CUPE/3904

CONTRACT ACADEMICS OF TORONTO METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY

FALL 2026 NEWSLETTER



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REPORT ON ONTARIO UNIVERSITY WORKERS' COORDINATING COMMITTEE (OUWCC)

This year's OUWCC convention was held February 26 to March 1 in Markham, the week after reading week, making attendance more difficult. Unit 1 VP Kelly Train and President Catherine Jenkins attended the sessions that did not conflict with their teaching schedules. Awkward scheduling and the Markham location seemed to affect other academic CUPE locals too, as attendance was noticeably lower than in previous years.

Much of the discussion focused on increasing workload and sector precarity due to ongoing underfunding. As class sizes have increased, many of us are working harder. Administrative focus is on performance-based funding and efficiency; investments tend to go towards professional programs and micro-credentials. Many also noted changes in governance with cuts to support staff yet an expansion in leadership administration.

In the **Climate Action** presentation, concerns were expressed that the 47% of publicly-owned water in Ontario is facing privatization under Bill 60. The rollout of this new privatized system is currently being tested in Peel Region but will expand to other municipalities in the next few years. Such changes risk a repeat of the Walkerton disaster. Visit Keep Water Public for further information and to sign a petition.

Generative AI is increasingly used for decision-making and to monitor and to evaluate worker productivity. These systems are powered by workers' data, such as network and server logs, and this adds to the potential for job losses or restructuring. It remains unclear whether TMU is part of this trend; however, as recommended by both CUPE National and CUPE Ontario, we plan to negotiate protections limiting AI use in the next round of bargaining in 2027.

The **Workplace Violence Prevention** workshop indicated that gaps often exist between policy and action. In this workshop, violence was defined to include bullying and harassment, including online environments as well as physical and psychological violence. This hands-on workshop focussed on identifying risks with the potential for workplace violence, discussing how it could be mitigated or eliminated. Risks involved high-stress work environments, improper reporting mechanisms, and a lack of policies and/or training.

OUWCC represents 36 CUPE locals at 16 Ontario universities and more than 40,000 CUPE members. Membership includes academics, librarians, skilled trades and facilities, and others.

TORONTO MET AWARDS GALA

Photos by Alyssa K. Faoro

Catherine Jenkins and Kelly Train attended the Toronto Met Awards Gala on April 28th to celebrate and support our members who were the successful recipients of the CUPE 3904 1 and 2 Dean's Teaching Awards, Long Service Awards and Joseph Zboralski Teaching and Community Engagement Award. Congratulations to all our members who were successful recipients of the various awards at the ceremony.



Raji Iyer receiving 30-year Long Service Award

CUPE UNIT 1 AND UNIT 2 DEAN'S TEACHING AWARDS

Faculty of Arts Unit 1
Deena Kara Shaffer (Sociology)
Faculty of Science Unit 1
Omar Falou (Physics)
Faculty of Community Services Unit 1
Charlotte Akuoko-Barfi (Social Work)
Faculty of Community Services Unit 1
Sue Albanese (Nursing)
The Creative School Unit 1
Keziah Myers (RTA Media)
The Creative School Unit 1
Felipe Tellez (RTA Media)
The Ted Rogers School of Management Unit 1
Judy Healy (Hospitality)
Faculty of Engineering & Architectural Science Unit 1
Kandasamy Illanko (Electrical, Computer and Biomedical Engineering)
Lincoln Alexander School of Law Unit 1
Maureen Silcoff (Law)
The G. Raymond Chang School Unit 2
Ilkka Kokkarinen (Computer Science)



WINNER OF JOE ZBORALSKI TEACHING & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AWARD

Nagina Parmar (Biology/Chemistry) Units 1 & 2, Faculty of Science



Nagina Parmar and Raji Iyer

LONG SERVICE AWARDS

25 YEARS

Charles Silverman – Unit 1 (Disability Studies)
Judith Barnaby – Unit 1 (Nursing)
Anthony Power – Unit 1 (Entrepreneurship & Strategy)
Mahmoud Jahani – Units 1 and 2 (Information Technology Management)
Richard McMaster – Units 1 and 2 (Professional Communication)

30 YEARS

Rajeshwari (Raji) Iyer – Units 1 and 2 (Biology/Chemistry)



Roberta Iannacito-Provenzano and Nagina Parmar

FALL 2026 SOCIAL

While the AGM and GMM are required for Union business, the Socials provide a more relaxed and informal atmosphere, allowing members to chat with colleagues as well the Executive Committee, providing a valuable opportunity for members to express concerns and feedback directly to the Executive.

Thank you to everyone who attended and congratulations to our Fall Social Raffle Prize Winners:
Vinay Yarlagadda (Unit 1), Jia Yi Ren (Unit 3),
Tanvir Hassan (Unit 3), and Kimia Ghosi (Unit 3).











Photography by Aiden Milroy

REPORT ON
CUPE ONTARIO CONVENTION

Catherine Jenkins, President of CUPE 3904, attended the CUPE Ontario Convention in Toronto from May 27-31, 2026.

This year's Convention was attended by over 1,200 CUPE members from all sectors representing 227 locals within Ontario.

The convention began on the evening of May 26th with the Ontario University Workers' Caucus (OUWCC), providing an opportunity for sector members to discuss and to prioritize resolutions ahead of the general convention. CUPE National Senior Researcher Abram Lutes presented the Crisis on Campus, flagging the lack of post-secondary sector funding and international students being used as pawns in the debate. He also noted that the new Federal Canada Strong Fund is largely being used to finance private sector trade schools rather than publicly funded academic institutions.

