

DELEGATE REPORT

June 14, 2018

Greetings,

I attended the VIDC Leadership Conference on June 6-9, 2018. I would like to thank CUPE 2018 for this informative and thoroughly enjoyable opportunity. I recognized the VIDC members I had previously met over the last 2 years and had a chance to get more acquainted with CUPE 2081 members, CUPE members from many other locals, and leaders from CUPE BC and CUPE National.

The speakers were knowledgeable and inspiring.

- Terry Davies, Secretary Treasurer, CUPE BC opened the conference with some valuable remarks.
 - Understand your local, how it is built and why. Ask questions and understand unwritten rules. CUPE is a team...build it! Don't let your title define you, learn from your mistakes and those of others. The structure of CUPE is like space!
- Mark Hancock, Keynote speaker and President of CUPE National.
 - CUPE has 660,000 members across the country and is growing.
 - Locals across the country share the exact same issues.
 - He shared the funny story of how he was asked to run for president of his local many years ago because none of the members wanted the other candidate as their president.
 - There is a task force looking at the structure of CUPE which has divisions and locals.
- Joey Hartman, labour and activist, past president of Vancouver District Labour Council.
 - Succession Planning is important for continuity. Let your CUPE local know how long you plan to stay in the role and prepare for someone to take over.
- Barry O'Neill, Past President of CUPE BC (retired in 2014) stressed the importance of this leadership conference in developing leaders who are willing to step forward.
 - It is the person who follows the leader who is truly the leader and so on. Our currency is our loyalty to each other.
 - Stewards are at the heart of the local unions.
 - There needs to be a place for all of our members to win.
 - With a collective voice we can work together on issues such as affordable education with the current NDP government who is listening.

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I attended 1 of the 5 VIDC Leadership workshops which had 4 separate modules;

- Understanding Mental Health and Understanding Mental Injuries at Work (3 hours)
 - I learned that 1 in 3 people in the workplace will face a mental health issue and that 1 in 5 people in Canada will also eventually experience a mental health issue.
 - I learned that employers are starting to be held accountable for psychological health and safety at work, in addition to physical health and safety.
 - I learned about the National Standard of Canada for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace and that there are 13 factors included such as; Psychological support, clear leadership and expectations, civility and respect etc.
- Creating Psychologically Healthy Workplaces (3 hours)
 - I received a Mental Health tool kit which describes mental health and mental illness and stereotypes and stigma around these. It outlines how to talk to someone who you suspect has a mental health issue. Page 2 has a helpful diagram called the 'Continuum of Mental Health/Illness' from the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA). We are all somewhere on this continuum at any given time.
- Violence Prevention in the Workplace (3 hours)
 - Workshop covered what is violence in the workplace, reporting violent incidences and the importance of knowing who is on your local Health & Safety Committee and where information is displayed in your local.
- Solidarity Beyond Borders (3 hours)
 - I received a participant workbook
 - We did not have time to cover this module but were encouraged to think beyond our borders.
 - We are fortunate in that we have rights and some countries are not quite there yet.

I am submitting a hard copy of the Health and Safety: Workplace Violence and Harassment Prevention Kit. Every CUPE member can access their own free copy by going to <https://cupe.ca/member-resources>

Two young CUPE workers stood out for me as they work for the Portland Hotel Society, a high risk environment where their safety may be at risk on a daily basis.

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Also of importance is that I participated in the KAIROS Blanket Exercise with VIU Elders.

- The KAIROS Blanket Exercise is a reconciliation workshop that uses blankets to represent the lands of what is now called Canada, and the distinct cultures and nations that live on those lands to this day. Participants represent the First Peoples. When they move onto the blankets, they are taken back in time to the arrival of the Europeans. The Narrator and facilitators will work with the participants to read a script while the exercise goes through the history of treaty-making, colonization and resistance that resulted in the nation we today call Canada.

In closing, I felt very supported during this conference which was well organized, comfortable accommodations, great food and wonderful energy during the workshops. I was encouraged to take the CUPE Human Rights Workshop in future which I plan to do.

Yours in solidarity,
Kelly Speak
Correspondence Secretary, CUPE 2018