

# STEELDRUM

USW1998 NEWSMAGAZINE

SPRING 2020 | Vol.XVIII No.1



## RETURNING TO CAMPUS: A PRIMER

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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



## UNPRECEDENTED TIMES

**T**he world and workplace has changed dramatically since we first planned this issue of the SteelDrum. At that time, the Local was looking forward to a spring and summer of educational events, courses, conferences, summer BBQs, and bargaining actions. Seemingly overnight, things took a dramatic turn, and our worlds have been turned upside down by the COVID-19 pandemic.

This has been a very difficult time for everyone. We all have so much uncertainty about our families and their health, our kids and their educations, our elders whom we can't visit, our own health and safety at work and the possibility of job loss. We're not alone in this uncertainty. All Canadians are feeling it. There are so many things that are beyond our control and so many unknowns.

Everyone in the Local Union office (now working remotely) has been working hard to communicate to members the constantly changing situation, answer literally hundreds of member inquiries, advocate for health and safety measures for staff, and help members with workplace issues. In addition to COVID-19-related work, regular Union work is continuing (grievances, job evaluation, membership meetings, bargaining preparations, etc.). I want to take a moment to thank all of them for their hard work turning our organization into a virtual one in the matter of a few days.

I also want to recognize all of our members during this difficult time. Thank you to those who are still coming into

campus to feed and take care of students, to clean, to work in labs and to keep important infrastructure running. Thank you to everyone who is working from home, keeping U of T, Victoria University, University of St. Michael's College and U of T Schools running from your kitchen table, your basement, your bedroom or whatever quiet space you can find. Thank you to those who are struggling to work from home with kids or elders who need your care and attention. Our institutions could never have pivoted so quickly to online work without the hard work and dedication of our members.

Miles Corak, professor of economics at City University of New York, has called COVID-19 the "great revealer." We keep hearing the phrase "we're all in this together," but the fact is that people's experience of the COVID-19 pandemic greatly varies, depending on socio-economic status, neighbourhood, race and gender. In Toronto, we are seeing COVID-19 clusters in lower-income neighbourhoods with racialized populations. Black people are overrepresented among front-line workers, who bear the brunt of the COVID-19 pandemic. Statistics from the U.S. show that

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# EDITORIAL...

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**T**his issue of the **SteelDrum** has been in the works since the beginning of February. As such there is very little coverage of the COVID-19 pandemic.

When the University shut down on March 13, we debated whether to go ahead and print this issue. We realized, of course, there were very few still on campus to send a printed copy to, no one to read it and no one to do the mailing during the lock-down. And, by the time the lock-down is lifted, much of the content would be dated.

They say that necessity is the mother of invention. Some members of the Local 1998 Communications Committee suggested we publish an electronic copy of **SteelDrum**, and so here it is: our first-ever electronic-only issue.

I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge the contributions and sacrifices of our colleagues – those who work from home as well as those who continue to work on site to take care of the thousands of students who remain in residence and others who work to maintain our facilities or the complex computer networks and ensure that the University continues to function. Thank you, thank you, thank you!

*I hope that all of you are staying healthy and keeping well. Together, we will prevail, and hopefully the pandemic will be over, in the not-too-distant future.*

In solidarity, **P. C. Choo**, Editor

**Unprecedented Times**, *continued* the coronavirus is killing Black people at a disproportionate rate. Canada has been lagging behind in even collecting race-based statistics, which would reveal the situation here.

The economic crisis created by the COVID-19 pandemic is being called a “she-cession” because of the differential impact of job loss on women. They are overrepresented in the hospitality and retail sector, which have been decimated by COVID-19 closures. As a result, the majority of jobs lost due to COVID-19, in both Canada and the U.S., have been held by women. Women are bearing the brunt of the impact of school and daycare closures. Even in the relatively privileged world of professors, academic journals are reporting a large drop in solo-authored articles by women as they struggle with research and child care.

The COVID-19 pandemic has also revealed what many in the labour movement have already known about precarious work. Suddenly, the public is noticing the key role that many precarious, minimum-wage workers have in our economy. While the Ontario government brought in job-protected leave for people sick or self-isolating, there is still no paid sick leave in the Employment Standards Act. Low-paid, precarious workers are reluctant to push for proper personal protective equipment and may not be

able to afford to take a sick day, putting themselves and co-workers at further risk.

We see this differential impact even in our own Local. We have seen about 100 temporary lay-offs and or reduction in FTE in our U of T Staff Appointed, Victoria and St. Mike’s units. Our Casual Unit has been hit very hard. Comparing May 2019 to May 2020, we have seen a reduction of over 700 casual positions. Their contracts have ended and are not being renewed, or they have been cut short because of cancelled events and programs. And, the employer has no obligation to rehire them when things open up again.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been like rolling over a log to see what’s been underneath all the time – gender inequality, systemic racism, precarious work. We need to recognize what’s being revealed and work to change it. We can’t allow our attention to these issues to drop off when things get back to normal. “Normal” wasn’t working for a lot of people. We need to take the momentum of the public paying attention to these inequities to continue to advocate for change that will improve the lives of everyone in our communities during this current crisis and beyond.

– **Colleen Burke**, President, USW Local 1998





# The Murder of George Floyd: Tragedy & Transformation

## OPINION

We were just about to go to press with the current issue of the first electronic issue of SteelDrum when America – and the world – was horrified by the brutal murder of George Floyd by Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin on May 25, 2020. Floyd's murder set off world-wide protests and shone a light on police brutality in the U.S. which had taken so many Black lives over centuries of pain and suffering.

Floyd's death set off a storm of protests in all 50 American states, here in Canada and in countries around the world. Yet, amidst the rage, the anger, the anguish and the despair, there is a glimmer of hope, a sort of silver lining that comes out of this tragedy.

First and foremost, it touches me greatly to see so many of people – Black and non-Black alike – take to the streets and join in the protest against racism and police brutality. More importantly, there has been a lot of introspection and soul-searching

and a recognition that this simply cannot go on.

As our colleague, Kim Walker, puts it ever so eloquently: "And us white people need to ACTUALLY DO THE WORK – MYSELF included – and not just say we will. We need to educate ourselves and act. Do more than just say how horrifying and unjust racism is and sign petitions and share posts on social media but also make space for people of colour, listen to their voices and experiences and believe them, and protest and fight alongside them."

Let us remember that it is possible to have unconscious racial biases. We can all agree forms of oppression, like slavery are wrong, but racism in general and can be very nuanced and that is why it is so embedded subconsciously into our culture. It's not always easy for us to detect. We will never understand what it is like to be a Black in our society because we have not walked in their shoes. It is for that reason, now is the perfect time to stop, listen and learn so we can appreciate the real depth of the problem.

But this goes beyond individual effort and change. It is incumbent on all of us to look at systemic racism and exclusion in our own organizations and work to change the culture. Our own Union Local and the labour movement as a whole, needs

to do much more to be pro-actively anti-racist and bring about systemic change in our structures, our activities and our programming. This is a challenge we must take up.

Walker also quoted from an article by advocacy group DemCast that white privilege is real and racism is real. The article provides a useful 'compare and contrast' perspective and put into proper context of what it means to be a white person and go about his or her daily lives and not fear any repercussions or consequences. Engaging in the same activities may cause a Black person to lose his or her life as evidenced by the examples below:

*"I have privilege as a white person because I can do all of these things without thinking twice:*

*I can go birding (#ChristianCooper)*

*I can go jogging (#AhmaudArbery)*

*I can relax in the comfort of my own home (#BothemSean and #AtatianaJefferson)*

*I can ask for help after being in a car crash (#JonathanFerrell and #RenishaMcBride)*

*I can have a cellphone (#StephonClark)*

*I can leave a party to get to safety (#JordanEdwards)*

*I can play loud music (#JordanDavis)*

*I can sell CDs (#AltonSterling)*

*I can sleep (#AiyanaJones)*

*I can walk from the corner store (#MikeBrown)*

*I can play cops and robbers (#TamirRice)*

*I can go to church (#Charleston9)*

*I can walk home with Skittles (#TrayvonMartin)*

*I can hold a hair brush while leaving my own bachelor party (#SeanBell)*

*I can party on New Years (#OscarGrant)*

*I can get a normal traffic ticket (#SandraBland)*

*I can lawfully carry a weapon (#PhilandoCastile)*

*I can break down on a public road with car problems (#CoreyJones)*

*I can shop at Walmart (#JohnCrawford)*

*I can have a disabled vehicle (#TerrenceCrutcher)*

*I can read a book in my own car (#KeithScott)*

*I can be a 10-yr-old walking with our grandfather (#CliffordGlover)*

*I can decorate for a party (#ClaudeReese)*

*I can ask a cop a question (#RandyEvans)*

*I can cash a check in peace (#YvonneSmallwood)*

*I can take out my wallet (#AmadouDiallo)*

*I can run (#WalterScott)*

*I can breathe (#EricGarner)*

*I can live (#FreddieGray)*

*I CAN BE ARRESTED WITHOUT THE FEAR OF BEING MURDERED (#GeorgeFloyd)"*

In the short time since Floyd's death, many changes – some previously unthinkable – had happened. Statues of Confederate leaders have been toppled in the U.S. and the city of Fredericksburg in Virginia removed a 800-pound slave auction block. Many cities are deliberating overhauling or defunding police departments. Some have barred police from using chokeholds or taking a second look at policies governing the use of force. Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Toronto Police Chief Mark Saunders both took a knee as did many police officers in both the U.S. and Canada.

The photo below, which went viral on social media, shows six-year old Armani Quanise from Paris, Tennessee, holding up a poster that sums it all up. Hopefully, this helps to clear up any confusion and why, right here, right now, 'Black Lives Matter.'

*Continued on page 23*



**PHOTO:**  
**Courtesy**  
**of Sarah**  
**Smith Wills**





# RETURNING TO CAMPUS: A PRIMER

**W**ith the uncertainty of whether the spread of COVID-19 will subside in the months ahead, USW Local 1998 members have rightfully expressed fear and anxiety around how the University has maintained a safe workplace for essential workers who are currently on site, and a safe return to work for those currently working from home.

To date, the University has been following the recommendations of Toronto Public Health (TPH), as well as those from provincial and federal health agencies. The recommendations from public health agencies are the minimum requirements that the public and businesses must take to slow and stop the spread of the disease.

Our Local's leadership has addressed many health and safety (H&S) concerns from our members during the COVID-19 pandemic. Most have been around the lack of personal protective equipment (PPE), sanitary products and physical distancing, as well as issues with working from home and mental health.

Beginning March 20, 2020, members working at front desks of residence buildings on all campuses have raised concerns that the safety protocols, as recommended by TPH, were not in place at their respective workplaces. Member concerns were heightened because all students were to move out of the residences over a single weekend. The University's response, through its Environmental Health and Safety department, was immediate in most cases, but there were sometimes a disconnect at the residence management level.

Of note was the experience of New College Residence staff. Despite staff repeatedly raising their concerns with management, New College Residence management was slow to respond to TPH's recommendations. For example,

members were forced to use blue masking tape to indicate where a person would need to stand to maintain a safe two-meter physical distance. There were also concerns with the lack of PPE and sanitary products. The Union intervened and contacted the University and were assured that prior to the next morning, the necessary PPE and sanitary products would be provided and that physical distances would be maintained. Later that same evening, the University confirmed that the safety precautions were in place. After following up with the members the next morning, it was found that safety procedures were still not in place (see picture 1 below). The Union again contacted the University and raised serious concerns about management at the residence not implementing the necessary changes to ensure workers were protected, and provided several suggestions to ensure all safety protocols were met. Finally,

the University, without delay, implemented the changes necessary changes to our members' satisfaction (see picture 2 below).

