

JUNE
2023

THE MEMBERS' VOICE



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

The Local election results are in!

In the recent electronic ballot, Debbie Mohabir was re-elected as Secretary-Treasurer, Santino Scardillo was re-elected as 1st Vice President, Cynthia Schadt was re-elected as K-12 Sector Representative, Aaron Cook was elected as the City Sector Representative, and Sophie Bennett was elected as the College/ University Sector Representative.

After the nomination process closed, Henry Lee was acclaimed as the Parks Sector Representative, Mia Nickel was acclaimed as the HSPBA Health Sector Representative, and Vanessa Mani was acclaimed as a Trustee.

All positions are for a three-year term. For a complete Executive list, please see the back page of this issue.

Thank you to each candidate who ran for office and thanks to all the members who participated in online voting.



Election of Delegates to the CUPE National Convention in Quebec City

ELECTIONS WILL TAKE PLACE AT THE JUNE 28, 2023 GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING FOR DELEGATES TO THE CUPE NATIONAL CONVENTION.

The convention is scheduled from October 23-27, 2023 at the Quebec City Convention Centre. 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.



NOTICE OF BY-ELECTION for TRUSTEE

There will be a by-election at the June 28, 2023 General Membership meeting for a Local 15 Trustee. This is for the remainder of a three-year term ending May 28, 2025. In order to be eligible to accept nomination, a member must have attended at least 50% of the General Membership meetings in the last 12 months. All members are eligible to vote.

The union cannot use your worksite email address @ we need your 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.

JUNE 2023 GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The General Membership Meeting will be held on June 28, 2023 at 5:30 p.m. 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 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 meeting). Child and dependant care reimbursement is available as per eligibility requirements in Local 15 Bylaw Section 31.

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 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.

**JUNE 28, 2023
5:30 p.m.
via Zoom invite**

UNDER DISCUSSION:

- By-Election - Trustee
- Election of Delegates to the CUPE National Convention
- Committee and Staff Reports
- Honourary Membership – Michelle Alexander

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.



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.

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





**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:
National Indigenous Month**



*by Warren Williams,
President*

**Hello CUPE
Local 15
Members,**

In June we celebrate our Indigenous cultures across Turtle Island. Each community

has different traditions and ceremonies to honour those who came before us, and those who are asked to witness and keep the history of their Nations.

So, in that spirit, I want to celebrate all of our CUPE Local 15 Indigenous members for

the work you do in our communities. I feel very fortunate to have worked in Indigenous education for the Vancouver School Board, which blessed me with the opportunity to work with many Elders over the years. These Elders taught me much about the Coast Salish nations across British Columbia, the importance of community, and our sacred duty to protect the land and waters of Turtle Island.

This month we remember all that was taken, and the spirit of those who continue to teach us the meaning of community.

Have you ever attended a potlatch?

Experiencing a potlatch is a privilege and an honour and I am fortunate to have attended several. It is a celebration of community and honouring those within it. It was at one

time banned by the British and Canadian governments because the Jesuit priests were tasked with irradicating the Indigenous language and traditions, and replacing them with European ideals and Christianity. They tried for many decades to suppress the families of our sisters and brothers in the name of colonization.

Thankfully the Indigenous spirit is strong. It bent but it did not break, and it continues to reclaim what was lost. In the spirit of community, they are willing to educate and share, not only with each other, but with all of us to remind us that People are People because of other People.

I raise my hands to our sisters and brothers, to Elder Ramona Guss, and everyone who accepted me as family and a member of community.

Secretary Treasurer's Report

by Debbie Mohabir, Secretary-Treasurer



**Hello
Everyone,**

**Executive
Board
Elections**

I would like to thank everyone for their support in my re-election as Secretary-Treasurer, and welcome our new and returning Executive Board members Santino

Scardillo, 1st Vice President; Aaron Cook, City Sector Representative; Sophie Bennett, College/ University Sector Representative; Henry Lee, Parks Sector Representative; Mia Nickel, HSPBA Health Sector Representative; and Cynthia Schadt, K-12 Sector Representative. Vanessa Mani also returns in her role of Trustee. Congratulations and I look forward to working together with all of you!

Spring School

CUPE National puts on two union education week-long schools a year; Spring School in Kamloops and Fall School in Nanaimo. These week-long schools are essential in providing stewards with more in-depth tools for their tool box to support the members in their sector.



Participants and other stewards and activists from all over BC spent the week learning important information about various topics such as Mental Health First Aid, Executive Leadership Training, Intro to Stewarding, Stewarding Learning Series, Legal Workshop, and Collective Bargaining. Local 15 sent two stewards to this year's Spring School, and our very own Henry Lee was a facilitator.

