



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

Celebrating our past and honouring the present

BLACK HISTORY MONTH 2023: A TIMELINE TO JUSTICE

1793 LIMITED SLAVERY
Upper Canada passed the Act to Limit Slavery in Upper Canada. The Act did not free any enslaved people but prohibited the importation of enslaved people into the province.

1834 ABOLISHMENT OF SLAVERY AND BLACK MEN'S RIGHT TO VOTE
Slavery was abolished in most British colonies. In 1834, the British Empire abolished slavery in all its territories.

1916 BLACK WOMEN'S VOTE
Black women in Ontario and Saskatchewan were granted the right to vote and hold office.

1917 ORDER OF SLEEPING CAR PORTERS
The Order of Sleeping Car Porters (OSCP), the first Black union in North America, was founded in Washington, DC. It later moved to Toronto in 1919. OSCP is recognized as the first Black union in Canada, fighting for better wages, working conditions and training for Black men that provided better pay and job conditions for Black employees.

1917-1918 WOMEN'S VOTE FEDERAL
Some Black women got the right to vote in the 1917 Provincial Election. Black women had the right to vote in all Federal Elections in 1918.

1944 ONTARIO RACIAL DISCRIMINATION ACT
Ontario was the first province in Canada to have legislation passed to end racial discrimination.

1947 SASKATCHEWAN BILL OF RIGHTS
Canada's first bill of rights protected traditional freedoms and liberties such as speech, assembly, religion, education, and due process. It also prohibited discrimination on the basis of race and colour.

1955-1967 WEST INDIAN DOMESTIC SCHEME
The scheme encouraged workers from the Caribbean to migrate to Canada where they would benefit from economic growth in the form of job openings. After working for two years, their wages would be granted for two years in Canada. The lack of job offers in Canada led to the implementation of a new wage scale after the implementation of new immigration regulations in 1962.

1960 CANADIAN BILL OF RIGHTS
Parliament passed the Canadian Bill of Rights, a uncodified section of statute, that set out the basic rights and freedoms of Canadians.

1967 IMMIGRATION POLICY CHANGE
Canada's immigration policy changed from a preference for British immigrants to a policy of equal opportunity for all immigrants, regardless of their country of origin.

1971 CANADIAN MULTI-CULTURALISM POLICY
The idea of the multi-culturalism policy was to recognize the diversity of Canada and to promote the cultural contributions of various ethnic groups in Canada. It also recognized the contributions of Black immigrants to Canada's cultural diversity.

1977 CANADIAN HUMAN RIGHTS ACT
Canada passed the Human Rights Act, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, religion, and other factors. It also provides a framework for the development of human rights legislation in other areas.

1982 CHARTER OF RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS
The Charter of Rights and Freedoms is a landmark in the Canadian legal system.

1996 FIRST BLACK HISTORY MONTH IN CANADA
Black History Month in Canada was first celebrated in 1996. It was established by the House of Commons in December 1992. It was the first national holiday in Canada.

1998 CANADIAN HUMAN RIGHTS TRIBUNAL
The Canadian Human Rights Tribunal was established in 1998. It is the highest authority in Canada for the resolution of human rights complaints.

2004 BLACK VOTE CANADA
Black Vote Canada was established in 2004. It is a national organization that promotes the political participation of Black Canadians.

2017 ANTI-RACISM ACT
Canada became the first province to pass an Anti-Racism Act in 2017. The Act aims to prevent and eliminate racism in the workplace.

2014 BLACK LIVES MATTER
The Black Lives Matter movement was established in 2014. It is a social movement that advocates for the abolition of systemic racism.

2016 POPULATION
According to Statistics Canada, there were about 1.7 million Black people living in Canada in 2016. Black Canadians formed about 10% of the total population.

FEBRUARY 2023 GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The General Membership Meeting will be held on February 22, 2023 using 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 these meetings, 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 Section 31 of the Local 15 Bylaws.

IMPORTANT NOTE

Virtual General Membership Meeting Invitations

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

FEB 22, 2023 5:30 p.m. via Zoom invite

UNDER DISCUSSION:

- Election of Delegates to the 2023 CUPE BC Convention (see notice elsewhere in this issue)
- Committee and Staff Reports

WE ACKNOWLEDGE...

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

We're open!

The union office is open and the boardroom and staff are available by appointment by calling us at 604-879-4671. Our office telephone hours are 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

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CUPE Local 15
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Vancouver, BC
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WARREN WILLIAMS
PRESIDENT

I am Black and I am proud

by Warren Williams, President

It's Black History month and we would all be hard pressed to find a part of Canadian culture that isn't affected by black culture.

Food, music, clothing, language, sports, our Canadian Bill of Rights, Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and the Canadian Human Rights Act have all been influenced by Black Leaders across Canada who stood up, and in doing so, made life better for all Canadians.

We all have a connection to black culture. The easiest example is

the music that we listen to. All the Greats credit black musicians, singers, and songwriters for being a profound influence on them. Yet we live in a society that still struggles with the colour of one's skin. This is hard to digest, but nevertheless, it's true.

