

MARCH
2025

THE MEMBERS' VOICE



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

It's almost time for Executive Board Elections!



Nominations to be held at the March 26, 2025 Virtual General Membership Meeting

Another year has passed and nominations for Executive Board elections are on the agenda for the March General Membership Meeting. The term of these positions is three years. This year there are nine positions up for democratic renewal. They are:

- President (full time paid position)
- 2nd Vice President
- City Sector Representative (1)
- Park Board Representative (1)
- College/University Sector Representative (1)

- K-12 Sector Representative (1)
- Cultural Sector Representative (1)
- Health Sector Representative – HSCBA (Community) (1)
- Trustee (1)

To be eligible to accept nomination you must be a member in good standing for at least twelve months immediately prior to the nomination. To be eligible for the President, 2nd Vice President, or Trustee positions you must have attended at least 50% of the membership meetings in the past twelve months.

Want to vote for the Executive Board in May?

Make sure we have your current email and home addresses. Call or email our office to confirm.

Voting will be conducted electronically, as it has been since 2013. More information will be available in the April issue of the Members' Voice, at cupe15.org, and via email if you have provided the union office with a personal email address.

It is essential that your contact information is current, including a personal email address. If you do not receive mail or email from the union, please call us at 604-879-4671 or email@cupe15.org to update your data. Please note that under no circumstances will the union send emails to employer email addresses.

MARCH 2025 GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The General Membership Meeting will be held on March 26, 2025 at 5:30 p.m. via 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. 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 the meeting). Child and dependant care reimbursement is available as per eligibility requirements in CUPE Local 15 Bylaw Section 31.

Article B.10.1(c) of the CUPE National Constitution allows Honourary Members to attend membership meetings with voice, but no vote. If you are an Honourary Member and would like to attend, please email the office on the day of, or the day prior to the meeting.

UNDER DISCUSSION:

- Nominations for Executive Board Elections
- Committee and Staff 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, 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.

WE ACKNOWLEDGE...

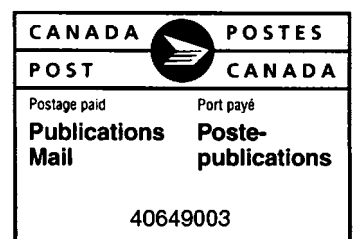
We live, work and play on the unceded land of the Coast Salish peoples—Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) and xʷməθkʷəyəm (Musqueam) Nations.

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



Solidarity in Uncertain Times



by **Warren Williams,**
President

In times of uncertainty, the one thing that remains unshaken is the power of our solidarity. As union members, we understand that our

strength does not come from working against each other, but from standing together. Now, more than ever, we must hold onto this truth.

Looking at recent events south of the border, we can see the damage caused when division takes root—when workers

are turned against one another, instead of coming together for a common cause. Anti-union forces thrive on this kind of discord, using fear and misinformation to weaken our collective voice. We cannot allow that to happen here.

Solidarity is not just a word we use when it suits us; it is the very foundation of everything we stand for. It is about supporting one another, even when we do not always agree. It is about understanding that when one of us is hurt, we all feel it. It is about remembering that the rights we have today—fair wages, safer workplaces, job security—were earned because we stood united.

We come from different walks of life, and that diversity only makes us stronger. We may have our differences, but we share the same goals: to improve our working conditions,

to protect our rights, and to secure a better future for those who come after us. That is why we must focus on what unites us, rather than what divides us.

Our union has always been a place where we can come together, share ideas, and find solutions that work for everyone. Disagreements are part of the process; that is how we grow stronger. When all is said and done, we must remember why we are here. We fight for fairness. We fight for dignity. We fight for one another.

Let us continue moving forward. Let us support one another. Let us remind ourselves that our true strength lies in unity. When we stand together, there is nothing we cannot accomplish.

Honouring International Women’s Day 2025



by **Santino Scardillo,**
Acting Secretary-Treasurer

March 8th is a special day for all of us, as we come together to celebrate the incredible achievements of women around the world. It is not only a time

to reflect on how far we have come, but also to recognize that the journey toward true gender equality is ongoing.

In our union, women have always been at the heart of creating workplaces where fairness and respect are not just things we talk about, they are a reality. They lead with passion, advocate for what is right, and make sure everyone, no matter their gender, is treated with dignity. Their work reminds us of the strength we have when we stand together.