CUPE Metropolitan District Council

Congratulations to Henry Lee, Parks Sector Representative, for his election as a Member at Large at the CUPE Metro meeting on May 18, 2023. Thank you for putting your name forward and representing CUPE Local 15.

**Vancouver Coastal Health Building
Bridges Education Day**

On May 30, 2023, over 150 Occupational Therapists and Rehabilitation Assistants gathered to network, celebrate their profession, and continue their learning in education sessions during the Building Bridges Education Day. Support personnel, students, and guests from Vancouver Coastal Health and Providence Health Care were invited to participate as well.

The Executive passed a motion to donate to this great event and I had the pleasure of attending to represent CUPE Local 15 in the Exhibitors' area. I met many wonderful people who shared their passion for the work they do, and I highlighted the work that many of our CUPE Local 15 members do within the healthcare system. It was wonderful to be able to attend this event and I hope to be able to do it again next year.

As this is the last edition of the Members' Voice until September, I would like to wish you all a wonderful summer!

JOB OPPORTUNITY

Come work with us!

Job Posting – Office Assistant

CUPE Local 15 is accepting applications for one permanent full-time Office Assistant position.

This is clerical work of advanced complexity including word processing and data processing. Duties include maintaining union files, members' records, dues check off, reception, comprehensive proofreading of a variety of documents, and liaising with a variety of office supply and servicing companies. The duties of the position frequently require independent action and discretion to resolve problems and to work independently with minimal supervision. The successful candidate will be detail-oriented with proven ability to manage a steady workload in a fast-paced working environment.

Required Knowledge, Ability, and Skills

- Knowledge of the organization, practices, procedures, and general rules of CUPE Local 15 sufficient to carry out the duties of the job, including the provision of accurate information to members and outside agencies.
- Knowledge of trade union and labour relations terminology sufficient to accurately word process and proofread a variety of documents and to deal with or refer phone calls, email correspondence, and other written correspondence as appropriate.
- Knowledge of standard professional business formats for a variety of documents including letters, reports, minutes, and emails.
- Ability to deal politely and tactfully with a variety of callers and visitors, some of whom may be angry or distressed, and to use discretion in providing or exchanging information and to keep sensitive information strictly confidential.
- Ability to operate a personal computer using database software to enter and edit information, and create and generate reports, and use word processing software to enter, format, edit and print a variety of documents.
- Ability to check records and printouts for errors and discrepancies and to maintain accessible files.

- Ability to navigate the union website to update, post, and delete a variety of documents and information.
- Ability to work to deadlines, establish priorities, and multitask in a work situation where there are frequent interruptions and multiple demands.
- Ability to compose/generate straightforward memos, reports, letters, and emails.
- Ability to operate a variety of office equipment including a personal computer, printers, photocopiers, phone consoles, fax machine, postage machine, folding/inserting machine, and ECopy station.

Qualifications

- Grade 12 or equivalent, including or supplemented by courses in word processing and database management plus at least two years' previous related experience, or an equivalent combination of training and experience.
- Ability to communicate both orally and in writing in the English language. Strong spelling and grammar skills are a necessity.
- Advanced Microsoft Outlook, Word, Access, Excel, and Adobe Acrobat skills are essential.
- The incumbent must have a good telephone manner, the ability to deal effectively with a wide variety of people and situations, and be able to work efficiently as a member of a team.

A strong commitment to trade union principles is essential.

Salary and other working conditions as per the British Columbia Union Workers' Union collective agreement. Hours of work are from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. based on a four-day week.

Please forward resumes to the CUPE Local 15 Office Manager by email to ttang@cupe15.org or via Canada Post. The application deadline is 12:00 p.m. on July 7, 2023. Resumes submitted without a cover letter will not be considered. Please note that only those selected for an interview will be contacted.

DECISIONS

BY THE EXECUTIVE

At the Executive and Society Board meetings on May 16, 2023, the following decisions were made:

- To recommend to the members that they receive the 2022 Audited Union Financial Statement.
- To recommend to the members that they receive the 2022 Audited Society Financial Statement.
- To recommend to the members the appointment of Fairhall Zhang and Associates to conduct the 2023 Union Audit.
- To recommend to the members the appointment of Fairhall Zhang and Associates to conduct the 2023 Society Audit.