Although we've heard about the restructuring of OSAP—leaving students with higher loan allocations (increasing from 20% to 75%) and lower grant allocations (decreasing from 80% to 25%)—approximately 40% of OSAP funding now is going to private institutions charging privatized tuition fees for their programs. While publicly funded post-secondary OSAP loans average $4,000 per student, more costly private schools average $15,000 per student. This further starves publicly funded institutions like TMU.

In the last few years, Artificial Intelligence (AI) has been identified as a bargaining concern, impacting different sectors in various ways. AI is based on user-produced data. Collected information may be used for monitoring users and algorithmic management, thereby impacting job security. CUPE has again emphasized the importance of bargaining AI language into our new Collective Agreements (CAs), especially considering how the technology might be implemented or used to exploit contractual weaknesses. Although AI is evolving rapidly, it's important to start including proposals for upcoming negotiations to protect members as the technology develops. CUPE 3904 has already spoken with our National Rep about AI language that has been successfully adopted by other locals to shape part of the proposals for future negotiations.

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Voting was held for numerous key positions on the CUPE Ontario Executive Board. Of particular note, after serving in various CUPE offices over the past decade, Yolanda McLean became the first Black woman President of CUPE Ontario with an overwhelming majority on the first ballot. Her vacated Secretary-Treasurer position has now been filled by another long-term CUPE representative, Dawn Bellerose, who becomes the first Indigenous and Francophone representative in this position.

Primarily, the Convention is an opportunity for members to discuss and to vote on resolutions. Similar to previous years, we were only able to review, discuss, and vote on about half of the +90 presented resolutions. Resolutions passed included those lobbying the Ford government for better post-secondary funding; opposing water privatization established by Bill 60; advocating for school nutrition programs, including in post-secondary institutions; and advocating for stronger support for healthcare, social services, and education workers. These sectors have been hit with chronic underfunding, increased workloads, and escalating workplace violence.

At such a challenging time for Ontario labour, I was relieved to sense a shift back towards issues of immediate worker concern and away from the divisive politics that have disrupted the last few conventions. Members again expressed their desire to spend more time discussing and voting on resolutions addressing practical concerns, and limiting time on ceremonial speeches. Many of us feel that resolutions are the core of Convention, as it is through such resolutions that CUPE can effect real change and apply political pressure, moving the Union beyond rhetoric and towards action.

The next CUPE Convention is OUWCC in Niagara Falls from February 16-19, 2027. Members of the Executive Committee will be in attendance and report on their experience in a future newsletter.

NOMINATIONS NOW OPEN: JOE ZBORALSKI TEACHING & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AWARD

The Joe Zboralski Teaching and Community Engagement Award is an annual TMU Award open to CUPE 1 and CUPE 2 members. Joe was one of the longest-serving Executive Members of CUPE 3904, initially as the Unit 1VP, and subsequently as the President for many years. This award recognizes members' contributions to community building among students and colleagues at TMU and in the broader community. This includes academic and civic engagement through teaching and service to members of the TMU community, as well as the public, and supporting leadership skills to create positive change.

Details about this year's awards are available here: **Joe Zboralski Teaching and Community Engagement Award - Recognition & Awards - Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU)**
The nomination deadline is November 10 by noon. Good luck!





LABOUR DAY PARADE

On Labour Day, September 7th, President Catherine Jenkins and VP Campaigns & Equity Michael Lapointe represented CUPE 3904 at the Toronto and York Region's 155th Labour Day Parade.

UPCOMING EVENTS FOR CUPE 3904 MEMBERS

ONLINE GMM

Dec 8th
3-6PM
ONLINE

WINTER SOCIAL

To Be Announced

YOUR CUPE LOCAL 3904 EXECUTIVE

President: Catherine Jenkins	president@cupe3904.ca
Unit 1 VP: Kelly Train	unit1vp@cupe3904.ca
Unit 2 VP: Rob Denning	unit2vp@cupe3904.ca
Unit 3 VP: Rebecca Scenna	unit3vp@cupe3904.ca
Treasurer: Richard Deklerk	treasurer@cupe3904.ca
VP Communications: Alexandra Perlin	communications@cupe3904.ca
VP Campaigns & Equity: Michael Lapointe	campaigns@cupe3904.ca

YOUR
CUPE 3904

All TMU Contract Lecturers and Academic Assistants automatically become dues-paying members of CUPE 3904.

Our local is divided into three Units:

UNIT 1
Represents TMU day school Contract Lecturers

UNIT 2
Represents Chang School Continuing Education Lecturers

UNIT 3
Represents Academic Assistants

Curious to find out more? Need information?
Check out our website:

CUPE3904.CA

The website includes details about:

- Unit-specific Collective Agreements and Executive Member information
- Information on Health Benefits and Professional Development/Assistance Funds
- Important Dates
- Stewards Lists
- FAQs and other Unit-specific information
- Access to CUPE 3904's Bylaws
- Monthly meeting minutes (login required)
- The local's latest news and newsletters
- A brief history of the local and Unions in Canada
- Links to Union Affiliates and Partners and the CUPE National Constitution
- Step-by-step details on what to include in your Academic application

KHW 373 CUPE 3904 Office
Open by Appointment