As per the provincial government's mandate, our members working as student counsellors were deemed essential workers and thus required to work on site. With all university buildings closed, visits to counselling clinics were limited, with the exception being the residences where a few international and Canadian students remained due to travel restrictions. Counsellors can conduct their meetings with students via video and teleconferencing. While considering and respecting the fact that a student in crisis may need an in-person meeting, there was not a need for all counsellors to be on site every day. Moreover, given the combination of 1) the increased likelihood of a counsellor coming into contact with community members that may be carrying the virus during their commute to work on public transit, for example; 2) the absence of a disinfecting protocol, given that the counsellors share meeting spaces; 3) the lack of PPE and sanitary products, at times due to supply issues; 4) the concern that non-medical staff were screening visitors by administering two types of temperature checks and not maintaining physical-distancing protocols; and 5) the necessary physical barriers, such as plexiglass screens, were not in place, our members rightly had reason for heightened concern for their safety.

Student counsellors have access to the technology required to meet with students

*Continued on next page*

## Health and Safety Training

### Open to All JHSC Members

***To further educate USW JHSC members about their rights as a worker member of the committee, and to further their knowledge of COVID-19, over the next few months, the Local will be offering full-day training on JHSC worker rights, which will be open to all JHSC members, from all units of the Local, and a half-day training on COVID-19. The Local will also be making this training available to other Unions at the University. I cannot stress enough the importance of our members being knowledgeable about worker powers, rights and duties as a JHSC member. In addition, I want to remind JHSC members that they are representing the Union and that they have an obligation, although voluntary, to protect the health and safety of not only Union members, but all members of the U of T community. The Union strives to work collaboratively with management on H&S matters, but our members can use their power to initiate change without managements agreement.***

***To ensure a safe and healthy working and learning environment continues to be maintained, we must first look to the past for guiding principles from times when there have been serious concerns around worker health and safety in general and/or incidents comparable to the COVID-19 pandemic and its response planning.***



**PHOTO:**  
**Before USW Intervention**



**PHOTO:**  
**After USW Intervention**



by alternative means. Yet despite this fact, managers in the department still required the counsellors to be physically present at the workplace. The Union intervened in this situation and the University expediently ensured that all safety protocols were put in place.

Working from home has proven to be challenging for a significant number of members. Members are working in make-shift home offices where ergonomic set-ups, in some cases, are absent. For members with medical accommodations, the University has either delivered via courier the members' ergonomic office equipment from their respective offices, allowed members to go to their respective offices and retrieve equipment themselves, and/or purchased members new office equipment to use at home. The University has not provided any assistance for members without a medical accommodation need, which the Union understands. Could you imagine the costs associated with delivery and/or purchasing office equipment for the University's 20,000+ employees working from home? However, at some point the University may have to reconsider its position as more workers start to develop injuries due to poor ergonomic office set-ups at home, which could lead to Workplace Safety and Insurance Board claims.

Members, especially female members, have also expressed concerns about the negative impact on their mental health as a result of balancing work deadlines and family obligations while working from home. Our Local's Staff Appointed Unit is made up of approximately 3,500 female members or 70% of the unit's membership. Despite positive changes in the roles and division of parenting duties over the past few decades, women still bear most of the brunt of childcare responsibilities.

Members are forced to face the challenges of maintaining full-time work responsibilities amid home schooling, childcare and/or elder care. The University has been flexible in allowing members to structure their workday to allow for members to manage both their work and family obligations. The Local's Outreach and Communications Coordinator, Margaret Bucknam, has been diligent in providing online links to mental health workshops. Workshops on managing stress, working from home, home schooling, childcare while working from home and financial management during COVID-19 pandemic have been available to the membership via our e-newsletters. The Union also has provided contact information about the Lifeline Foundation, a free service for Steelworker members that provides confidential information, referral and support services

to Union members and their families to assist them with difficult issues in their personal and working lives. Members can contact the Lifeline Foundation at the following link: <http://uswtac.org/services>.

At a recent meeting between Union representatives and members of the University's Central Health and Safety Committee, the Union raised concerns that provincially legislated Joint Health and Safety Committees (JHSCs) have not been included in the initial response to the COVID-19 pandemic eventual return-to-work plans. The University's position is that policy around return to work is an employer's responsibility and that it will consult with the Union directly for planning such return to work. The Union believes our members know the workplace best and should be involved at all stages of the return-to-work planning process. With over 50 JHSCs at the university, including close to 250 USW members being members of those committees, the JHSC members' expertise and knowledge of the respective workplaces can be key to the assessment of workplaces prior to the resumption of in-person operations at U of T.

To further educate USW members who belong to a JHSC about their rights, and to further their knowledge of COVID-19, over the next few months, the Local will be offering full-day training on JHSC worker rights, which will be open to all JHSC members in all units of the Local, and a half-day training on COVID-19 to all USW JHSC members. The Local will also be making this training available to other unions at the University. I cannot stress enough the importance of our members being knowledgeable about worker powers, rights and duties as a JHSC member. In addition, I want to remind JHSC members of the importance of being a Union appointee to a JHSC, and that they have an obligation, although voluntary, to protect the health and safety of not only Union members, but all members of the U of T community.

To ensure a safe and healthy working and learning environment continues to be maintained, we must first look to the past for guiding principles from times when there have been serious concerns around worker health and safety in general and/or incidents comparable to the COVID-19 pandemic and its response planning.

In 1974, about 1,000 Steelworkers at Denison Mines (uranium mine) in Elliot Lake went on a wildcat strike to protest unsafe working conditions. With the urging of then Ontario New Democratic Party leader Stephen Lewis, the province ordered that a Royal Commission be formed. The commission was led by

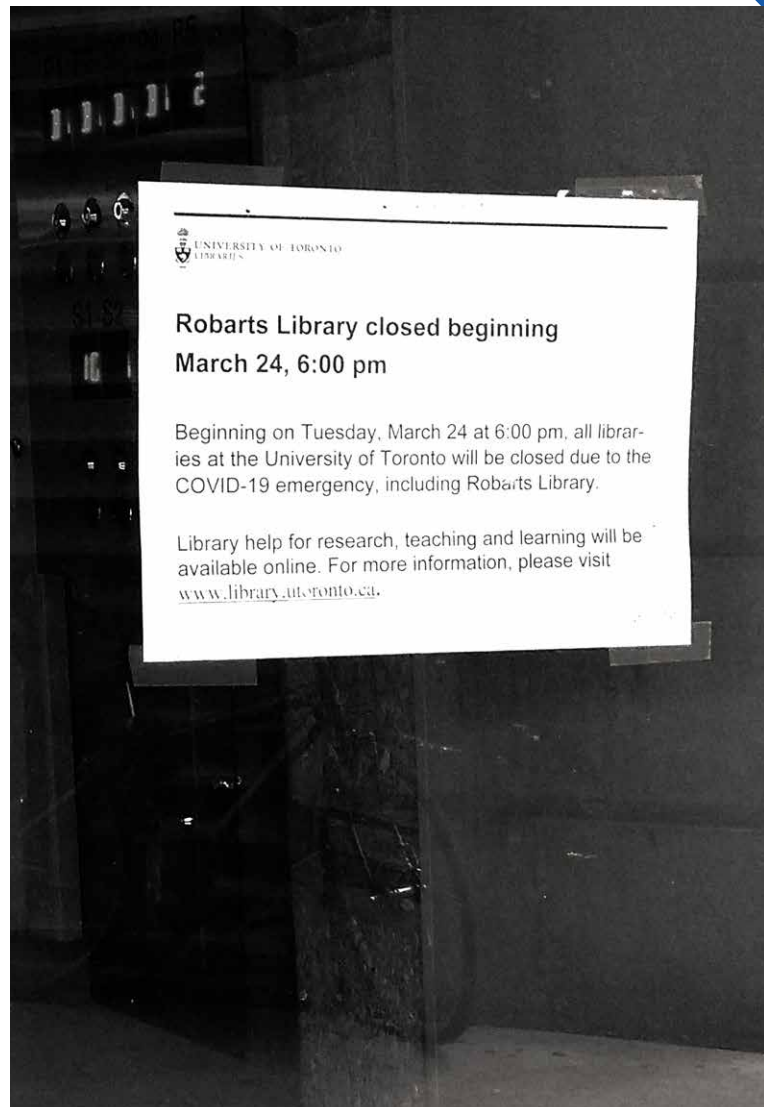
"To date, the University has been following the recommendations of Toronto Public Health (TPH), as well as those from provincial and federal health agencies. The recommendations from public health agencies are the **minimum** requirements that the public and businesses must take to slow and stop the spread of the disease."



former University of Toronto president Dr. James Ham, also known as the father of occupational health and safety in Canada. The commission was mandated to develop recommendations to address safety concerns for mine workers. As a result of the commission's 100 recommendations, the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) was born. As one of his recommendations, Dr. Ham devised the Internal Responsibility System, where workers, employers and the government share the responsibility for health and safety in the workplace. Dr. Ham also developed three fundamental worker rights: the right to know, the right to participate and the right to refuse unsafe work. The Union believes that both workers and JHSC members have the right to know about the hazards in the workplace and the right to participate in developing recommendations around COVID-19 safety protocols, and the University must recognize these as principles guiding any return-to-work plans and ensuring a safe environment for all who frequent the university. I cannot stress enough that workers know the workplace best!

In early April 2020, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommended that 1) "Everyone should wear a cloth face covering when they have to go out in public," 2) "The cloth face cover is meant to protect other people in case you are infected," and 3) "Continue to keep about 6 feet between yourself and others. The cloth face cover is not a substitute for social distancing." Subsequently, on May 20, Canada's chief public health officer, Dr. Theresa Tam, and later on May 23, Ontario's chief medical officer, Dr. David Williams, followed suit.

The Union approached the University subsequent to these recommendations and requested that the Local's members who had been deemed essential and working on campus are provided non-medical face masks. The University denied the request on the ground that TPH officials recommended that masks are only essential when an individual cannot maintain a two-meter physical distance. The University did say it would provide the necessary PPE on a case-by-case basis and encouraged employees to make their own non-medical masks. The Union was disheartened by the University's decision not to provide non-medical masks to essential staff who are working on campus. The Union's expectation was that as a world-renowned university, one of "Canada's Top 100 employers" and home to the world-leading Dalla Lana School of Public Health, would follow the example of the City of Toronto and



provide non-medical masks to all essential workers, instead of only meeting TPH's minimum requirements. Moreover, U of T is located in one Canada's epicentres of the COVID-19 disease.

Employers in Ontario must meet minimum safety requirements under the OHSA. Where there is not any explicit language in the OHSA to address a specific hazard, worker members rely on the General Duty Clause, as stated under Employer Duties in section 25 (2)(h) of the OHSA: "an employer shall take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of a worker." The Union believes that a reasonable precaution would be to provide essential staff working on campus with non-medical masks.

Two of the foundations of occupational health and safety structures are the Principles of Control and the Precautionary Principle.

The Principles of Control include elimination of a hazard at the source (i.e., engineering), along the path (general and local ventilation) and before the worker (by using PPE). Best practice is to control hazards at the source. In the case of COVID-19, an individual carrying the virus is the source. Based on the Principles of Control, the reasonable precaution for the University would be to provide non-medical masks to all workers to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 disease.