We should be embraced but instead we sit outside knowing the contributions we've made mean nothing to so many. Why is that? What is keeping us separate and apart, and at the same time, a part of everything?

The simple answer has been addressed over and over by so

many yet acceptance is still outside all our reach. I don't know the answer, I don't know who does, or even if there is an answer. All I know is that I am Black and I am Proud.

Black History month is a time for all of us to celebrate the many contributions of Black culture that have enhanced our diversified society.

A Person is a Person because of other People. A culture is a culture because of the contributions made by its people.

Celebrating our Black History in Canada

by Debbie Mohabir, Secretary-Treasurer



DEBBIE MOHABIR
SECRETARY-TREASURER

Hello Everyone,

February is Black History Month! This is by far one of my favourite articles to write every year! I always learn something new and my appreciation for contributions

made by so many Black Canadians continues to grow.

This year for Black History month, I would like to highlight a few notable Black Canadians who have contributed in various ways.



Peter Lester was the first Black person to sit as a juror in BC in February 1860. He moved to San Francisco from Philadelphia in 1850 with his wife and five children. His trade was a bootblack and bootmaker. He became

a partner in the firm Lester and Gibbs and opened a successful shoe store. As time went on, Lester became increasingly unhappy with the way blacks were treated and decided to join those who were leaving for Victoria, Canada. There he became prominent through the Lester Gibbs business and was called as a juror in the Butts case. Butts didn't want Lester to sit as a juror, but he was allowed to. On November 26, 1872, Blacks were allowed to be added to the jury lists.

John Sullivan Deas became well-known for becoming the leader in salmon canning on the Fraser River in the 1870s. In the beginning, he was hired by Captain John Edward Stamp to make the cans. He was a tinsmith by trade. After the captain died, Deas eventually built his own cannery in the area we know as Deas



Island and became the lead canner on the Fraser River. Eventually, competition grew and Deas sold the cannery and moved to Portland with his family, where he later passed away.

William Allen Jones was the first dentist in BC in 1886. He moved to Salt Spring Island in 1859 with his brother after graduating in California. At that time, things were not good for many Black people and many moved to BC in hopes of a better life. Jones moved to Barkerville and began practicing dentistry. He became known as "Painless Jones" by using medicines to make the process less painful. In 1886, BC introduced a new Dental Act and



DR. WILLIAM ALLEN JONES

† b. 1831 Raleigh, North Carolina, USA †
d. 1897 Barkerville, British Columbia, Canada

Jones received a license to practice on June 26, 1886 making him the first person to have a license to practice dentistry in BC. He later died of pneumonia in 1897.

CUPE BC Racialized Workers' Committee
I would also like to recognize and thank the CUPE BC Racialized Workers' Committee.

This year, the committee theme for Black History Month is "A Timeline to Justice", pictured on the cover of this issue, highlights a timeline of significant changes in Canada. A poster will be included in our mailing to Local 15 site contacts for posting on the on the union board at their worksite.

I would like to thank the committee for their amazing work in the research, design, and production of these posters every year!



VIFF Black History Month Films

February is as good a time as any to celebrate Black film, Black film artists, Black thinkers and activists, and to highlight the legacy of slavery, white supremacy, colonization and capitalism that underpins our unjust society.

THE VIFF BHM programming this year includes two series: Icons and Dispatches.

Icons spotlights the accomplishments of American movie stars like Denzel Washington, Viola Davis, Angela Bassett, Chadwick Boseman and others, emulating and transcending the path beaten by Sidney Poitier 60 years ago.

Dispatches turns from fantasy to reality, with a focus on documentaries, ideas, and social justice, including work by and about James Baldwin, Camille Billops, and two exceptional recent Canadian films, Dear Jackie and Our Dance of Revolution.

When: Various dates from February 1 to 28, 2023

Time: Various times

Where: VIFF Centre – 1181 Seymour Street, Vancouver

Tickets: \$10 for students and accessible pricing, \$13 for seniors, and \$15 for adults. 3-pack of tickets available for \$27-\$30.

POLICY REMINDER

Policy 10.4: Good and Welfare

This is a reminder that the Society has had a Good and Welfare policy since 1987. If you know of a CUPE Local 15 member at your worksite that is eligible as per Sections (1) or (2) of the policy below, please call or email the union office to let us know and we will look after the rest. It would be helpful if you include the member's current contact information in case our information is out of date.

10.4.1 Remembrances, Condolences, and Congratulations

- (1) Upon the office being notified of the following occurrences, the Society shall provide either flowers or a fruit basket, or make a donation to a specified charity, at a total cost of up to \$100.
 - i) Death of a member or retired member.
 - ii) Serious illness or injury of a member where absence exceeds two weeks.
 - iii) Death of an immediate family member, including spouse, child, parent, or sibling.
 - iv) Birth or adoption of a child.
- (2) Upon the office being notified of the death of a member's extended family member, the Society shall send a card of condolence.
- (3) Trustees will review annually and propose updates as required.

