

EXECUTIVE REPORT –

July 2020

This last year has been very busy and it has had many opportunities and unexpected developments as well. It has been a year of many firsts for me, and indeed for us all. Things arising for which we couldn't foresee and things we are able to respond to. Things are still unwritten for the future, which is in equal parts inspiring and anxiety inducing.

I attended my first CUPE national convention this fall in Montreal, along with Erynne Grant, Petty Wong and Keith Todd. It was exciting and inspiring to connect to the labour movement on a national level. To truly understand how CUPE reaches from coast to coast. With our many members, there truly is strength in a union. We had several contentious motions to vote on and some constitutional changes, which divided the regions on their stance. The days were long, but the business at convention is important and we really put the time in to vote on every motion as presented. Looking back from this current point in time it seems so surreal to remember the convention floor with thousands of CUPE members all gathered in one place.

This year was also my first opportunity to bargain on behalf of CUPE 2081. I welcomed the challenges to learn and grow through the efforts at the bargaining table. It was not what I expected. I won't deny that the process was tedious mostly and at various instances it became arduous. But I can say with clear certainty that the team worked hard to deliver the best possible package, and that we held on and strove with strong conviction unto that goal. I am not a prideful person, but I must acknowledge the hours of hard work that went into those negotiations and in particular the work of Erynne Grant in the construction of the proposal package. I learned a great deal being at the table and I am grateful for the opportunity to have had a seat there in order to represent the local. I also must acknowledge all the efforts that have happened historically in previous rounds of bargaining to bring the collective agreement to where it is today.

I had the honour of being nominated to become part of the CUPE BC environment committee this year. I was looking forward to drafting resolutions in order to make meaningful and tangible changes in the areas of environment and how it intersects both social justice and indigenous rights and issues of sovereignty. Sadly Covid 19 cancelled the CUPE BC convention this year and the committee didn't have an opportunity to have any resolutions make it to the floor. The committee is still functioning and we are still meeting and doing needed work.

I was excited this year to attend the winter school week long course "a path to reconciliation" it was the first time the course had been offered, and its timing occurring in conjunction with the crisis of R.C.M.P invading Wet'suwet'en territory provided a very heartfelt and tangible backdrop for learning and engagement in political dialogue and activism. The course facilitators were very knowledgeable and guided the group well. The class as a whole went through a very intense and heavy process throughout

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the week. I learned a lot through the shared wisdom and personal experiences shared there. There was so much honesty, vulnerability and authenticity shared there, it made a lifelong impact. There is much gratitude

In addition to those new experiences that I had the privilege to be part of I also kept up with some of my typical and previous duties. Which are being part of the JOSH (Joint occupational health and safety committee) JEIP (joint early intervention program) Contracting out committee (sorry no acronym for that one ;) and LMCC (labour management cooperation committee) It is very busy being at many tables but the work of one often bleeds into another. Being at those tables is a great way to advocate for members and to engage in meaningful conversations with all parties concerned. I am always learning and always willing to admit, that I still have much to learn. As with all learning in life we are forever arriving and also never all the way there.

We are all coping with things and all doing our best. Its o.k. to feel overwhelmed sometimes. I don't know how to meaningfully encapsulate the moment of history we currently occupy. But it is of significance, and we are all part of it. Its meaning and the only resolution to the huge problems can only be solved within each other and how we can connect. May we all walk the path forward, together.
In solidarity

Shane Johnson | Vice President

Camosun College campuses are located on the traditional territories of the Lkwungen and W̱SÁNEĆ peoples. We acknowledge their welcome and graciousness to those who seek knowledge here.