The Precautionary Principle is an approach for protecting workers in circumstances of scientific uncertainty, reflecting *Continued on page 22*



# Negotiating Committees Elected for All USW Local 1998 Units

## LOCAL RAMPS UP FOR BARGAINING

**A**ll Units of USW Local 1998 have elected a new Negotiating Committee as the Local prepares for what is believed to be a tough round of bargaining later in the year.

The largest unit – the Staff-Appointed Unit – had its elections in November 2019. The following members were elected to its Negotiating Committee, with President Colleen Burke an ex-officio member of the Committee:

### THE STAFF-APPOINTED UNIT NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE, ST. GEORGE



**Justin Bennett**  
Rotman



**Mary-Marta Briones-Bird**  
Information



**Toni Eyre**  
Slavic Languages



**Natalia Krencil**  
Anthropology





**Isaam Mikdashi**, Information



**Nik Redman**  
Student Life



**Zack Sholdra**  
Kinesiology



**Valeria Sladojevic-Sola**  
Rotman



**Courtvan Beek**, Information



**Tamara Vickery**,  
Test & Exam Services



**Colleen Burke**  
President, USW1998

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**THE STAFF-APPOINTED  
UNIT NEGOTIATING  
COMMITTEE,  
UTM & UTSC**

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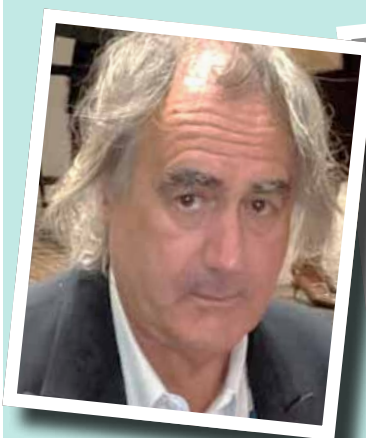
**Richard Waters**  
UTM



**Josh Cleminson**  
UTSC (acclaimed)

## THE CASUAL UNIT NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE

**I**n November 2019, Scott Eldridge and Rebecca Singh were acclaimed to the Casual Unit Negotiating Committee. In December 2019, Gabriele Simmons was appointed to fill the remaining seat on the committee. Nick Marchese, as the Casual Unit President, is an ex-officio voting member.



*Scott Eldridge*



*Gabriele Simmons*



*Rebecca Singh*



*Nick Marchese*

## THE VICTORIA UNIVERSITY UNIT NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE

**F**or the University of Victoria College Unit Negotiating Committee, Chris Greenwood and Alex Thomson were acclaimed. As President of the Unit, John Ankenman is an ex-officio voting member of the committee.



*L to R: Chris Greenwood, Alex Thomson & John Ankenman*



## THE UNIVERSITY OF ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE UNIT NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE

**F**or the University of St. Michael's College Unit Negotiating Committee, Angie MacAloney-Mueller was acclaimed. As President, Manda Vrkljan is an ex-officio voting member.



*Manda Vrkljan (left),  
& Angie MacAloney-  
Mueller (right)*

## THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO SCHOOLS UNIT NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE

**A**t the University of Toronto Schools Unit, Kevin Brice was acclaimed. Unit president Martin Aiello is an ex-officio voting member of the committee.

*Martin Aiello (left) and Kevin Brice  
(right) with Staff Rep Mary-Lou Scott.*



# UNITED STEELWORKERS



## UNITY AND STRENGTH FOR WORKERS

# LEO GERARD & CAROL LANDRY RETIRE FROM USW International Roles

**I**n one of the largest transfers of power at the helm of the International United Steelworkers, International President Leo Gerard and Vice President-at-Large Carol Landry stepped down from their respective positions on July 15, 2019.

Gerard began his career at Inco Ltd. (now Vale Canada Ltd.) in Sudbury when he was 18. He was soon elected a shop steward with his Union, Steelworkers Local 6500. In 1977, he became a Staff Representative and in 1985 he was elected District 6 Director. He became National Director for Canada in 1991, and in 1997 he became International Secretary-Treasurer before assuming the International Presidency in 2001. He was the second Canadian Steelworker to lead the international Union, after Lynn Williams who served as International President from 1983 to 1994.

Gerard was instrumental in forming the first global Union, Workers Uniting, and he worked tirelessly to build several other labour alliances around the world.

"There are few labour leaders who can match Leo Gerard's record and commitment in leading the fight for good jobs, for workers' rights and for social justice in Canada, the U.S. and throughout the world," says USW Canadian Director Ken Neumann.

Carol Landry was the first-ever woman on the United Steelworkers International Executive Board, serving as the International Vice-President-at-Large since 2008. Landry has been a champion for equity, human rights and creating space for new activists and leaders.

On October 26, 2019, some 800 Canadian Steelworkers gathered at the Sheraton Hotel in Toronto to honour Gerard and Landry and to pay tribute to their leadership and dedication to the cause.

Among the dignitaries present at the event were Mexican Senator Napoleon Gomez Urrutia; Ontario NDP Leader Andrea Horvath;



president of the Toronto and York Region Labour Council, John Cartwright; former Ontario Premier Bob Rae; and former Canadian Ambassador to the United Nations, Stephen Lewis, who introduced Gerard.

Other dignitaries who could not be present at the event sent messages of thanks via video recordings. Among them were U.S. House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi; B.C. Premier John Horgan; former Alberta Premier Rachel Notley; former Saskatchewan Premier Roy Romanow and former Manitoba Premier Gary Doer.

Happy retirement, Leo and Carol!

— **P.C. Choo & Margaret Bucknam**, Co-Chairs, Communications Committee



# What is Environmental Racism?

## BLACK HISTORY MONTH @USW1998

**O**n February 20, 2020, the USW Local 1998 Human Rights Committee held its annual Black History Month event. This year, Denise Hampden came to speak about environmental racism. Hampden is the Regional Education Officer for the Public Service Alliance of Canada.

Hampden started by talking about photos she had posted around the room that gave visual representations of what environmental racism looks like. They included black people in New Orleans begging for help after Hurricane Katrina, an old black and white photo of Africville, Halifax, showing how African Canadians lived dangerously close to a polluting industrial plant and photos of the difference between clean water from the taps of predominantly white neighbourhoods in Michigan versus the dirty water from taps in predominantly black neighbourhoods in Flint, Michigan. The Flint water crisis in 2014 resulted in an outbreak of Legionnaires' disease that killed 12 people and affected another 87. To this day, Flint residents don't have safe drinking water. Nor do Indigenous people living in many communities in Canada, including Grassy Narrows in Ontario. Some of the pictures Hampden showed us were Indigenous-designed art posters calling for action against pipelines and for clean water. The pictures demonstrated how environmental racism is a term used to describe the fact that pollution and environmental degradation disproportionately impact people of colour.

Hampden spent time talking about how anger about the rail blockades in support of the Wet'suwet'en hereditary chiefs is an example of how environmental racism is used to divide people. Indigenous people have suffered generations of cruel oppression and cultural genocide; their land has been stolen, and their water is polluted for industrial profit. Yet, white people cry out when they are inconvenienced when



blocked rail lines mean white communities can't get enough chlorine to purify their drinking water. Yes, as trade Unionists, we feel badly when rail workers are laid off as a result of these blockades. But we must remember what it is these protesters are fighting against: further theft and pollution of unceded Indigenous lands, the hypocrisy of so-called reconciliation, the disastrous consequences that fracked gas has on clean water sources and the refusal to recognize Indigenous sovereignty and historical governance structures. And we must remember who is ultimately responsible for this situation. It's not workers or Indigenous people. It's capitalism, it's corrupt governments, it's corporate greed. Divided, we will always be defeated by these powerful forces.

Hampden then showed us a Power Point presentation that included a couple of short videos on environmental racism and



## PHOTOS

**LEFT:** *Guest Speaker Denise Hampden speaks to Local members.*

**RIGHT:** *USW1998 Recording Secretary Mark Austin presenting Denise Hampden with a token of our appreciation.*



showing how environmental racism plays out in Toronto. The first map showed circles representing where the most pollution is emitted. The second map showed where most minority communities are located. It was almost a perfect overlay. People of colour are much more likely to live in the most polluted parts of the city. And pollutants are much more likely to be tolerated in communities where people of colour live. There didn't appear to be any chemical pollutants getting pumped into the air in the Rosedale neighbourhood.

One of the speakers in the video Hampden presented pointed out how some people might believe what is going on in Canada is more class-based than race-based. But the speaker had statistics showing that in the U.S. at least, even median and high-income earning black people live closer to polluted areas such as airports than white people whose earnings are similar.

Hampden was a powerful speaker, and I particularly appreciated hearing about her personal experiences. At many points during her talk, you heard gasps of disbelief from members. To me, this shows how we need to do a better job of educating workers about the lived reality of people of colour. It is talked about in classrooms across this campus daily, but what is being done about it? Hampden's talk also made me think about how environmental and human rights issues overlap significantly. I have been involved in environmental sustainability initiatives on campus for over a decade. I hope to represent our Union local on the

joint Sustainability Committee once it is up and running.

However, up to now, environmental initiatives of our local have mostly been confined to the Next Gen Committee. Perhaps it's time more of the work of our local is done through a sustainability lens. Environmental consciousness ought to be a part of everything we do, from health and safety and human rights, to reducing the waste we produce at our events, and ensuring our pension funds are invested ethically. Our Black History Month event pointed us in the right direction. But a 90-minute lunch time session cannot do justice to the depth necessary to truly understand this topic. We may consider doing a longer, one-day session next year, for which we would cover members' release time.

If you are interested in getting involved to help make this happen, send an email to [info@usw1998.ca](mailto:info@usw1998.ca) expressing interest in one of our committees: Political Action, Human Rights, Next Gen, Women of Steel, Health & Safety or Steel Pride. You can also get involved in broader campus activism, such as the Divestment & Beyond Coalition (<https://divestmentandbeyonduoft.ca/>), or Dig In! Campus Agriculture, a student-led group that grows food on campus to address food insecurity. Email me at [kbard@usw1998.ca](mailto:kbard@usw1998.ca) for more information.

— Kristy Bard, Grievance Officer



# USW District 6

## BLACK HISTORY MONTH DINNER & DANCE

**O**n February 22, 2020, the USW District 6 Human Rights Committee ("D6 HRC") hosted its first Black History Month Dinner/Dance, which I had the honour of hosting. The purpose of the event, held at the Leo Gerard Centre in Mississauga, was to raise funds for the Youth Hub Camp run by the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU).

CBTU has 54 chapters, predominately in the U.S., including three international chapters. Working within the framework of the trade union movement, CBTU advocates for black trade unionists and provides a vehicle for advancing their work and inclusion as workers. CBTU challenges systematic racism within the labour movement with partners such as Black Lives Matter and maximizes political influence within unions to increase the involvement, education, and voter turnout of black trade unionists, with the latter done in collaboration with Black Votes Matter.

CBTU hosts an annual golf tournament to raise funds to sponsor scholarships for women, where no applicants receive a scholarship.. CBTU also offers courses, such as Environmental Racism, which was

offered to USW Local 1998 members in February.

Upon arrival at the D6 HRC dinner/dance, the attendees' senses were aroused by the smooth sounds of Pan Fantasy, a Toronto steel pan group; the aroma of West Indian food, provided by Master Chefman Catering (Oliver); and tables decorated by the D6 HRC, which included lighted centrepieces, with placards featuring influential black Canadian and American leaders. One attendee, who is a primary

school teacher, asked the D6 HRC members if she could take all of the centrepieces at the end of the night to assist in teaching the children in her class about Black History Month. Of course, we obliged.