BY THE MEMBERS

At the Annual General Membership and Annual General Society meetings on May 24, 2023, the members in attendance made the following decisions:

- To receive the 2022 Audited Union and Society Financial Statement.
- To appoint Fairhall Zhang and Associates to conduct the 2023 Union and Society Audits.
- To amend Article VI of the Society Constitution and Bylaws to reflect that the Society AGM take place in May of each year as per past practice since 2013.

NEXT GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING IS ON JUNE 28, 2023 via Zoom

Local 15 Member wins CUPE BC Award

by Warren Williams, President

Congratulations to our very own Local 15 member, Michael Pollard, who won the CUPE BC Annual Environment and Climate Justice Award for outstanding activism for environmental sustainability. Michael is a member who works at Emily Carr University of Art + Design.

CUPE BC makes a \$1,000 donation on behalf of the winner to the organization of their choice. Michael has elected to donate his award winnings to Unist'ot'en Camp Legal Fund.

Unist'ot'en Camp, located on Dark House territory of the Gilsehyu Clan, has been a beacon of resistance for over 10 years. It is a space of Indigenous sovereignty dedicated to healing, and an active example of decolonization.



Representing CUPE Local 15 at the annual Vancouver and District Labour Council MayDay Event

ANNEX A

NATIONAL INDIGENOUS HISTORY MONTH

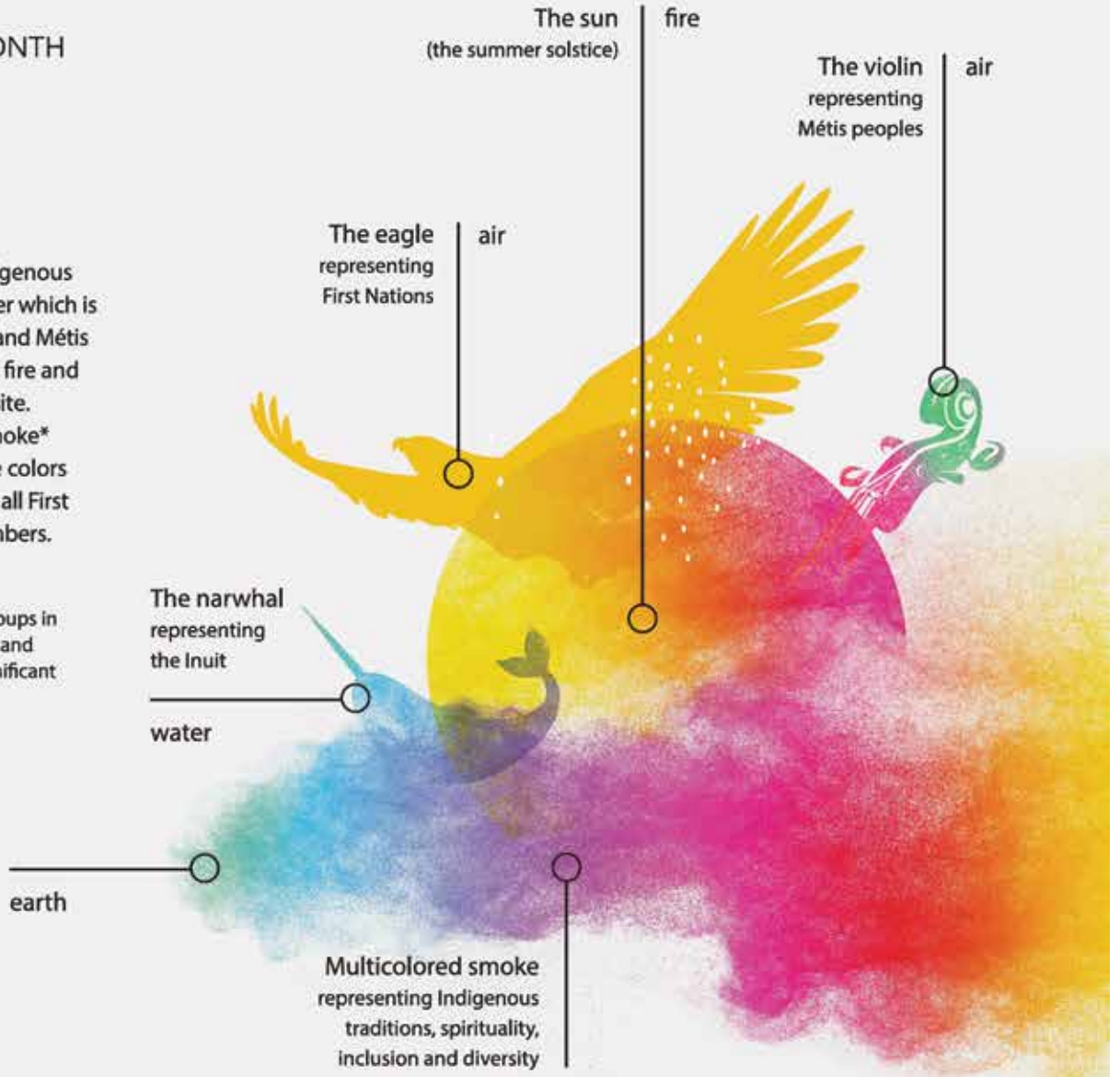
DESCRIPTION OF VISUAL ELEMENTS

Among the various visual elements illustrating Indigenous cultures, the sun (the summer solstice) is at the center which is at the heart of the festivities. The First Nations, Inuit and Métis as well as the four elements of nature (earth, water, fire and air) are represented in the image and shown opposite. The whole visual is supported by a multicolored smoke* reminding us of Indigenous spirituality but also the colors of the rainbow - symbol of inclusion and diversity of all First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities and their members.

*Smoke is used in different ways by all three Indigenous groups in Canada. Whether it is to smoke fish and meat, to burn sage and tobacco or for sacred ceremonies or celebrations, it is a significant symbol in Indigenous culture.

DESCRIPTION OF THE THREE ICONS

-  The eagle to represent the First Nations
-  The narwhal to represent the Inuit
-  The violin to represent the Métis peoples



June is National Indigenous Month

by *Debbie Mohabir, Secretary-Treasurer*

SINCE 1996, JUNE HAS BEEN DESIGNATED AS NATIONAL INDIGENOUS HISTORY MONTH IN CANADA.

While we should all be taking the time to continue our learning about Indigenous history throughout the year, June has been proclaimed a time where we acknowledge the contributions made by Indigenous Peoples, their rich heritage, and rich history of the lands we live on. These lands have been cared for and continue to be cared for by Indigenous Peoples and it is only appropriate that we learn about it.

I would like to share something new that I have learned about an Indigenous woman named Rose Cole Yelton. She was a member of the Musqueam Nation and one of the last surviving members of the Indigenous community that lived in Stanley Park. She was born in 1913 and passed away in 2003.

