of other unions and supporters.
Thank you again.

Carolyn Wrice
President, Unifor Local 597

MEMBER & EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

The Executive Decided

At the November 17 and December 15, 2020 Executive and Society Board meetings the following decisions were made:

- To contract Grandview Blacktop to repave the CUPE Local 15 parking lot.
- To recommend the draft Union, Society, and amended Capital budgets to the membership.
- To recommend bylaw amendments to Section 7, 12, 13, 18, and 21 of the bylaws and to add a new (as yet unnumbered) bylaw regarding policies.
- To appoint Ravina Lal as the alternate City Sector Representative to the Union OH&S Committee.
- To appoint Mona Mirzayan to the CUPE Local 15 OH&S Committee as the Health Sector Representative.
- To appoint Percy Navarro as the OH&S Site Representative at the Roundhouse Community Centre.
- To appoint Garret Wong as the OH&S Site Representative at Douglas Park Community Centre.
- To appoint Jeremy Quan as the OH&S Site Representative at Champlain Heights Community Centre.
- To donate \$699 to Camp Jubilee to cover the cost of one week at summer camp.
- To approve the January 1, 2021 to December 31, 2022 Memorandum of Agreement between CUPE Local 15 and the BC Union Workers' Union.



- To approve one applicant for CLC Winter School.
- To donate \$1,000 to Vancouver Co-op Radio for an All-BIPOC podcast.
- To organize anti-racism training for the Executive, Trustees, Stewards, and Staff using an external facilitator.
- To increase the allowance for *Doubtful Accounts* by \$25,000 per the 2020 approved Society Budget.
- To approve the *Recognition of Territories* statement which was vetted by the Indigenous community: "We give thanks today to be on the unceded lands of the Coast Salish peoples, the Squamish, Musqueam, and the Tsleil-Waututh Nations, original inhabitants of the lower mainland since time immemorial. On their lands where we live, work, and play we ask for their guidance on a day where the work we need to do needs to be guided by respect, understanding, and contemplation."

The Members Decided

At the Virtual General Membership and General Society meetings on November 25, 2020 the members in attendance made the following decisions:

- To approve the proposed 2021 Society, Capital, and Union budgets.
- To elect Ravina Lal to the vacant 2nd Vice President position ending May 25, 2022.
- To amend bylaw 12.7 by adding a new article (12.7.5) as follows: At the conclusion of the calendar year, full time officers are required to complete a full summary of all banked entitlements, consistent with the language of their governing collective agreements, that includes all days used and all days remaining in their respective banks. The summaries must be submitted to the CUPE Local 15 Table Officers for approval. Approval will not be unreasonably denied. Unless extenuating circumstances justify a later submission, full time officers must submit their summary of banked entitlement no later than 5:00 p.m. Friday of the first full business week in January each year. Once approved, the summaries will be submitted to the CUPE Local 15 Office Manager for reconciliation with the officer's employer.
- To receive the Union and Society Financial Statements ending September 30, 2020.

Notice of Motion on Union Bylaws

Special Membership Meetings – Union Bylaws

Special Virtual General Membership meetings have been scheduled on February 17th and March 18th from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. to deal with amendments to the union bylaws. Both meetings will take place using the Zoom platform and 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 these meetings please call us at 604-879-4671 to update your information or email us at email@cupel5.org.

The current bylaws and proposed amendments are available on the *ABOUT* tab at www.cupe15.org. Notice of Motion for these amendments was served in the March 2019 issue of the Members' Voice. In addition, the following proposed amendments will be brought to the special meetings (strike out denotes deleted language and bold denotes new language):

1. Section 7: Initiation Fees and Monthly Dues

At the General Membership meeting on February 26, 2020 the members in attendance referred Bylaw 7.4 back to the bylaw working group for further amendment.

The Executive recommends the members approve the following proposed bylaw amendment to Section 7: Initiation Fees and Monthly Dues:

7.42 **CUPE Local 15 union dues will be 1.95% of regular wages.** The regular monthly dues **may be amended** to be levied upon the general membership or portion thereof, will be determined at a regular or at a special general meeting. **The vote must be by secret ballot.** called for that purpose and for which notice of motion has been served. All members will receive a written notice with date, time and place of the meeting, and wording of the motion **will be mailed by post and electronically** to their **most** current address **on file at the union** (under the membership list) and post marked not less than 60 days prior to the meeting where the dues will be voted on.