USW District 6 Director Marty Warren opened the evening by welcoming the attendees and acknowledging the importance of Black History Month and commended the work of the D6 HRC. Committee co-chair Janet Moffat then spoke of the work of the committee and informed all that the proceeds from the event would be going to the CBTU Youth Hub Camp to sponsor children from families that would not otherwise be able to afford to attend such a camp.

The first speaker of the evening was Jackie Taylor, from USW Local 7536, representing members at the United Way GTA. Taylor spoke of her family immigrating to Canada from the United States. Upon arrival, she explained that her family went from “having, to not having,” when her father left the family’s life savings in the taxi that they had travelled in from the airport. The family went to the police, who led them to a shelter. The family soon transitioned to government housing.

Taylor worked in health care for many years, and she rose through the ranks to become president of her local and served for eight years. In 2019, feeling unfulfilled with her day job, Taylor secured a position with the United Way GTA, which supports over 270 organizations, as a labour liaison. Her duties include fundraising on behalf of local unions to help tackle poverty. Taylor expressed that her life has coming full circle as the United Way was the organization that helped her family when they immigrated to Canada and lost their life savings and she is now able to give back to the community directly through the agencies that helped her family.

In her short time with USW, Taylor has formed many relationships and is currently training to be a health and safety instructor. In the closing of her speech, Taylor encourage union members to participate in union education and strive to create opportunities for others. She urged all to “give back what we are able to receive.”

The next speaker was the Ontario Federation of Labour’s Secretary Treasurer, Ahmad Gaied. Gaied spoke of celebrating the work of generations of African, Caribbean and other black leaders who for decades have been instrumental in successfully



**Top to Bottom:** CBTU President Yolanda Receiving a Cheque from the D6HRC Co-Chair Janet Moffat; USW Local 1998 Members at the Dinner & Dance; the Steel Band, Pan Fantasy, performs the night away.





lobbying governments for positive change to human rights laws, worker rights and working conditions. Despite their efforts, systematic barriers still exist. He spoke of learning from the past to chart a course forward and continuing to break down systematic barriers. He then acknowledged those that have done the "heavy lifting" to make life better for people of colour in Canada, highlighting the work of black leaders, such as Bromley Armstrong, Janice Gary and Yolanda McClean. Gaied spoke passionately about the need to strive to leave a legacy behind for the next generations to build upon to effect positive social change.

Gaied then spoke of the Ford government's cuts to the funding of public services, the privatization of public services and austerity measures, which have exponentially negatively affected people of colour; for example, the repeal of the \$15 per hour minimum wage, which instantly erased 23 years of efforts and gains that social justice activists of the past and present have fought for.

Gaied also talked about how the Canadian criminal justice system disproportionately targets black and Indigenous people through the use of 'carding.' He stressed that we must be diligent in organizing collective actions and continue to combat racism within our police forces and communities so that the future generations can look back on the legacy we have created.

The third speaker was Karl McBurnie, a Toronto-

### PHOTOS, Black History Month Speakers

**Left, Top to Bottom:** Mark Austin, District 6 Human Rights Committee Co-Chair; Ahmad Gaied, Ontario Federation of Labour's Secretary Treasurer; Karl McBurnie, USW Staff Representative. **Right, Top to Bottom:** Anita Byan, USW Staff Representative; Jackie Taylor, USW Local 7536; Marty Warren, USW District 6 Director.



area USW staff representative. McBurnie spoke of working at Mississauga-based NTN Bearings for 22 years and taking on many roles in his union local before becoming a full-time staff representative.

McBurnie had the opportunity to be released from his regular job to

facilitate courses and to take on casual assignments as a USW staff representative. He acknowledged his co-workers for their support while he was on release and made it a priority to always share his experiences and knowledge gained when he returned to his workplace. McBurnie reflected on a conversation that he had with one of his co-facilitators who stated that "to engage people, you need to turn on the light bulb and keep it on, and find ways to educate and challenge those around you." McBurnie said he keeps this in mind during his daily duties.

McBurnie then described his work as a staff representative as a busy and challenging job, and that his daily duties helping the membership take on management and the government are complex as members' livelihoods and benefits are on the line. He spoke of striving to educate members to be better union activists, and he is always looking out for upcoming leaders who are people of colour that just need an opportunity. He acknowledged that there are still union members that are not comfortable with having a person of colour represent them.

Racism is nothing new to McBurnie. While growing up he said he faced a great deal of racism and learned how to address the ignorance in a civil manner. These highly transferable skills have proven to be valuable and have assisted him in his role as a staff representative. He encouraged attendees to attend union and CBTU meetings and courses to help understand the depth of the racism problem and how to address it.

McBurnie also spoke of his parents being trade unionists in their roles at Canada Post and the United Association (an international union of plumbers, fitters, welders and service technicians); however, there was not any talk of the union in his home while growing up. At the first CBTU meeting McBurnie attended he thought he heard his name being called but could not distinguish where it was coming from. He took his seat and was surprised when he felt a hand on his shoulder. It was his father, who said, "I didn't know that you were into the union thing!" Since that day, McBurnie and his father continue to have many conversations about unions, and McBurnie encouraged the attendees to speak with their kids from an early age about the great work of unions.

McBurnie stated his commitment to continuing to advocate for opportunities for more people of colour to become part of the union's leadership at all levels and the need to educate our members from all ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

The final speaker was Anita Bryan, USW Area Coordinator for South Central Ontario. Bryan also

*continued on page 23*





***Returning to Campus, continued***

the need to take immediate action in the face of potentially serious hazards without having to await complete scientific proof that a course of action is necessary. In these instances, the Precautionary Principle should guide employers in the selection of the most appropriate controls related to a hazard, and it should be applied prudently and in the context of Principles of Control. Again, this basic principle signals the need for non-medical masks for all workers at the university. (Have we not learned from the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (or SARS for short) epidemic in 2003?)

Researchers have established that the COVID-19 disease can be spread while an individual is breathing or talking when slightly outside the recommended two-meter physical distance while in closed quarters, such as an office or classroom. Also, through examples such as the Diamond Princess cruise ship, COVID-19 has also been found to live on surfaces for up to 17 days. The need for all reasonable precautions to be taken to ensure the safety of all workers and other members of the U of T community is paramount.

To assist in contributing to our ongoing safety during the COVID-19 pandemic, at our March 2020 general membership meeting the Local's membership approved a motion to purchase 2,500 non-medical masks. The masks

will be distributed first to essential-worker members currently on-site, and then to other members as they return to the workplace. I am hopeful that other unions and staff associations at U of T will also provide non-medical masks to their members.

After the Ford government implemented "Phase One" of its plan to reopen the province, some members were required to be physically present at work. There were instances where managers hastily ordered workers back to the office without any safety planning in place. The Union has intervened in several situations of this type. The Union strongly advises that members exercise their "right to know" and question their managers to ensure that all applicable safety precautions are in place prior to returning to work on campus.

The Union is optimistic that in the spirit of Dr. Ham, the OHSA, the Principles of Control and the Precautionary Principle, the University and colleges that are part of U of T will "take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of a worker" and not the bare minimum, as the U of T community returns to work.

I encourage members to frequently visit <https://www.usw1998.ca/> for updates and/or contact me at [mark.austin@usw1998.ca](mailto:mark.austin@usw1998.ca) or e-mail [info@usw1998.ca](mailto:info@usw1998.ca) with any questions or concerns that you may have.

— **Mark Austin**, USW Local 1998 Health & Safety Officer





***The Murder of George Floyd, continued***

In conclusion, we leave you with a quotation from Senator Robert Kennedy who wrote in his book, "To Seek A Newer World":

"But we can perhaps remember, if only for a time, that those who live with us are our brothers, that they share with us the same short moment of life; that they seek, as do we, nothing but the chance to live out their lives in purpose and in happiness, winning what satisfaction and fulfillment they can.

Surely, this bond of common faith, this bond of common goal,

***District 6 Black History Month Dinner, continued***

worked out of NTN Bearings. Within her first year of employment, she became the union local's shop steward, and the following year a unit chair.

Bryan spoke of her upbringing in a small steel town just outside Sydney, Nova Scotia, named Whitney Pier, but affectionately known as "the Pier," spans 3 square miles and had a population made up of immigrants from the West Indies, mostly Barbados, and people from various European countries. In a newspaper interview, Bryan's 88-year-old uncle, Garfield, stated, "We have had a United Nations in 'the Pier' long before it was ever thought of being."

The Pier is separated from Sydney by a creek, railroad and a steel manufacturing plant, which is by design. The intention upon the populating of the area in the early 1900s was to divide it by class and racial ethnicity. Despite the efforts of the government to oppress the people in the Pier, through their resiliency and pride of their cultural heritage, regardless of their class identity and resulting hardships, there was laughter, food, dancing, family and church to lift their spirits. In 1927, the St. Philip's African Orthodox Church was established in 'the Pier' when the steel company gave the community a tool shed, which the steelworkers moved by flatbed to "the Pier", and it is now deemed a national historic site.

Bryan spoke of some of the amazing people that have come from "the Pier," including Bryan's grandfather, who was the first black USW local president; Isaac Phills, the first black man to be awarded the Order of Canada; and Mayann Francis, the first black Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia.

The steelworkers in the Pier have worked to defy the odds and demand the respect and inclusion as union members. Bryan's uncle Garfield, who still carries his union card, is and always asking her if, as a USW leader, she is taking care of his pension. There is a sense of belonging and family in 'the Pier,' and a hurt to one is a hurt to all. Struggles in the community and people standing together have created an environment of activism, and those roots

can begin to teach us something. Surely, we can learn, at least, to look at those around us as fellow men, and surely we can begin to work a little harder to bind up the wounds among us and to become in our own hearts brothers and countrymen once again."

The last word in this tragedy must surely go to Floyd's six-year old daughter, Gianna: "Daddy changed the world!"

Indeed!

— **P. C. Choo and Margaret Bucknam**, Co-Chairs, Communications Committee



have led Bryan to the USW.

At the end of the speeches, the D6 HRC presented Yolanda McClean, President of CBTU Canada, with a cheque for \$2,500, from funds collected from selling dinner/dance tickets and T-shirts, to support the children's summer camp.

I am also proud to announce that the USW Family and Community Education Fund has approved an application for funding for the CBTU Youth Hub Camp. The D6 HRC met the application criteria given that the CBTU camp supports Steelworker families, promotes the USW in the community and engages young activists. The funding includes pay for lost time of D6 HRC members to facilitate health and safety, bullying and harassment and other courses at the camp; a \$200 donation per USW child participating in the camp to be made to the CBTU to subsidize the cost of their attendance, up to a maximum of \$20,000; and up to \$6,500 for the D6 HRC to purchase and distribute USW swag to all children attending the camp.

Special thanks to the D6 HRC members for all their hard work on this project, especially Janet Moffat, who worked tirelessly to make this event happen. Also, thanks to Marty Warren, District 6 Director, and Kevon Stewart, District 6 Area Coordinator, for your unwavering support in the planning of this event. We look forward to a bigger and better Black History Month Dinner/Dance in 2021.

— **Mark Austin**, District 6 Human Rights Committee Co-Chair

# LABOUR COMMUNITY ADVOCATE TRAINING

## Helping Members in Need

**If you get satisfaction from helping others, then you should consider enrolling in the Labour Community Advocate Training Program (LCATP). The program links coworkers facing personal and family challenges to various community services in their area.**



Members take on a role of a referral agent and learn how to listen, guide and refer coworkers who are struggling with personal issues. Members steer them in the right direction so fellow coworkers can get the help they need in a safe and confidential environment.

ajib Soufian has been the program's coordinator for the past 11 years. He explains the program as follows: "People like to help other people. It's about prevention and working in collaboration with community services. We are talking about people's emotions, personal matters that are highly confidential. When you recognize that something is not right with your coworker, you try to make a connection with an individual. Often times, they are not in a great place at the moment and it's very satisfying finding them the assistance they need."