POLICY AMENDMENT

Policy Amendment

An amendment to Policy 3.1.6 – Food and Beverages at Meetings was amended at the January 17, 2023 Executive Board meeting. The amended policy follows with bold text denoting the new language:

3.1.6 Food and Beverages at Meetings

- (1) Requests for food for steward, committee and other union related meetings (except for executive, bargaining and general membership) are submitted to the Finance Committee prior to the meeting for approval.
- (2) The Finance Committee will report on approvals and refusals to the Executive.
- (3) Beverages for steward, committee and union meetings do not require prior approval and are limited to coffee, tea, water and juice.
- (4) Food may be provided for evening meetings expected to exceed two hours duration, on a case-by case basis.
- (5) **Food for bargaining proposal ratification meetings is pre-authorized as follows:**
 - a) **Up to \$25 per person for a daytime meeting.**
 - b) **Up to \$35 per person for an evening meeting.**

DECISIONS

BY THE EXECUTIVE

At the Executive and Society Board meetings on January 17, 2023, the following decisions were made:

- To deny an appeal of the Trustees' decision regarding an expense claim submitted by a shop steward.
- To appoint Aaron Cook as the Returning Officer for the 2023 Executive Board elections.
- To approve lunch costs of \$364.98 for the Ratification of Proposals meeting at Emily Carr University.
- To approve an amendment to Policy 3.1.6 – Food and Beverages at Meetings. See details printed elsewhere in this issue.
- To deny an appeal of the Grievance Committee decision regarding a grievance in the Health Sector.
- To receive the Union and Society Financial Statements ending November 30, 2022.

BY THE MEMBERS

At the General Membership meeting on January 25, 2023 the members in attendance made the following decisions:

- To approve the Union Financial Statement ending November 30, 2022.
- To destroy the ballots from the Langara Students' Union Ratification of Agreement meeting.
- To destroy the ballots from the Vancouver School Board Ratification of Agreement meeting.

NEXT GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING IS ON FEB. 22, 2023 via Zoom

we need your email address

The union cannot use your worksite email address

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.



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: 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: Chris Brown, Cynthia Schadt

Trustees:

Aaron Cook, John Kaptein, 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
Tia Tang, Office Manager
Nadia Thibault, Office Assistant
Michelle Yim, Office Assistant

Building Service Worker:

Elaine Duan

CUPE National Representatives:

Andrew Ledger, Bryan Bickley (on leave),
Sung Wong (temporary)

Happy Year of the Rabbit!

from Warren Williams, President

As you may already know, 2023 is the Year of the Rabbit. It started on January 22, 2023 and will continue to February 9, 2024. A rabbit is the fourth in the twelve-year cycle of the Chinese zodiac signs. The Rabbit is a symbol of mercy, elegance, beauty, longevity, peace, and prosperity. It is predicted that this will be a year of hope. People who are born in the year of the rabbit are calm and peaceful. They avoid fighting and arguing at all times, but are artistic and have good taste in life.

There are many customs during this time that you may be familiar with such as giving red envelopes with "lucky money", lighting fireworks, wearing red, lighting lanterns, and enjoying dinner with the family.



Happy Lunar New Year to all our members who celebrate, and may the new year bring you lots of happiness and prosperity.

MEMBER PROFILES



Anthony Castillo
Building Worker/Utility
Maintenance II, Britannia
Community Services Centre
(PARKS)

Q. Name a place you have always wanted to travel to and why?

A. Philippines - so I can wear shorts (to visit my extended family).

Q. What do you think you are much better at than you actually are?

A. Skating

Q. The great debate -- pineapple on pizza?

A. No.

Q. What was the first concert you went to?

A. Metallica

Q. Your binge-worthy recommendation?

A. Kim's Convenience



Joel Rossi
Skateshop/Iceman
Birtannia Community Services
Centre (PARKS)

Q. What do you love about your job?

A. My favourite part of my job is the people I get to work with and see day-to-day, as well as the youth and public I get to meet in this community.

Q. Name a place you have always wanted to travel to and why?

A. I've always wanted to travel to Jamaica; it just seems like a cool place to go to.

Q. What do you think you are much better at than you actually are?

A. I think I'm pretty good at pickleball; other people might not think so.

Q. The great debate -- pineapple on pizza?

A. It's not my first choice, but I'm a fan.

Q. What was the first concert you went to?

A. Vanessa Hudgens.

Q. Your binge-worthy recommendation?

A. Breaking Bad, for sure.

Election of Delegates to the CUPE BC Convention

The 2023 CUPE BC Convention will be held at the Victoria Conference Centre commencing at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, April 26, 2023, continuing through until 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, April 29, 2023.

Delegate elections will be held at the Virtual General Membership Meeting on February 22, 2023. In order to be eligible to stand as a CUPE 15 delegate, a member must have attended a minimum of 50% of General Membership meetings in the last 12 months.