As we celebrate, let us also renew our commitment to supporting and empowering

the women in our union. Whether it is pushing for equal pay, standing up against harassment, or making sure women have the same chances to lead, we are all in this together.

Let us take a moment today to honour the women who inspire us with their strength, hard work, and determination. Let us keep pushing forward for a future where equality is the norm, not the exception.



*British Columbia Electric Railway (B.C.E.R.)
Conductorettes, 1947 Vancouver, B.C.
Courtesy of Edra McLeod*

Mrs. Edra McLeod was born about in Rowland, Manitoba about 1916. The family eventually moved to Winnipeg where her mother worked as a substitute teacher for a time and then at the kitchen at Hudson’s Bay department store. Edra graduated high school in 1934. Her father was laid off during the Depression and took a job delivering coal. The family moved to Vancouver in 1938. Her father took a job fumigating and then went to Britannia Mines to work as a miner. Edra took a job at Woodward’s, however, when she married later that year, she was laid off as a result. She and her husband lived in the boarding house her parents ran. Her husband joined the Reserve Army and then enlisted in service for WWII around the time their first child was born. Edra got a job at Boeing as a spray painter, leaving in 1944 to become one of the first conductorettes hired by the B.C. Electric Railway [later B.C. Hydro]. By the 1950’s she was working as a driver and began organizing.

MUNICIPAL PENSION RETIREES' ASSOCIATION (MPRA) The benefits of membership!

submitted by Betty McGee, MPRA Member and President of the Vancouver Municipal Regional Retirees' Association (VMRRA)

Since inception in 2003, the Municipal Pension Retirees' Association (MPRA), has witnessed continual growth, currently **boasting a membership of over 12,000 members**. This collective strength empowers us to advocate effectively on pension issues that impact all of us.

Our members are made up of retirees just like yourself from within the Municipal Pension Plan, British Columbia's largest public pension plan, the sixth largest in the country, serving over 120,000 pensioners. Knowing your plan is important, and we encourage you to see **what the benefits of being an MPRA member can provide you during retirement**.

The MPRA has a voice within the Municipal Pension Plan and Municipal Retirees' Benefit Trust and meets with the Chair and Vice Chair throughout the year, offering us a platform to communicate your concerns and influence decisions regarding your pension and Group

Health Benefits. Further to this, we participate with the Municipal Employees' Pension Advisory Committee (MEPAC), Municipal Employees' Pension Committee (MEPC), and other public pension retiree associations.

With 33 districts across the province, including one dedicated to out-of-province members, quarterly meetings provide forums for Association business and opportunities of social interaction among retirees.

MPRA members also enjoy access to **exclusive group rates for travel and home insurance** along with discounts at partnering establishments such as Lordco, Cloverdale Paint, and Specsavers, just to name a few.

With annual membership of just \$22 per individual or \$40 for an individual and partner, we encourage you to visit www.mpra.ca for complete details.

If you have any inquiries or require further information, please contact us at 250-768-1519 Monday to Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

DECISIONS

BY THE EXECUTIVE

At the Executive and Society Board meetings on February 18, 2025, the following decisions were made:

- To uphold the decision to delete Policy 2.3 – Executive Book Off.
- To not consider an amendment to Policy 3.2 as the President called the request out of order.
- To not accept a settlement offer in the City Sector.
- To uphold the decision of the Staff Representative to withdraw a grievance in the City Sector.
- To appoint Henry Lee as Lead Shop Steward in the Parks Sector and City et al Bargaining Committee Co-Chair during Starla Bayley's staff assignment.

REMINDER OF NOTICE OF MEETINGS

VSB Information and Proposal Ratification Meetings

The VSB/CUPE Local 15 collective agreement expires on June 30, 2025. Your bargaining committee has been meeting to review survey responses and other related material in order to prepare bargaining proposals for the upcoming round of negotiations.

For your convenience, two meetings have been scheduled to review and ratify proposals.

MEETING TIMES:

April 1, 2025

Holiday Inn Vancouver-Centre (Arbutus Ballroom)
711 West Broadway, Vancouver

- Meeting Starts: 5:00 p.m.
- Voting Opens: 5:30 p.m.
- Voting Closes: 7:00 p.m.