The kind of assistance Soufian refers to include support related to bereavement, financial problems, stress, family issues, harassment, substance abuse and violence. All too often, these difficulties can manifest and transfer into their work environment. Soufian points out, "It may not always be obvious at first, it could resemble your coworker being late for work, or frequent absenteeism, or behavioural issues in the workplace that end up resulting in coaching letters or even discipline letters." Our Union local's membership is diverse, with many different stories, and they often suffer in silence until an advocate picks up on that something isn't right

and initiates a conversation with 'Are you doing okay today?' or 'You don't seem like yourself lately.'

Through hands-on training, the program's aim is for participants to learn interviewing skills, train in advocacy techniques, acquire knowledge about current legislation and how best to go through a referral process. The program has a terrific network of guest speakers (lawyers, nurses, etc.) specializing in topics such as family law, dependency issues and tenant law, to name a few.

What Soufian is most proud of is the program's success stories. However, he finds it difficult to pick just one since most are confidential and personal in nature and are difficult to share. During training, members can expect to meet other brothers and sisters from an array of other Unions.

There are three levels to the program and each level is 10 weeks in duration. Time commitment involves one evening a week for the 10 weeks for each of the levels. The program was founded over 60 years ago under the name Union Counselling Program. Later in 2010, at the Canadian Labour Congress Convention in Vancouver, a resolution was passed to change the name to "Labour Community Advocate Training Program". To this day, the results are the same - providing information and the skills needed to refer co-workers to existing social services in their area.

While outlining the strengths of the program, Soufian admits it remains a challenge to achieve the program's attendance targets. Since the program's inception, our local has trained over 40

members. Still that's not very many considering the size of our local. It could be the evening time commitment that people shy away from. Soufian notes that just as important as acquiring the knowledge is having the opportunity to apply it. "Members have all this fabulous knowledge and then members seem to fall through the cracks after the course completion." We could do a better job advertising who has undertaken the course so our members can connect (anonymously or not) with trained members outside of their work area.

The LCATP is driven by the belief that doing good for members is an obligation that serves as its own reward. Many members take the course strictly for self-interest, but they are then well positioned to make a real difference in their workplace. LCATP provides participants with the information and knowledge of over 20,000 community services in the greater Toronto area and works as a collaborative partnership between those providing community resources and Unionized members. Many members suffer in silence and the goal is to improve the quality of their lives and this program does exactly that – one member at a time.

– **Margaret Bucknam**, Faculty of Medicine

## PHOTOS

**Top:** Najib Soufian, LCATP Coordinator.

**Bottom:** Labour Community Advocate Training Program attendees.



02/11/2010





# GRIEVANCE Committee REPORT 2019

**A**s we head into bargaining, it's useful to reflect on what were the most common grievances filed not just in 2019, but the past three years representing the life of our current contracts (2017-2020).

From my perspective, these are indicative of what ought to be primary issues in our 2020 round of bargaining, particularly given that Bill 124 (Protecting a Sustainable Public Sector for Future Generations Act, 2019) will restrict what we can hope to achieve in terms of pay and benefit increases. There are several things in the Staff Appointed collective agreement (CA) that could be changed to the benefit of our members without costing the University a dime.

A prime example of this is hiring practices. Out of 104 grievances filed in 2019, failure to hire and failure to interview grievances were the second most common at 14%. It was the same percentage in 2018; in 2017, it was 16%. The main problem is one of the biggest loopholes in the entire CA. Article 12:04 gives the University the right to post jobs externally, even when there are qualified internal applicants. At the University of Guelph, the employer is not allowed to do this. If we had the same language in our CA as our counterparts at U of Guelph have, our members' ability to advance their careers at U of T could be greatly enhanced.

Unjust discipline has shot up to 19% of all grievances filed in 2019. In 2018, they were only 8%. In 2017, it was 9%. This increase doesn't necessarily mean more discipline is being issued. It could be that members are less willing to accept that discipline without at least trying to fight it. An inequity related to discipline we've become aware of is that while some members are allowed to bring a Union representative to a fact-finding meeting that may result in discipline, others are not. We should have language giving every member the right to Union representation during fact-finding meetings. Not only might this result in less discipline getting issued, it also greatly enhances our ability to represent that member if a grievance results from

said discipline.

Often, we can get the severity of discipline reduced, or the length of time that it remains on an employee's file reduced. Progressive discipline at the University can range from a verbal warning (least severe) to written warning, one-day unpaid suspension, three-day unpaid suspension or five-day unpaid suspension (most severe). The severity depends on the nature of the infraction, such as damage to reputation caused, or negative operational consequences. Perceived poor performance that results in a complaint from a student or faculty member will often be addressed by management with discipline. The point of discipline is supposed to be corrective – that is, to warn an employee that if they don't shape up, termination may result. Lying, stealing and fraud often result in immediate termination. (Don't do it.)

Many of our unjust termination grievances result from Staff Appointed members not passing their six-month probation. This percentage has remained fairly consistent over the past three years.

It's interesting to see the percentage of improper organizational change grievances have dropped down to 7% in 2019, from 12% in 2018 and 13% in 2017. This isn't because fewer people are being laid off. It's likely in recognition that these are incredibly difficult grievances to win. We typically only have a viable grievance in organizational change matters if the correct process wasn't followed or if we can prove the work has been contracted out. What prompts many to want to grieve anyway is when it's evident that management has decided to eliminate their job without fully understanding the nature of their work or giving full consideration to the impact of such change.

Discrimination and bullying-related grievances have jumped to 7%, from 4% in 2018 and 5% in 2017. In the past three years, there have been at least 36 formal harassment complaints filed. This number dwarfs the large amount of inquiries stewards receive from members suffering from bullying and harassment every day. Unfortunately, the University's workplace harassment policy leaves much to be desired. This institution is far too slow when it comes to reviewing and responding to complaints. In the meantime, we see many people forced on sick leave because the bullying causes serious mental health impacts. When responses are finally received, most complainants find them unsatisfactory. If you come across a department with high turnover, it may be because

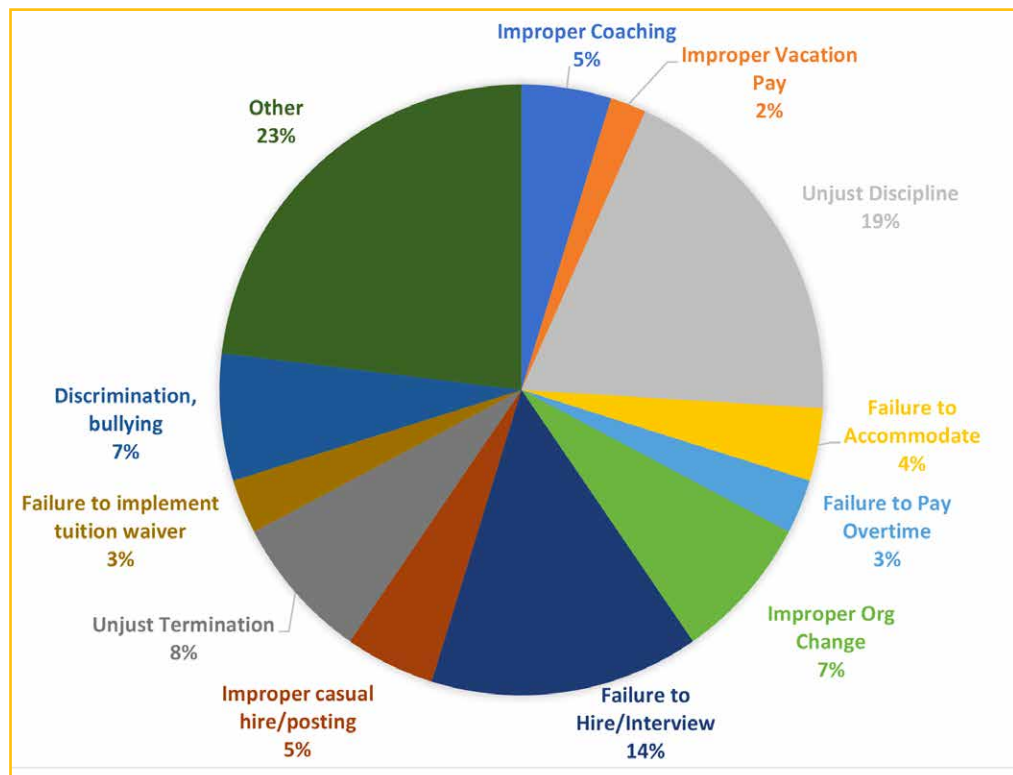
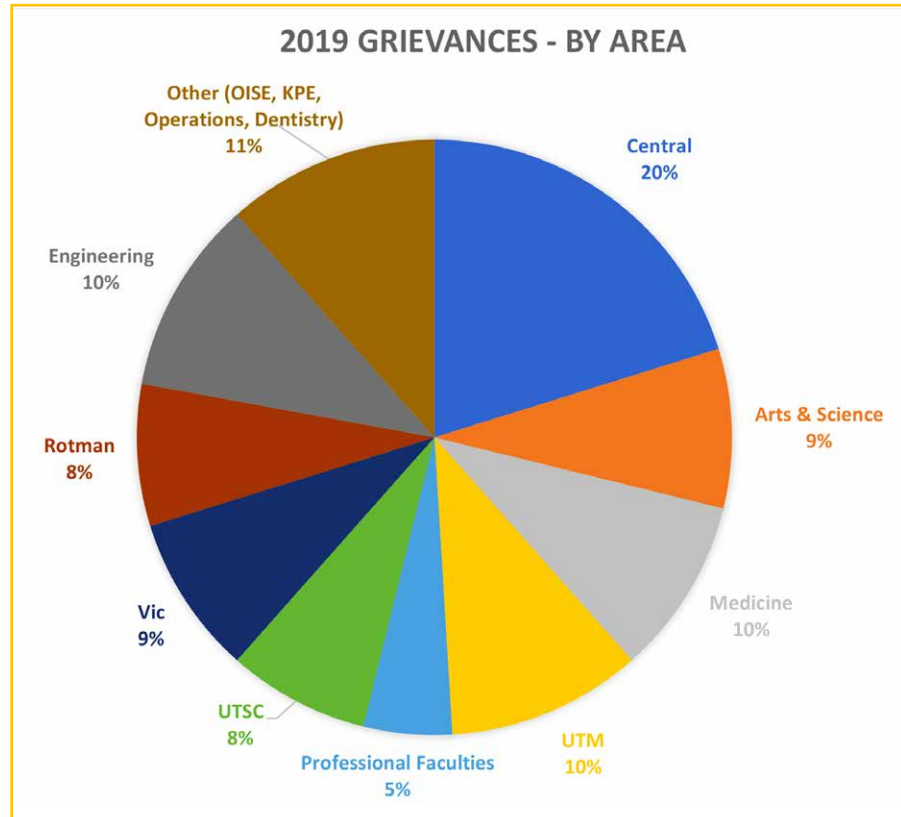
many people find it easier to find another job than assert their right to a workplace free from bullying and harassment – despite some problematic hiring practices making it a daunting task to find work elsewhere at the University.

It would be nice to get some language compelling the University to explore workplace restoration and/or mediation options immediately upon receiving a complaint. Often, these options aren't considered until after a long investigation has occurred – and by that point, it's too late to be effective.