Today, if you visit Stanley Park, you can see a totem pole that was created to honour Rose, her family, and those who lived in Stanley Park. It is placed in front of what would have been her house, where the Cole family lived until 1935. It was carved by her son along



Rose Cole Yelton Memorial Totem Pole, Stanley Park

with “many hands”. You will also see a plaque with two photos of Rose as a teenager living in Brockton Point and as an elder commemorating her life at Stanley Park.

Eventually, the Park Board at that time wanted the land to turn it into an “urban oasis” for city dwellers and deemed Indigenous residents as “squatters”. They were removed in a violent and destructive way by burning their ancestral land to the ground. The community resisted eviction until the early 1930s when their attempt to keep their homes died at the Supreme Court of Canada. Their case relied on upon oral testimony claiming families had lived there for decades. The court agreed with government lawyers when they argued that “Native Indians have no idea of time”. However, one set of siblings were allowed to stay, Tim and Agnes Cummings, who lived in a small cottage until Tim died in 1958.

June 21st is National Indigenous Peoples Day. Throughout the month of June there will be many events that will broaden your learning and I encourage you to participate or observe an event.

If you are looking for an event, CUPE Local 15, CUPE BC, CUPE Metro, and the Vancouver and District Labour Council are proud sponsors of the Gathering Place Indigenous Day Event on June 17th from 11:30 a.m. – 6:30 p.m. (Helmcken Street between Granville and Seymour Streets).

Living with Diabetes

by **Chad Cammer**
Union OH&S Committee Member
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 and 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 and a poor lifestyle, which consists of a poor diet and lack of exercise.

Type 1 diabetics are insulin-dependent, meaning Type 1s require insulin injections to control their blood sugars.

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 eleven years ago at age 36. 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 sugars (through injections) with calculated amounts of insulin".

I believe that the key words are responsibility and commitment. Diabetes does not allow one to "take a vacation" from it - ever. Without responsibility and commitment, proper management, 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 outsource.

Diabetes can be "controlled", or can be the controller...

It's a matter of how strong one's perception and willingness is to survive.

OH&S FAQs

Union OH&S Committee FAQs

1. What steps do we take when injured?

- See the First Aid Attendant (incident needs to be documented by First Aid attendant)
- If there is no First Aid Attendant, call 911
- Inform your supervisor
- See a medical professional if necessary (let the First Aid attendant know)
- Ensure form 6A is complete and send to your employer
- Complete form 6 and send to WorkSafeBC

2. When an injury/accident has occurred, what is the supervisor or manager responsible for and what is the employee responsible for?