2. Section 12: Officers

The Executive recommends the members approve the following proposed bylaw amendment to Section 12: Officers:

12.7.4 A flexible work schedule (based on the 35 hour week) consistent with the provisions applicable to field staff of CUPE Local 15 (General Membership and Executive meetings are excluded). **Table Officers are expected to work at the CUPE Local 15 office unless alternate arrangements are approved by the Executive Board.**

3. Section 13: Election of Officers

The Executive recommends the members approve the following proposed bylaw amendment to Section 13: Election of Officers:

13.3.5 **Proxy voting is not permitted. A voting member may not appoint another member to act and vote as the member's proxy.**

4. Section 18: Shop Stewards

The Executive recommends the members approve the following proposed bylaw amendment to Section 18: Shop Stewards:

18.1 Shop Stewards are official representatives of CUPE Local 15 and are authorized to speak and act on behalf of CUPE Local 15 while acting as an advocate for a member or as an officially designated representative to a committee, subject always to:

- a) Selection **and/or election** by fellow members at the work site to serve a two year term. These elections to be held annually.
- b) ~~Appointment by the Executive Board.~~
- cb) Membership in good standing.
- dc) Compliance with the Constitution, Bylaws, Policy and Directives of CUPE National **Constitution and the Bylaws of CUPE Local 15.**
- ed) Compliance with the training requirements as determined by the membership **and subject to confirmation by the CUPE Local 15 Executive Board.**
- e) **Adherence to strict confidentiality.**
- f) **Working collaboratively with the Chief Shop Steward of the sector to enforce the collective agreement.**
- g) **Attending a minimum of 50% of steward meetings per calendar year unless excused.**
- h) **Following the directive of the Sector Staff Representative.**
- i) **Participating in the rotation of answering the sector shop steward line as directed.**
- j) **Maintaining the integrity of the local by action and example.**

18.2 **Shop Stewards shall not be authorized to amend or alter the terms, conditions, or agreed practices arising from the collective agreement either verbally, by action, or in writing. Such authority is vested with the President or designate subject to these bylaws.**

18.23 Shop Stewards not in compliance with one or more of the subjects above, may be removed by the Executive Board **President or designate.** Shop Stewards so removed may seek redress in accordance with the provisions of Section 22 of these bylaws **appeal the decision to the Executive Board.**

5. Section 21: Discipline of Members

The Executive recommends the members approve the following proposed new bylaw amendment to Section 21: Discipline of Members:

21.2 **The President or designate has the authority to immediately remove a committee member who is in contravention of the CUPE National Constitution and the Bylaws of Local 15 or who is actively bargaining below employment standards. The decision may be appealed to the Executive.**

6. Policies

The Executive recommends the members approve the following proposed new bylaw:

The CUPE Local 15 Executive may create policies to govern day to day operations of the union provided those policies are consistent with the CUPE National Constitution and the CUPE Local 15 Bylaws.

Information on the Vancouver Municipal and Regional Retiree's Association



by Betty McGee, President of the VMRRA

This article is to provide members with information about the Vancouver Municipal and Regional Retiree's Association (VMRRA) and to ensure that anyone contemplating retirement in the next while knows about the organization and the opportunities to engage with those who have already left the workplace.

Prior to the pandemic we hosted regular meetings with guest speakers who provided valuable information on subjects of interest to retirees. In addition, we hosted a number of social events during the year. These events were quite popular and the Executive of the organization is looking forward to the New Year when we hope to reinstate not only our regular meetings but our socials as well.

The membership of the organization come from the various bargaining units of CUPE Local 15 and we welcome any and all who fit this description. We also have a number of members who are spouses or partners of members plus associate members who fit neither category. The membership fee is \$10 per year and you are welcome to join pre or post retirement.

Please feel free to contact myself (elizabethmcgee@shaw.ca) or any member of the Executive for more information. Contact information is listed on the back of our newsletter, the Golden Gang Gazette, which is available on the CUPE Local 15 website under the Retiree's tab.