Never hesitate to contact your steward or one of the grievance officers if you have a workplace concern. Remember that everything you share with us is kept strictly confidential, and we don't take any action without your consent. Oftentimes, it's not necessary to file a grievance.

We're able to resolve many issues by having informal discussions with the University's Human Resources staff.

– **Kristy Bard,**  
Grievance Officer



# VICTORIA UNIVERSITY UNIT REPORT – MAY 2020

**A**s the **COVID-19 pandemic unfolds**, your USW Local 1998 ("Union") representatives continue to negotiate and advocate on behalf of the Victoria University Unit membership to improve terms and conditions of work and the health and safety standards on campus.

*If you have any concerns or questions you would like your Union to address, please contact John Ankenman, Mark Austin, Alex Thomson, Wanda Hughes or Chris Greenwood. Full contact information is provided at the bottom of this report. If you are not receiving emails from the Union and you would like to be on our listserv, please email John.*

## Collective Bargaining

Negotiations for a new collective agreement with Victoria University (the "University") are due to begin in a couple of months. Your Negotiating Committee is Chris Greenwood (Food Services), Alex Thomson (Registrar's Office), Mary Lou Scott (USW Staff Representative) and John Ankenman (Victoria University USW Unit

President). We are in the process of assembling the Communication Action Team (CAT) and the Strike Committee. Over the next couple of months, you will have the opportunity to play a role in setting our negotiating priorities by completing a survey and by attending bargaining consultation meetings. The details of these initiatives will be announced in the coming weeks.

## Grievance Updates

Grievance VC 19-1 (Individual) – unjust written warning

This grievance was filed by an employee who was issued a written warning by their manager. Before scheduling a step-1 grievance meeting, the Union and the grievor participated in a dialogue with management that was facilitated by a professional mediator. That process led to the written warning being removed from our member's personnel file.

## Grievance VC 19-2 (Policy) – improper casual position

As provided for in our collective agreement, Casual Category A jobs are to be used by the University to fill short-term staffing requirements such as those created by a sick/LTD leave, an unpaid leave of absence or a short-term project. They are not to exceed six months in length, unless the Union and the University agree to an extension. In May 2018, a manager created a Casual Category A position that was supposed to be for a specific project. Shortly before the employee hired to do the work reached six months of employment, the Union was asked to agree to a two-month extension because, we were told, the project was not yet completed. After agreeing to the request, we found evidence suggesting that the job had never focused on the project and the duties associated with it were broader in scope than what is contemplated



by the language in our collective agreement. The situation was even more problematic given that the job had continued past the revised end date without the Union agreeing to a further extension. To address these violations of the collective agreement, grievance VC 19-2 was filed and that led to management ending the casual job.

### **Grievance VC 19-3 (Individual) – failure to interview**

Language in Article 12.03 of our collective agreement obligates the University to interview a bargaining unit member for a posted USW job, if the applicant is qualified. VC 19-3 was filed by a member who was denied an interview for a posted job for which they were qualified. The University dismissed the grievance at steps 1 and 2 of the grievance procedure, and the Union advanced the grievance to mediation/arbitration. A mediated settlement was reached that was satisfactory to the grievor.

### **Grievance VC 19-4 (Individual) – improper implementation of overtime**

This grievance was filed because a member lost the opportunity to work overtime when management used student employees to complete a task outside of the regular hours of the USW members who normally performed the kind of work done by the students. After hearing the Union's step-1 presentation, the University agreed to pay our member overtime wages for the time the student employees worked on the task.

### **Grievances VC 19-5 (Individual) & VC 19-6 (Individual)**

Not only did these two grievances challenge the properness of two

discipline letters issued to a member, they also addressed the University's decision to not identify the letters as discipline and not identify which form of discipline they represented. The Union is currently working towards a negotiated settlement with the University.

### **Grievance VC 19-7 (Policy) – improper change to the implementation of discipline**

This grievance focused on the policy issues raised in VC 19-5 and VC 19-6; that is, the University's failure to identify the letters as being discipline and their decision to no longer issue discipline within the framework of progressive discipline. The general idea of progressive discipline is for management to correct improper workplace conduct by issuing a low level warning (a verbal warning with written documentation) and then, if the employee does not adjust their behaviour, issue progressively more serious discipline (a written warning and then unpaid suspensions of various lengths), up to the possibility of termination. If the nature of an employee's conduct warrants it, management can start discipline at a stage somewhere above a verbal warning, up to and including termination. Since at least the certification of our bargaining unit in 1999, the University has implemented discipline within the framework of progressive discipline. With the two discipline letters involved in VC 19-5 and VC 19-6, the University ended that long-standing practice, which caused confusion because there was no longer signposts to indicate how serious the issued discipline was nor how close to possible termination the employee was after receiving the discipline.

When the University dismissed the grievance, the Union advanced it to mediation/arbitration. With the help of a mediator, we were able to

reach a settlement with the University that obligates them to appropriately label any work performance-related written documentation given to an employee and to copy the Union on such documentation.

### **Grievance VC 19-8 (Individual) – unjust termination**

With this grievance, the Union argued that the University's termination of an employee was unjust. We are currently working towards a negotiated settlement.

### **Grievance VC 19-9 (Individual) – dissatisfaction with the outcome of a harassment complaint investigation**

This grievance is at the beginning of the grievance procedure.

– **John Ankenman**,  
Victoria University Unit President

### **Contact Info**

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• **Wanda Hughes**,  
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• **Chris Greenwood**,  
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# UNIVERSITY OF ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE UNIT REPORT – MAY 2020

**T**he past year has been a very busy time for USW members at the University of St. Michael's College ("St. Mike's").

We were finishing up the final employee stage of our Pay Equity/Job Evaluation plan. St. Mike's had a 100% return rate for the job evaluation questionnaires, which will be valuable assets for the Joint Evaluation Committee. As a member of that committee, I cannot thank enough our members for their hard work filling out the 50-page document during the busiest time for an educational institution. Then, to resubmit it again with their responses to their manager's comments shows the respect our members have for getting this process done, and done right. The Joint Evaluation Committee has been meeting since November 2019, and the Joint Evaluation Committee's goal is to complete the work by the end of 2020.

In December 2019, Steven Koshchuk stepped down from his role as president of the unit. We are grateful for his time served as Unit President, as a member of two previous contract bargaining committees, and his work with the Joint Evaluation Committee.

With Steven stepping down, a number of positions became vacant

and needed to be filled. The USW Local 1998 Executive Committee named myself as Acting Unit President and at the subsequent unit meeting, I was acclaimed Unit President until the spring of 2021. Ken Schnell from Advancement was acclaimed as Unit Secretary. Also from Advancement, Matt Doyle came on board as a member of the Pay Equity/Job Evaluation Committee. Both will be exceptional in contributing to the St. Mike's Unit, and I look forward to working with them over the next year.

In February 2020, both Angie MacAloney-Mueller from Facilities and Services and myself were acclaimed to the St. Mike's Unit Negotiating Committee. This will be my third straight time as a member of the committee, and I am very much looking forward to working with Angie on bargaining an improved collective agreement for our members. She brings a wealth of knowledge to this committee, and together we will be reaching out to St. Mike's members for their input and direction in setting our proposals for the upcoming bargaining.

Since mid-March of this year, St. Mike's has been on pandemic closure. Our buildings are closed and a majority of staff have been working from home to ensure the continued operation of the University. Students, faculty, and alumni will continue to receive support from us via email, telephone, and video conferencing.

Our essential staff within the Facilities and Services Department are scheduled to work alternate days in order to maintain social distancing while on campus. These unit members are ensuring that the buildings are operating within specifications, spaces on campus are clean, and the grounds maintained. These are the key personnel that are sustaining the physical campus.

During these unprecedented times, the St. Mike's community is demonstrating its best qualities of resourcefulness, flexibility, and commitment to our work and each other.

— Manda Vrkljan

University of St. Michael's College  
Unit President





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#### PHOTOS

**Top:** The St. Mike's Unit Executive team: (L-R) Steve Craig, Unit Grievor; Manda Vrkljan, Unit President; and Ken Schnell, Unit Secretary.

**Bottom left:** Manda Vrkljan and Matt Doyle are the two members of the St. Mike's Pay Equity/Job Evaluation Committee

**Bottom right:** St. Mike's Unit Negotiating Committee: Manda Vrkljan and Angie MacAloney-Mueller





## *NextGen Conference a Great Learning Experience*

**I was lucky enough to be chosen to attend the USW Next Gen Conference in Pittsburgh November 18–22, 2019.**

I got to discuss, debate, socialize and learn with my fellow Steelworkers from all over Canada and the United States. Although most of the attendees were from the U.S. and worked in physical-labour jobs (unlike myself, who works in an office), I was happy to meet them and learn from them. And, I learned a lot.

The reason I applied to attend this conference was because I was new to the Union and I wanted to learn more about it. Being from Hamilton, I knew Unions were strong entities and important for working people. Hamilton was a huge steel city, and I knew countless people who worked all their lives in the steel industry there, and I saw what the slow process of a collapsing industry looked like. How hard the heads of Union fought for the workers who were in jeopardy of losing what they worked so hard for. That was the idea of a Union I went into this conference with. I wanted to know the beginning processes, what they do for us and how I could get involved and learn more about them.

The Next Gen conference felt like a crash course in 'amazing young people' within the Union. That's the best way I could describe it. From the smallest parts of Ohio to the far-off parts of Alberta, I made sure to speak to as many people as possible who were all around my age and trying to make a change. Trying to learn. Trying to educate others within their workplace. It felt like one big team spread across two large countries. To be honest, I was probably the luckiest person to attend the conference since I got to experience it with two wonderful women I knew from our Union local at the University of Toronto. Elysha, Adrienne and I, all about the same age, were trying to figure out the intricacies of the Union system we were in. But enough sappy things and feelings. The conference wasn't about all that – it was about strength!

### **The Workshops**

Now, about the actual conference. My favourite workshops were:

- Race and the Economy
- Language in the Workplace
- Workplace Grievances

- The Bystander Effect: Break the Silence on Gender-Based Violence

The workplace language workshop was especially heated because we learned quickly that what we think is inappropriate to say in the workplace (or ever) others think is totally fine. It was a spirited debate and although an uncomfortable conversation in some ways, I see why it had to be. A shout-out to the awesome instructor, Ryin, on leading this specific workshop. He was the perfect person to take us through this topic. He was calm, understanding and didn't talk down to anyone who was saying things he may not have liked. He was the highlight of the workshop.

I'm happy I chose the workshops I did. I learned a lot about the Union and American issues in the workplace.

### The Day of Community Service

We all really looked forward to this day!

All 900 of the attendees were dispatched to different organizations around Pittsburgh to do a day of community service.

I ended up at the Boys & Girls Club of America.

If I recall, my group was the 'goats.' Not greatest of all time, but literally, baaaaa, named after the animal.

My group consisted of people from completely different parts of North America, and hard work really brings you together. We spent the day painting and talking shop, how work is, how the Union works where they are from and, of course, sports. We goats were tasked with removing all the contents out of one office, paint the walls and a cupboard, and then put all the contents back in when the paint was done drying. Listen, I haven't had to bend and crouch like that for a long time. My body was doneeeeee! (I did the cupboard all by myself!)

I wish we had the opportunity to spend some time with the kids after we finished the work. You could tell the workers there were excited to present all the changes to them that night. It felt good to be able to give something back to Pittsburgh, since the city had welcomed us so pleasantly. Leaving a little piece of USW teamwork and work ethic felt awesome.