April 2, 2025

Italian Cultural Centre (Grand Ballroom)
3075 Slocan Street, Vancouver

- Meeting Starts: 4:00 p.m.
- Voting Opens: 4:30 p.m.
- Voting Closes: 6:00 p.m.

PLEASE NOTE:

You may attend either or both meetings, but will only be allowed to vote once.

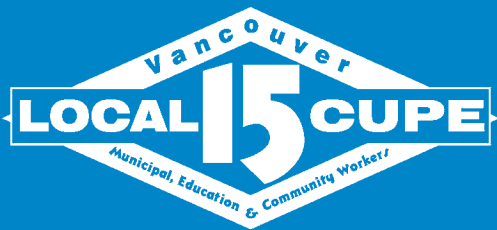


VSB Job Shares

1. SSA looking for a 50/50 job share partner to work Mondays, Wednesdays, and every second Friday at McKechnie Elementary School starting September 2025. If you are interested, please contact Ashley at bismeyer.ashley@gmail.com.
2. SSA looking for a job share partner to work either Tuesdays and Wednesdays, or Wednesdays and Thursdays at Lord Roberts Elementary School starting September 2025. If you are interested, please contact Tahmineh at tamineh1234@hotmail.com.
3. SSA looking for a job share partner to work Mondays and Tuesdays at Lord Tennyson Elementary School (French is not a requirement) starting September 2025. If you are interested, please contact Miriam at miriammalka25@gmail.com.

NEXT MEMBERSHIP MEETING IS March 26, 5:30pm Via Zoom.





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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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: Aaron Cook, Paul Chohan
College/University: Sophie Bennett, Rose Palozzi
Cultural: Courtney Gillen
Health/HSSCBA: Roxshanna Shankar
Health/HSPBA: Lucia Rincon
Parks: Bernie Dionne, Henry Lee
K-12: Chris Brown, Cynthia Schadt

Trustees:

Seagrín Worster, Sheri Nielsen
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
Mei Wu, Accounting Assistant
Tia Tang, Office Manager
Michelle Yim, Office Assistant
Geneviève Dubuc, Office Assistant
Vanessa Chow, Office Assistant

Building Service Worker:

Elaine Duan

CUPE National Representative:

Dan Todd

OH&S CORNER



March is Brain Health Awareness Month

by Cynthia Schadt, OH&S Committee Representative – K-12 Sector

Protecting our most vital organ, the brain, is of utmost importance. The brain plays a significant role in our overall health and well-being. Brain injuries can profoundly affect individuals, families, and communities.

In Canada, someone sustains a brain injury every three minutes. These injuries can result from various incidents, including sports and recreational activities, falls, motor vehicle accidents, and certain medical conditions. Unfortunately, there are currently no medications or treatments that can cure a brain injury, making prevention essential.

Raising awareness about brain health is crucial for reducing the incidence of brain injuries and understanding the common causes of these injuries is key to their prevention.

Brain injuries can occur when the head makes contact with an object or as a result of specific medical conditions. Here are some common causes of brain injuries:

- Participation in sports and activities often leads to brain injuries.
- In Canada, falls are responsible for 53.9% of all brain injuries.
- Motor vehicle accidents are the second most common cause of brain injuries.
- Contact with an object accounts for 11.8% of brain injuries, while contact with another person contributes to 18%.

- The remaining 16.3% of brain injuries are caused by other factors, such as tumours, aneurysms, and infections like encephalitis.

To prevent sports-related brain injuries, wearing a helmet is essential. Ensure that the helmet is CSA certified and replace it every five years. This also applies to motorcycle helmets, which should have an expiration date. If someone sustains a head injury, it is crucial to have concussion symptoms evaluated instead of ignoring them and returning to activity, as concussions are serious brain injuries.

Hard falls pose the greatest risk for brain injuries worldwide, especially for children and older adults. To reduce the risk of these injuries, keep pathways clear, ensure that areas are well-lit, maintain good health, exercise regularly, and attend regular eye appointments.

Regarding motor vehicle accidents, children under eight should be secured in a car seat. Before riding ATVs and snowmobiles, it is important to take a safety course. Always drive sober, wear a seatbelt, and avoid speeding. Additionally, wear a helmet when riding ATVs, bicycles, and snowmobiles. Following these guidelines will help prevent life-threatening brain injuries.

