



## In these uncertain times...

by Warren Williams, President



WARREN WILLIAMS  
PRESIDENT

I want to start off by thanking all of our members for their commitment and hard work on behalf of Vancouver residents, their families, and communities. Our work across all sectors will help keep everyone safe. From Community Health and Health

Science workers, who along with others at Carnegie Centre and other worksites in the Downtown East Side, are on the front line; to custodians and members in schools who are taking on extra work to ensure everyone's safety; to Parks and Recreation workers and others who are being deployed; and to those who are staying home to help flatten the curve – we are all in this together.

The current COVID-19 crisis makes these times unprecedented. We are facing a lot of unknowns, with many questions and concerns. Safety and health are the top priorities for each and every one of us. Things are in a constantly evolving state and our employers are also scrambling to ensure that services are provided and that everyone stays safe. Things

are changing and being determined sometimes on an hourly basis, not only in terms of public health, but also in terms of what action needs to be taken.

Bargaining is continuing for members at Emily Carr University of Art + Design and the bargaining team at Langara College is setting up bargaining sessions with the employer.

These are challenging times. Some of our members are being laid off, others are working from home, and some are being redeployed to assist in other locations or sectors. In BC we are fortunate to have a government that respects our collective agreements, unlike some others across Canada who have suspended public sector contracts.

Workers who are redeployed may be asked to take on work that is not what they currently do. An example is child care. It's essential that child care is available for all frontline workers who need it. Our emergency and health services cannot function without these essential workers. We simply can't let that happen.

Members have lots of questions about what return to work looks like, what safety protocols are in place, and wages and benefits to name a

few. Your union does not have all the answers to what and when things will happen but I commit to you that we will continue to share information as we receive it. Please check the links at the end of my column for online resources.

This is a time when our union values of solidarity need to be embraced by everyone in society, so that we all act in the best interests of our communities and our most vulnerable citizens. Together we will beat this virus.

You have all been putting in long hours during this pandemic and there continues to be much work ahead. Since many of us are working from home and practicing physical distancing, we really need to find alternative ways to stay connected. This will help us stay healthy.

As we go through the coronavirus pandemic, one of the things we are learning is that we are unable to reach all our members quickly. Getting information to you as fast as possible is really important. I am asking all members to send their personal email address to [email@cupe15.org](mailto:email@cupe15.org) so that we can connect with you and you can stay connected to us.

## Secretary-Treasurer's Report

by Sally Bankiner, Secretary-Treasurer



SALLY BANKINER  
SECRETARY-TREASURER

In this unparalleled time of crisis for so many of you I wanted to write something that may be a bit inspirational and encouraging. The only thing I could come up with right at this moment is what my dad used to say when we were really sad or anxious

about something: "Don't worry, this too will pass". I didn't find it all that encouraging back then when I was a kid mostly because I didn't understand what it meant and what he was trying to say. Now I get that he was actually feeling the same and wanted me to know that as bad as I feel right then, it will get better, eventually... It always did.

There is not much encouraging news on the horizon for many of you and my heart aches for everyone who is suffering both physically, mentally, emotionally, and financially right now. I am for the first time almost speechless as to what to write. The sheer gravity of our current situation is breathtaking to the point of being overwhelming. In challenging times people often have a source of comfort: someone they are drawn to for that comfort; volunteering,

community, friends, work, family, or spiritual beliefs. Now, it's a bit awkward to be drawn towards anything because of fear. We need to rely on other ways to keep in touch with each other and feel connected even though we are facing unparalleled uncertainty.

Please know that our staff at the union office is working non-stop trying to deal with all of our employers to protect your rights. Remember that we have 18 different collective agreements and almost 8,000 members who we service. Please be kind and patient with our stewards who are doing their best trying to answer all of your questions and concerns. Remember that these stewards are facing exactly what you are facing and many have already been laid off work. We are all in the same boat as the saying goes and we are all trying to do our best. Any words of encouragement or kindness you can send to people that are helping or have helped you would be welcomed and appreciated.

We have, of course, postponed our April steward training. I really hope that we can get at least one class going prior to June but we will have to make that determination as things progress, so keep reviewing updates on our website.

Our office building is closed to walk-in service; however, our staff is still hard at work inside. If you need to reach the office, you still call the office number or email the general email address. Our website is also packed with information for every sector on any changes

to your working conditions. As soon as changes happen that we are made aware of we get them posted. There are several pages of breaking news or top stories so you may need to scroll through a few pages to find the information relevant to your sector.

Unfortunately timing is everything most of the time, and this year is not an exception. The Union and Society are governed by their bylaws and ours state that the election of your Executive Board is next month. With mass layoffs looming and most underway, we have broached postponing our elections for a few months with CUPE National as some members very strongly feel that we need to be focusing all of our energy on our membership and not elections. Those discussions, however, did not go as we had hoped and the CUPE National President has made the ruling that we must continue as scheduled with our elections. I for one understand that it is going to be very difficult for candidates to campaign as the election of our Board is likely the last thing on our member's mind. Please keep in mind if you are contacted by a candidate that National wants our members to have the confidence that even though these times are unprecedented for all of us, the business of the union carries on and we are here to serve you. Remember, the election process is important as the people you elect will be making decisions that affect each of you, so please exercise your right. It makes a difference!