After the day of service, we all returned to the hotel and got to enjoy a wonderful closing gala that night. This included music, food and lots of dancing. It was a

***While NextGen targets workers under 35 years old, we encourage all members to participate in our events and join our committee. We rely on the experiences and wisdom of more experienced members, so email us at [nextgen@usw1998.ca](mailto:nextgen@usw1998.ca) if you want to get involved!***

great way to close off a really fun conference.

Going forward, I hope the Union continues to cultivate young people. This isn't a slight at people over 35. (I'll be there soon, too!) It's just that we need a better understanding of why things are the way they are. We are literally the next generation of USW. You can't really carry on a torch for something if you don't know where and why it was lit.

Whatever and whenever the next opportunity is to engage with my North American USW counterparts, I will always continue to try and attend so I can learn more and bring what I've learned back to Toronto.

— **Mirna Eljazovic**, Faculty of Law

***"This isn't a slight at people over 35. (I'll be there soon, too!) It's just that we need a better understanding of why things are the way they are. We are literally the next generation of USW. You can't really carry on a torch for something if you don't know where and why it was lit."***



# CONFERENCE

**I work as a standardized patient (S.P.) with the Standardized Patient Program (S.P.P.) which is attached to the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Toronto.**

As a Casual Unit member of USW Local 1998, I was invited to attend the USW's 18th International Civil & Human Rights Conference in Minneapolis, Minnesota, July 21 - 24, 2019.

Since this was my first time attending such a conference, I had no idea what to expect, so I felt I was blazing new territory for myself. And I was. This conference had such an incredible energy which was at times very inviting and intoxicating.

Every guest speaker I heard was extremely interesting, and each had an incredible story to tell. As they spoke, one could just feel the 'electricity in the air'. It was like when you went to your first rock concert. All the guest speakers received a standing ovation.

I was sitting at a table with my colleagues from Local 1998 - Toni Eyre, Carolina Rio Lezama and Elysha Daya - as well as Norma Mohamed, President of USW Local 3950 and her husband Nazir. Our table was in the second row directly in front of the speaker's podium. Toni was so keen on keeping that table throughout the conference that she asked me to arrive early each morning, so I could grab and hold this central table for all of us.

One of the guest speakers that stood out for me was William "Bill" Lucy, former long-time Secretary-Treasurer of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal

## Civil & Human Rights

UNITED STEELWORKERS

Employees Union and a co-founder of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists. Most Union members probably won't recognize his name immediately, but "Bill" Lucy was the Union organizer behind the 1968 Memphis sanitation workers strike - the strike that Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. came to Memphis to support when he was assassinated on April 4, 1968.

Lucy talked about the unsafe working conditions and the low pay that the sanitation workers had to endure before they went on strike to demand recognition of their right to form a Union. You could just feel the workers' suffering by the tone in Lucy's voice. Lucy went on to say the strike was an incredibly important one and the sanitation workers did finally win their right to form a Union.

The third day of the conference (July 23) was an amazing day at the conference because the attendees took some real action. At 4 p.m., we were given protest signs and organized for a march along Marquette Avenue in downtown Minneapolis to 5th Avenue and then along 5th Avenue to City Hall. The protest march was in support of immigrant and worker rights. The sign I was given to carry had "terre de Immigrantes" written on it, which is Portuguese for 'land of immigrants'.

I had never been on a protest march before and I did not know what to expect. I found the event to be an exciting and



unbelievable experience. Protesting through the streets of Minneapolis, I felt very proud to be there. For a souvenir, I kept my protest sign and I had Toni, Carolina, Elysha, Norma and Nazir sign it.

The conference workshops were another extremely interesting aspect. All the workshops sounded fantastic as you read through them in the conference program. I wish I could have attended all of them. One of workshops that I did attend was titled, Using Art to Mobilize, was led by Kyle (Guante) Tran Myhre, a poet, performer and activist based in Minneapolis.

Myhre spoke about how to use the arts (such as songs, poetry, dance, illustrations, video, photography) to assist in highlighting your cause. He said that no matter how sophisticated or complicated your cause or activism is, you

need to wrap it around with a 'simple message' as this makes it easier for people to comprehend what you are trying to achieve. In doing so, maybe they will become involved and support your cause as well.

An excellent example of this use of simple messaging was the slogan/theme for the conference: "Ain't No Stopping Us Now! Forward as One!"

It was an honour and privilege to have represented our local at the conference. I can't wait to attend my next conference!

— **Scott Eldridge**, Standardized Patient Program

PHOTO: USW1998 participants at the USW International Civil and Human Rights Conference. (L-R): Carolina Rios Lezama, Scott Eldridge, Toni Eyre and Elysha Daya.



## Casual Unit Members Building Skills Ahead of Bargaining

**M**obilizing precarious workers at U of T to fight for better working conditions starts with lots of conversations.

To that end, our Local sent 10 leaders of the Casual Unit to two events the last weekend of February – the Fight for \$15 and Fairness provincial strategy conference and the Building Skills for Change seminar, both held at Ryerson University – where we learned more about not only how to better listen to the needs and demands of our fellow members, but also engage them in fulfilling their needs and achieving their demands. So, our work at the bargaining table this spring and summer really starts now with grassroots organizing of our membership.

In attendance at the \$15 and Fairness conference were three voting members of the Casual Unit Negotiating Committee (Scott Eldridge and Rebecca Singh of the Faculty of Medicine and myself (Kinesiology and Physical Education)) and two alternates on the committee (Duncan

Pike of the Munk School of Global Affairs and John Warwick of the Faculty of Medicine); along with Joanie Lim, a nominated steward; Fred Spek, steward for Hart House; and Esther Thibault, a steward for members who work as Standardized Patients through the Faculty of Medicine.

Attending the Building Skills seminar were Gabriele Simmons, a member of the Negotiating Committee, and Heather von Atzigen, also a steward representing Standardized Patients.

The Negotiating Committee and members of our bargaining support team are planning several actions throughout the summer and into early fall. Check our weekly e-newsletter, which gets sent to you via e-mail, or feel free to reach out to me (nick.marchese@usw1998.ca) for details.

— **Nick Marchese**, Casual Unit Grievor



# No Feeling is Final:

## On Mindfulness & Work

**W**ith looming deadlines, distressing drama, and difficult demands at work, the workplace can become a source of stress for many individuals. While some stressors may be out of our control, we can control how we react to them by cultivating mindfulness.

Mindfulness refers to the state of awareness that is free from reactive judgements and ruminations. Although further research on mindfulness needs to be conducted, previous studies have suggested how mindfulness may have the potential to improve the wellbeing of employees. In the *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, for example, one randomized controlled trial with sixty participants has examined the impact of mindfulness on office employees. The researchers have randomly assigned the employees to either a group that will practice mindfulness for six weeks or a group that will not have to practice mindfulness for six weeks. Compared to the group that is not committed to mindfulness, the group in the six-week mindfulness program has demonstrated less work-life conflicts and more positive attitudes toward work. This research has added to a growing body of evidence that suggests how cultivating mindfulness may be associated with emotional resilience. Mindfulness is ultimately a state of mind that allows you to become aware of your thoughts, feelings, and external experiences without dwelling on the past, fixating on the future, making assumptions, or making overly critical observations.

Since the practices of mindfulness promote acceptance, equanimity, and open-mindedness, applying mindfulness principles in the workplace may

potentially foster a positive work environment. Instead of blaming your coworkers for an issue, for instance, you can practice mindfulness by doing the following: accept that an issue has occurred without putting anybody down, and immediately redirect your focus to solving the problem. Instead of obsessing over your mistakes at work and beating yourself up about them, you can accept that you have made some mistakes, avoid catastrophizing the situation, and redirect your attention to either correcting your errors or completing your next task. Applying mindfulness strategies in the workplace may potentially help boost morale and reduce conflicts at the workplace.

Whenever you feel overwhelmed at work, you can use the following mindfulness technique to try to diffuse your feelings of stress: Try your best to stop whatever you are doing for a few

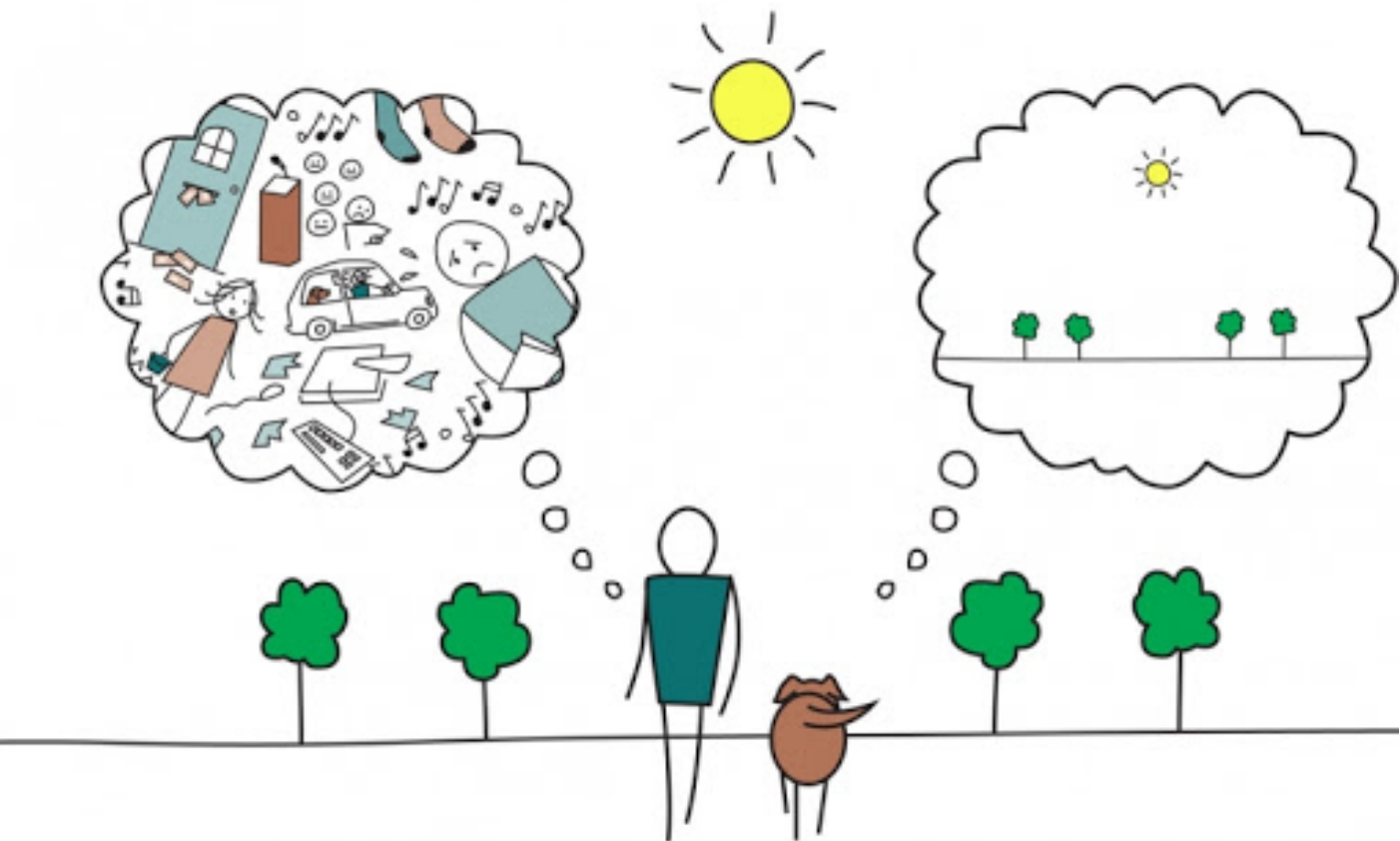
seconds, and focus on your breath as you slowly breathe in and out. Without critiquing yourself, acknowledge whenever you start to make assumptions, think about the past, worry about the future, or have judgmental thoughts. After acknowledging your distractions, immediately redirect your attention to your breath. Engage in this exercise until you can think clearly enough to move forward and focus on your job again. It is important to note that this exercise is not the only way to practice mindfulness. It is good to explore various mindfulness techniques to see which one works best for you. With regular practice and commitment over time, you will eventually find it easier to infuse mindfulness into all aspects of your life.