Supervisor/Manager

- Conduct investigation with OH&S Committee Representative
- Fill out any applicable paperwork and submit

Supervisor or Manager and OH&S Committee

- Follow up with injured person
- Implement corrective measure(s) and/or action(s)

OH&S Committee

- Worker's representative will conduct an investigation with the supervisor or manager

3. Where can I bring forward an OH&S concern?

You can go to your worksite's OH&S Committee with any health and safety

concerns you may have. Please reach out to the CUPE Local 15 representative on the committee. If applicable, you can go to your Joint OH&S Committee. If it is an immediate danger or hazard, report it immediately to your supervisor.

4. Who is on the worksite's Health and Safety Committee and where is this information?

The committee consists of a worker representative from each union group and a supervisor or manager. This information can be found on your worksite's Health and Safety Board.

5. When can I refuse unsafe work?

You can refuse unsafe work if you have reasonable cause to believe that performing a job or a task puts you or someone else at risk. Please see the following link for more information: <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/health-safety/create-manage/rights-responsibilities/refusing-unsafe-work>

6. What are the 4 basic Health and Safety Rights of all workers?

The right to know. The right to participate. The right to refuse unsafe work. The right to no reprisal.

7. Where can I get Health and Safety Guidelines?

You can access this information on your worksite's Health and Safety Board.

8. When do I contact a Union Steward? When do I contact the CUPE Local 15 OH&S Sector Representative?

Union Steward

- Grievances
- Collective Agreement clarification
- Refusal of unsafe work support
- Representation in meetings with the employer

CUPE 15 OH&S Representative

- Election of site reps
- Provide resources
- Guidance and advice

9. How do I seek a medical accommodation?

If you are seeking a medical accommodation, speak to your medical practitioner. Make sure they include what your limitations and restrictions are. Provide this information to the employer and they will assess whether or not they can accommodate you. Please contact a shop steward if you need help or have been denied an accommodation.

10. What do I do if I am working alone?

Please review the working alone policy/procedure at your organization. If it is not being followed, speak to your site's CUPE Local 15 OH&S Representative.

If you have questions or need union assistance, please contact the CUPE Local 15 Office at 604-879-4671 or send an email to email@cupe15.org.



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: Mia Nickel
Parks: Bernie Dionne, Henry Lee
K-12: Chris Brown, Cynthia Schadt

Trustees:

Vacant, 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
Vacant, Office Assistant

Building Service Worker:

Elaine Duan

CUPE National Representatives:

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



COV Family Day Event

On May 13, 2023, the City of Vancouver held its Family Day Event at Manitoba Works Yard for the first time since the pandemic. President Warren Williams, 1st Vice President Santino Scardillo, Parks Sector Representative Henry Lee, and College/University Sector Representative Rose Palozzi attended on behalf of Local 15. Our Local was excited to sponsor the bouncy castle again, and the kids enjoyed the juice boxes.



Congratulations on your retirement, Kamal Gautam!

The Executive Board, members, and staff would like to extend their congratulations to Kamal Gautam on his retirement.



For those who may not know, Kamal is a long-time member of CUPE Local 15 and a long-time employee of the City of Vancouver.

Over the years, he has devoted countless hours supporting members in the City Sector as a steward, Chief Shop Steward, and Executive Board member. His passion for International Solidarity has been highlighted in the Members' Voice with his many articles about what is happening in other countries. He has also continually advocated for workers at many conventions.

We thank you for your activism on behalf of CUPE Local 15 and its members.

Best wishes for a happy and healthy retirement!



VSB Member Madelyn Switzer retires

by Santino Scardillo, 1st Vice President

Congratulations Madelyn on your retirement after 35 years of service and dedication to your job as an office support worker.

Madelyn started working for the Vancouver School Board in the Night School Department and has spent a significant time at Franklin Elementary School becoming the heart and soul of the school community. Her contributions over the years were greatly appreciated and the continued support to keep things going for students, CUPE Local 15 members, teachers, and administrators is immeasurable.

Her friends and co-workers at Franklin sent the following words:

You will be deeply missed by all your friends at Franklin Elementary. You were the heart and soul of Franklin. Your big bright smile was there to greet all who walked through the front doors, always making people feel special and welcomed. What a gift you have been to all of us for 22 years. Thank you for all your hard work and making Franklin a fun place to be. Enjoy your well-deserved retirement!