**decisions**

**The Executive Decided**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the Executive and Society, meetings in March were cancelled. The Executive Board did however have conference calls on March 22 and March 29, 2020 where the following decisions were made:

- To ratify the Letter of Understanding Workforce Adjustment Measures "The Framework" for City and Parks.
- To allow CUPE Local 15 staff to work remotely until such time as it is safe to return.
- To appoint Noel Macul as a Temporary Staff Representative I for up to one month and extend the assignment if necessary.
- To approve additional Chief Shop Steward and active Shop Steward book off as necessary to assist members during the COVID-19 pandemic crisis.

**The Members Decided**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the General Membership meeting in March was cancelled therefore there are no decisions to report. Nominations for the upcoming Executive Board elections were conducted via email as per notice mailed to members and posted on the website. More information on the upcoming elections is printed elsewhere in this issue.

**VSB JOB SHARE OPPORTUNITY**

1. I am currently an OAA on call and am looking to job share with an OAA who is in a permanent job starting September, 2020. If you are interested please email or call Rhoda at rthow@vsb.bc.ca or 604-771-1588.
2. I am looking to work Mondays and Tuesdays with a permanent SSA as of beginning of September. For commuting purposes I cannot work far to the west side of Vancouver. Please contact me at judithlynn57@yahoo.ca or jheintz@vsb.bc.ca



CUPE 15 had a good turnout for the VDLC International Women's Day Dinner with a theme of Joy and Justice.



Left to Right - Front: Karl, Antonius, Julie, Emi, Hannah, Kattia, Brie, Sally, Sharmila, Brianne, Noreen. Left to Right - Back: Mike, Adrian, Chris, Kristina, Leanne, Hannah, Megan. Not in photo: Chrystal



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: Sally Bankiner  
1st Vice President: Santino Scardillo  
2nd Vice President: Gaye Fowler

### Sector Representatives:

City: Kamal Gautam, Ravina Lal  
College/University: Alex Fowler, Rose Palozzi  
Cultural: Noel Graves  
Health/HSSCBA: Allison Bell  
Health/HSPBA: Mia Nickel  
Parks: Kyle Larson, Starla Bayley  
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:

Chris Losito, Patrick Barbosa

The CUPE Local 15 office is very old and unfortunately not accessible. For our members with mobility challenges please note that the office is on the 3rd floor and there is no elevator. If you are attending an appointment or meeting with one of our staff, please contact them in advance to make alternate arrangements for the meeting place or call the Secretary-Treasurer at 604-879-4671.

We sincerely apologize and want you to know we are working very hard to rectify the accessibility issues with our building.

# Electronic Voting information for the CUPE 15 Executive Board Elections

by *Rosemary Matheson, Office Manager*

**All voting for the upcoming 2020 Executive Board elections will be conducted online.**

You will receive voting instructions and a Personal Identification Number (PIN) in the mail. This PIN will allow you to cast your vote for the sector you work for if applicable as well as the table officer positions. There will be an election for Secretary-Treasurer, City Sector Representative, Park Board Sector Representative, College/University Sector Representative, K-12 Sector Representative, and Trustee. The 1st Vice President and Health Sector Representative positions have been filled by acclamation.

Simply Voting has been hired as the independent third-party election provider. All PIN issuance and voting is maintained and

monitored by them. If you do not receive a PIN in the mail please contact the union office and after verification of your membership, we will instruct Simply Voting to send you one.

If you have any questions regarding the administrative process please contact Rosemary Matheson, CUPE Local 15 Office Manager. If you have other concerns about the election please contact Donna Petersen, Returning Officer, by leaving a message at the union office.

The following members (see below) have accepted nomination for a position on the Executive Board. Look for candidate statements on the election website and in the May issue of the Members' Voice. The address of the election website will be provided with your PIN.



## Voting will open by electronic ballot at

**8:00 a.m. Pacific Standard  
Time on May 19, 2020 and  
will remain open until 11:59  
p.m. on May 26, 2020.**

Polls will be accessible 24 hours a day.

If possible, results will be announced at the Annual General Meeting which is scheduled to convene at 5:30 p.m. on May 27, 2020 at the Italian Cultural Centre.

If this is not possible due to the COVID-19 situation, results will be posted at [www.cupe15.org](http://www.cupe15.org) at 5:30 p.m. on May 27, 2020.

### Secretary-Treasurer

Starla Bayley  
Kyle Larson  
Lauretta Loong  
Debbie Mohabir

### 1st Vice President

Santino Scardillo (Incumbent) - Acclaimed

### City Sector Representative

Sally Bankiner  
Andrea Duke  
Kamal Gautam (Incumbent)  
Brad McGowan  
Reza Sebti

### Park Board Sector Representative

Steve Anderson  
Henry Lee  
Erica Mark  
Collins Njoroge  
Tracy Thompson

### College/University Sector Representative

Cybele Creery  
Alex Fowler (Incumbent)

### K-12 Sector Representative

Shirley Ann Harris  
Cynthia Schadt (Incumbent)

### Health Sector (HSPBA) Sector Representative

Mia Nickel (Incumbent) - Acclaimed

### Trustee

Aaron Cook (Incumbent)  
Lilianna Gut