"Let everything happen to you: beauty and terror. Just keep going. No feeling is final," the Austrian-German poet, Rainer Maria Rilke, once wrote. Since every emotion is ultimately transient, cultivating mindfulness may potentially buffer your feelings of stress and empower you to just keep going.

— **Cecilia Nguyen**, USW Local 1998 Office

*"Let everything happen to you: beauty and terror. Just keep going. No feeling is final," the Austrian-German poet, Rainer Maria Rilke, once wrote.*

*EDITOR'S NOTE: This article was written before the COVID-19 pandemic reached our shores. As most of us started working from home, the message contained in this article is no less relevant.*



Mind Full, or Mindful?





## In Memoriam: Maymie Howe



**Maymie Howe**, who worked as a receptionist at the USW Local 1998 office, passed away in mid-December 2019. She worked in several departments at the University of Toronto prior to joining the Local office.

"Maymie was a strong supporter of the Union but, more importantly, she was a kind hearted person," says John Ankenman, President of the University of Victoria College Unit and Grievance Officer at the Local. "I have heard from more than one person about how Maymie warmly welcomed them when they started working in her department, how she invited them to lunch and did whatever she could to help them be successful in their new job. Maymie is remembered for her generosity."

Vice President P. C. Choo, who was also the perennial Chair of the Elections Committee, remembers Maymie fondly and her role in helping to run elections at the Local. "Maymie did not run in any Union election but she helped to ensure that the elections are run smoothly. I looked after the political side of things and she looked after the administrative details. We were quite a team."

Rest in peace, Maymie.

# In Memoriam: Lee Hill

**Lee Hill** was a casual employee with the Standardized Patient Program for twenty years after retiring from a career in education. He worked mostly as support staff on licensure exams for physicians, physiotherapists, and pharmacists. On April 13, 2020 Lee passed away from COVID-19. With his passing, the SPP lost more than a casual staff but a member of their family.

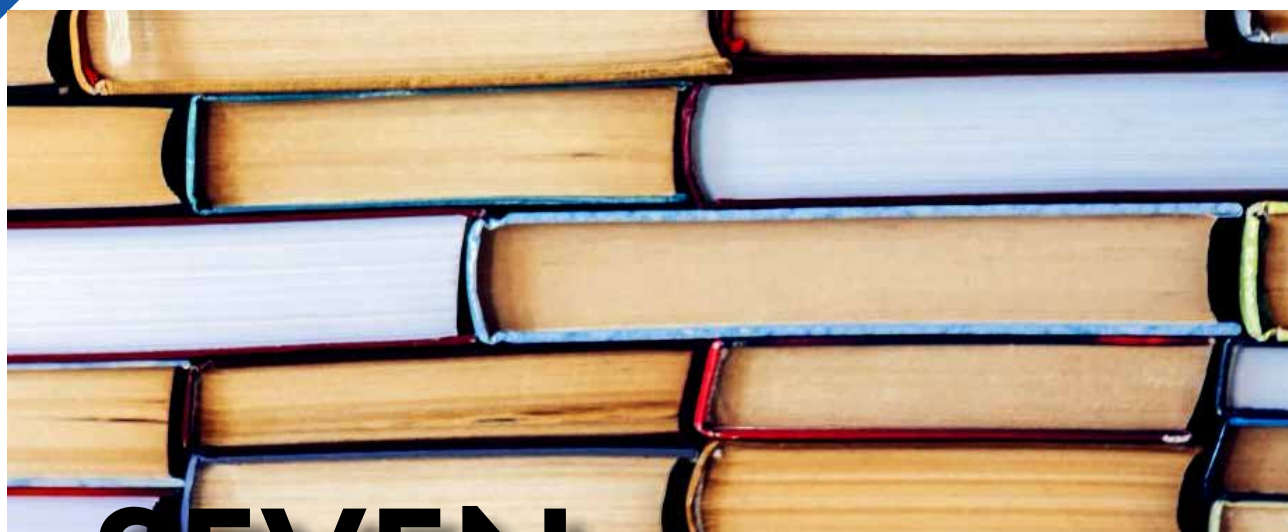
Lee graduated from the University of Toronto with a BA honors in mathematics and a MEd from OISE. He was a staunch supporter of the arts and a consummate gentleman. If you met Lee, you came away knowing a warm, kind-hearted, person, someone who put people at ease with his humor and charm.

Lee and his partner of over fifty years, Walter Donovan, who also is a SPP casual staff started the Donovan Hill Foundation to help Indigenous youth who wish to become independent entrepreneurs. Lee's legacy will live on through the good work of this foundation.

For more information visit:

[www.torontofoundation.ca/listings/donovan\\_hill\\_foundation/](http://www.torontofoundation.ca/listings/donovan_hill_foundation/)





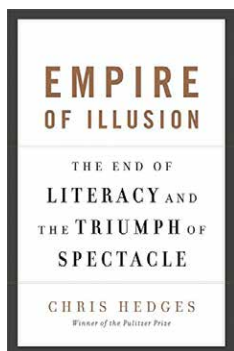
# SEVEN Quarantine Reads for Steelworkers

By Ahmad Khawaja

*"A book can be thumbed for quick access to facts and knowledge. It does not need to be plugged in, booted up, or upgraded. It will not break down nor need repairing. It does not require an expert to operate. Old and young alike can access the power of a book. The book is the ideal shape for the human hand."*

– Robert Darnton, *The Case for Books: Past, Present, and Future*

As Steelworkers, it is imperative to keep up to date on issues affecting workers and the labour movement as a whole. It is necessary to stay informed about the political decisions and cultural phenomena that impact us directly, and how to effectively organize and respond. As Steelworkers, we may be the first point of contact for information from friends, family, and co-workers. In order to better prepare for these responsibilities, I have put together a list of seven books that all Steelworkers can benefit from during the quarantine.

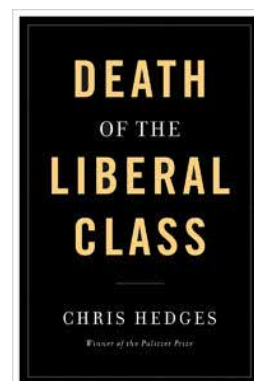


## 1. *Empire of Illusion* by Chris Hedges

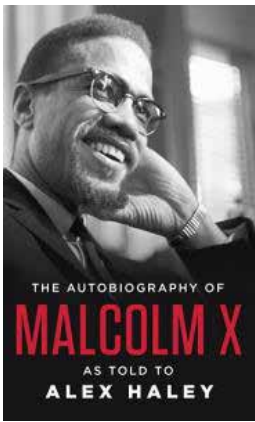
This book outlines the corrupting effects the loss of literacy has had on our society. Without higher aspirations we have descended into a consumer society, allowing large corporations to dictate policy in what Hedges describes as a "corporate coup d'état." The effects of our descent into unmitigated hedonism is an eye-opening read and call to self-reflection.

## 2. *Death of the Liberal Class* by Chris Hedges

In this timely book, Hedges outlines the failure of traditional liberal institutions to challenge the rise of the corporate state. He offers a scathing critique of the liberal establishment's regression to concerns of status and privilege and demonstrates the disturbing historical trends that accompany the moral bankruptcy of the liberal class.





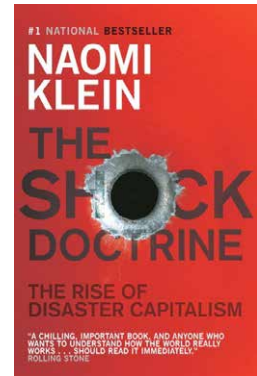


### 3. The Autobiography of Malcolm X by Alex Haley

Often regarded as the book that best articulates the anger and struggles faced by Black people in the United States and beyond, this autobiography provides a first-hand account of the racially based structural disadvantages they faced at every turn, and one man's quest to bring equality for all. This book is necessary reading to build better allyship with fellow Steelworkers of colour, and to understand that many of the challenges Malcolm X faced continue to exist today.

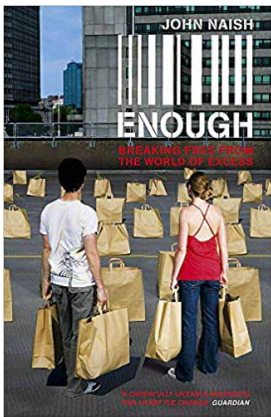
### 4. The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism by Naomi Klein

If you ever wondered why the labour movement has supported the anti-war movement, this book provides a detailed understanding of how the military-industrial complex influences policy abroad to the detriment of the working class, bankrupting entire nations to the coffers of a few.



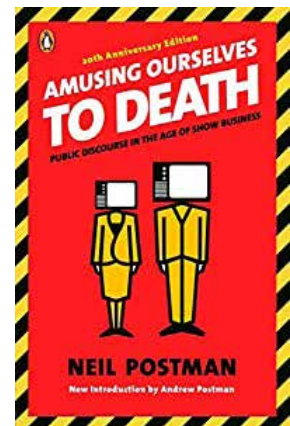
### 5. Enough: Breaking Free from the World of Excess by John Naish

"More status, more food, more info, more stuff." These days we are constantly bombarded with the need for more. This book offers a reflection on our consumer culture and how the perpetual cycle of material gratification can never lead to satisfaction and peace of mind. True happiness is found beyond all of these wants, in contentment, and in connecting to our true purpose.



### 6. Amusing Ourselves to Death: Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business by Neil Postman

Perhaps one of the greatest culture commentators, Postman offers a timely look into what happens when politics, journalism, and education become subject to the demands of entertainment. Electronic media have reshaped our lives, and their effect on public discourse is reflected in the kinds of political leadership available today. A must read for Steelworkers interested in the effects media addiction has had on society.



### 7. Long Walk to Freedom: The Autobiography of Nelson Mandela

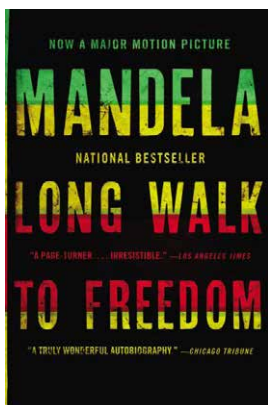
Autobiographies offer a unique ability to motivate and inspire, a window into the struggles and achievements of the author awakes within us the aspiration to reach our human potential. Mandela's struggle for justice included a 27-year prison term in his fight to end apartheid in South Africa. Insight into life in the Bantustans draws parallels to the modern struggle of Palestinians against Israeli apartheid.

*Lives of great men all remind us  
We can make our lives sublime,  
And, departing, leave behind us  
Footprints on the sands of time;*

*Let us, then, be up and doing,  
With a heart for any fate;  
Still achieving, still pursuing,*

*Learn to labor and to wait.*

– Henry Wadsworth Longfellow



## USW 1998 MEMBERS

show off their USW 1998 cloth masks.

USW 1998 staff and volunteers distributed the non-medical cloth masks to essential workers at all three campuses.



## SteelDrum D I R E C T O R Y

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