

2021 SPRING UPDATE REPORT – APRIL ATKINS, OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY COORDINATOR

March 17, 2021

I would like to thank the CUPE 2081 Union Executive for their continued support as I have represented the position of Health and Safety Coordinator over the past two years. I would like to take this opportunity to have my name put forward to help support the executive in a different role. I believe my experience has given me the passion to be your voice as I care deeply about maintaining a harmonious, nurturing atmosphere among union members.

YEAR AT A GLANCE

Joint Early Intervention Program (JEIP)

- Monthly virtual committee meetings reviewing members on medical leave and following up virtually with those members that may need support completing Manulife applications and Canada Pension Plan Disability paperwork.
- Remember, next time you know of a colleague who has returned to work please give them a warm welcome. Their leave is personal and supported between their doctor, Human Resources and our insurance provider Manulife. We might not know what their condition is as it is private, but as a fellow Cupe Member they deserve the respect and acknowledgement of being welcomed back.

Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee (JOHSC or JOSH) – Worker Co-Chair

- Extensive safety measures put into place at the college because of COVID-19 from restructuring group-learning activities for applied learners to allow physical distancing, D2L instruction for students learning remotely, checking all that enter the college for pre-entry wellness, detailed cleaning measures and so much more.
- The committee has grown over the past year with a very organized and structured format. As the current Worker Co-Chair, my term ends next month giving an opportunity for someone from either CUPE, CCFA or BCGEU to fill in this role. I will continue being a representative as a JOSH Champion helping with the First Aide, Investigation and Incident Reviews as well as supporting building inspections where needed. My time as the Worker Co-Chair evolved over the past two years as I now have a solid understanding of the JOSH Committee. I feel very privileged to have worked with an amazing team helping support the growth toward a well-organized committee. We introduced “JOSH Champions”, developed a structure with well-organized agenda and minutes, receiving mentorship from the direction of Elisa Behn from Human Resources who continues support improving the foundation of the committee.

- Reviewed and updated JEIP Guidelines, Evaluation Tool, and Building Inspections.
- First Aid representation at the college has been an area of concern, now addressed and becoming better managed thanks to Patrycja Fatla, Occupational Health & Safety Coordinator. Patrycja joined the college last summer and started her role with safety measures at the college because of the pandemic. I recognize the hard work she has done and taking charge of the duties required within her position supporting our staff with ergonomic assessments.

Shop Steward

- I continue to be available to help members when needed.

Training

- Health and Safety Webinar: Dealing with COVID in BC – Nov 9, 2020
- Introduction to Stewarding – Part 1 and 2 Nov 3 and 17, 2020
- Respect in the Workplace for Leaders – Dec 2, 2020
- BC Federation of Labour Convention – Nov 25, 2020
- Difficult Conversations – Feb 1, 2021
- TELFIN TFE WILNEW (TTW) – Understanding Indigenous Peoples – Jan-April 2021
- Occupational Health and Safety – Level 2 on March 30, 2021.

As the JOSH Worker co-Chair, my term ends in April 2021 offering the position to another worker to carry the torch. It has been a great learning curve and I am proud of the committee's work toward a well-structured, attended committee. Overall, I feel there is a strong connection between the JEIP and JOSH Committees addressing supports needed for our membership. I continue to be available to support CUPE 2081 Union Executive where needed.

Stay Safe and Healthy
In Solidarity,

April Atkins
Occupational Health and Safety Coordinator, CUPE Local 2081