During this pandemic CUPE BC is not offering the two and a half day pre-retirement course that has been available to members for many years. An online substitution for this course is in development at this time but I have not had an indication of an actual roll out date. This course offered valuable information on a variety of issues that will impact retirees. As a facilitator for CUPE National I enjoyed delivering this course to folks around the province and look forward to doing so again. As CUPE members your Municipal Pension Plan advisors are available to assist with questions you may have regarding the pension choices you will make as you contemplate leaving the workforce and I would encourage you to contact them with

any questions you may have. They can be reached by email at mpp.pensionsbc.ca or by phone locally at 604-419-2000 or toll free at 1-877-722-2583.

Service Canada representatives are also available to assist with questions regarding the Canada Pension Plan (CPP) and Old Age Security (OAS) at servicecanada.ca or 1-800-662-6232.

We hope that as we move into the new year that the pandemic will be brought under control and we can return to many of our pre-pandemic activities.

COVID-19: Service Canada Centres

You do not need to go to a Service Canada Centre for service.

Complete a service request form online. A Service Canada officer will call you back within 2 business days. If your request cannot be completed over the phone, you will be offered an appointment to visit a Service Canada Centre.

For more info on the OAS, please go to <https://www.canada.ca/>

What does a membership in the VMRRA offer?

Friendship: Opportunity to renew acquaintances, share memories, relive experiences, and perhaps make new friendships.



Newsletter: The Golden Gang Gazette, is sent to every member one week before the monthly meeting.

Social Activities: Monthly meetings, Christmas and Summer Socials.

Education: Many of our monthly meetings feature guest speakers on topics such as the benefits of group medical, travel and home insurance plans, protecting seniors rights, housing, health, personal and home safety, etc.



2021

Pension Payment dates

January 28

February 25

March 30

April 29

May 28

June 29

July 29

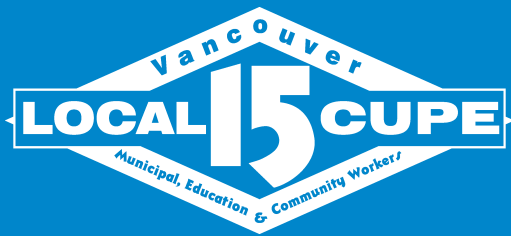
August 30

September 29

October 28

November 29

December 23



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

Sector Representatives:

City: Kamal Gautam, Vacant
College/University: Alex Fowler, Rose Palozzi
Cultural: Nicola Clur
Health/HSSCBA: Mona Mirzayan
Health/HSPBA: Mia Nickel
Parks: Starla Bayley, Henry Lee
K-12: Carley Romas, Cynthia Schadt

Trustees:

Donna Petersen, Michele Alexander, Aaron Cook

Staff Representatives:

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

Office & Administrative Staff:

Mark Gloumeau, Accounting Coordinator
Rosemary Matheson, Office Manager
Barbara Simpson, Office Assistant
Nadia Thibault, Office Assistant
Nancy Strider, Accounting Assistant
Tia Tang, Office Assistant

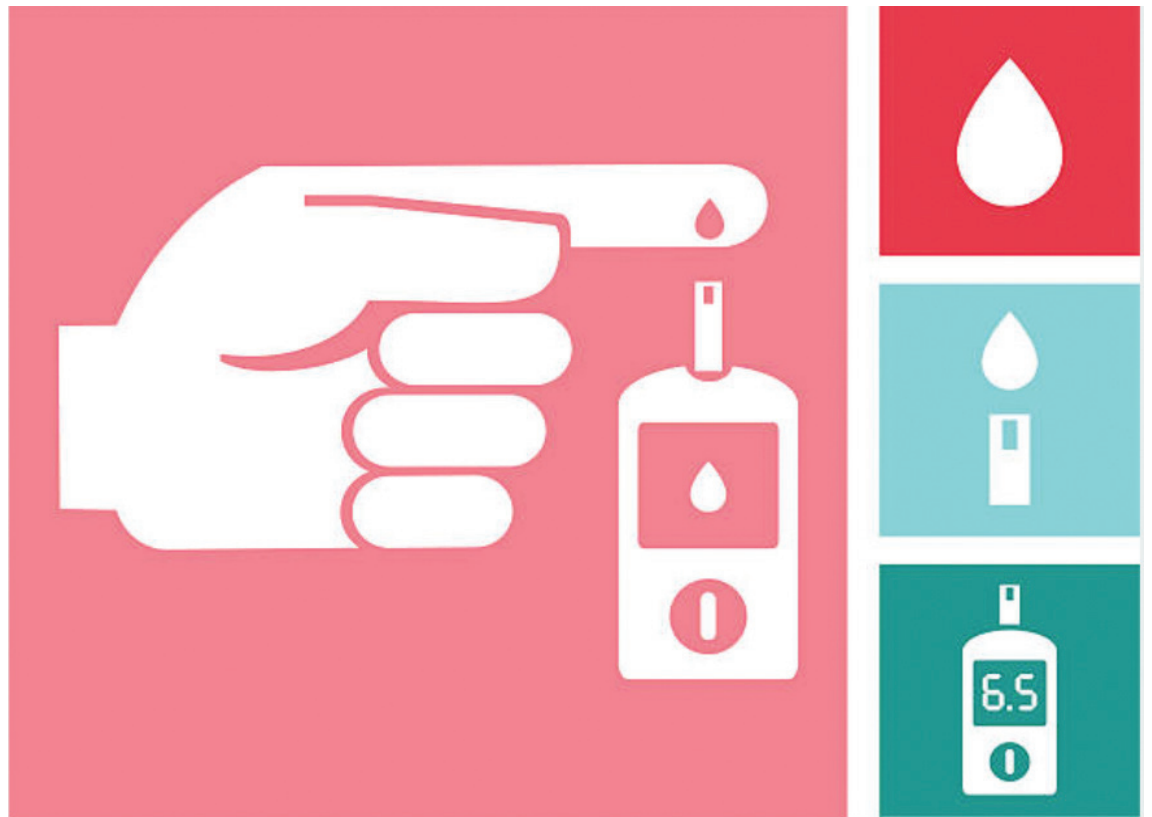
Building Service Worker:

Elaine Duan

CUPE National Representatives:

Lee Mossman, Tanya Paterson

OH&S CORNER



Living with Diabetes

by Chad Cammer, CUPE Local OH&S Committee Representative – Emily Carr University

Diabetes is a metabolic disease that causes high blood sugar. The hormone insulin moves sugar from the blood into your cells to be stored or used for energy. With diabetes, your body either doesn't make enough insulin or can't effectively use the insulin it makes.

Early signs/symptoms that an individual may be diabetic or borderline diabetic are, but not limited to, the urgency to frequently urinate, increased thirst, constant desire for fluids, increased appetite, fatigue, itchy skin, and blurred vision.

There are two different types of diabetes: Type 1 and Type 2.

Type 1 diabetes (a chronic condition) is caused when one's immune system; the body's system for fighting infection, attacks and destroys the insulin-producing beta cells of the pancreas. Type 1 diabetes is caused by genes and environmental factors, such as viruses, that may trigger the disease. Type 2 diabetes is caused by, but not limited to, aging, poor lifestyle, poor diet, and lack of exercise.

Type 1 diabetics are insulin dependent, meaning Type 1s require insulin injections to control their blood sugar. Type 2 diabetics are typically prescribed Metformin by their doctor to stimulate and increase the production of insulin from their pancreas. Eventually the pancreas "burns out" however it can be stabilized and prolonged by living a healthy lifestyle.

My Story

I became a Type 1 diabetic at age

36; eleven years ago. The common symptoms of diabetes I experienced began and worsened very quickly. Living a considerably healthy lifestyle throughout my life, I wasn't sure exactly what was happening. After being diagnosed, it took me approximately six months to recover (both mentally and physically), transitioning, and educating myself on the disease.

I found it challenging to make something positive out of something I considered catastrophic. However, the "condition" (doctors like to call it that rather than a disease) made me become a more responsible person.

With the transitioning, I pictured it kind of like driving an automatic vehicle where the transmission "the pancreas" does all the gearing for you; "ensures your blood sugars are properly balanced". However, now switching to a standard vehicle where I become responsible for, and in control of, all the gearing, "controlling my blood sugar (through injections) with calculated amounts of insulin".

I believe that is the key word: responsibility. Diabetes does not allow one to "take a vacation" from it – ever.

Without responsibility, proper management of, and understanding the disease, diabetes can lead to other serious health complications; vital organ disease(s), including, but not limited to complications of the heart.

Imagining "seeing the light at the end of the tunnel", there are many support groups available that one can resource. Diabetes can be "controlled", or can be the controller... It's a matter of how strong one's perception and willingness is to survive.