



Dear Brothers, Sisters, Friends,

Finally Persephone has emerged from the underworld and Spring may have arrived! This has been a very busy time for all of us on the Executive, as we navigate these turbulent Ford waters. We have all been working hard in our respective areas to keep informed about changes, policies, and laws that will affect us personally and politically. It is especially during these times that we must remain strong and united – there is power in many. As Martin Luther King Jr. noted, “We may have all come on different ships, but we are all in the same boat now.” Just know that as your Executive, we will do our utmost for you, our members, and keep you apprised of happenings. Special thanks go out to our Trustees, Stewards in all three units, and to those of you on the Audit and Health and Safety committees. And thanks also to our wonderful CUPE staff, Linda Barnett, Michael Cassibo and Rebecca Nevins.

Warmest wishes for a safe and peaceful summer,

Your CUPE Executive
Joseph Zboralski, President
Mary Green, VP Campaigns
Rob Bajko, VP Communications
Richard Deklerk, Treasurer
Kelly Train, Chief Steward Unit 1
Amir Kiumarsi, Chief Steward Unit 2
David Tenty, Chief Steward Unit 3

CUPE Women’s Conference, *Empowerment: Labouring for Change*

From December 6-8, 2018, Mary Green joined women from all over Ontario gathered for the Women’s Conference at the Sheraton Centre. Difficult stories as well as stories of success were shared.

We talked about the Ford government’s dangerous Bill 66, which leaves public services open to non-unionized workers. An increased number of children in private homes leaves an open door to unlicensed childcare, and to potentially perilous situations.

Longtime social activist Judy Rebick spoke about the woman’s movement, what has been done but how much still needs to be done. Rebick noted the epidemic level of violence against women, that 84% of homicide victims in Canada are killed by a current or former intimate partner, and that almost 75% of women were turned away from shelters in 2014 to 2019 because of lack of capacity and resources. While the women’s movement has made progress in terms of laws and policies, the culture of violence is still here. Today women’s rights mean rights for everyone, addressing issues of race, colonialism, gender identity, and violence.

An interesting workshop concluded that success may occur through persistence, education, collaboration, persuasion, and networking. Elected officials need to hear our concerns and be made accountable. Finally, stories are important as they are lived experiences, and thus need to be told!



Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) Rally, Feb 19, 2019

On February 19, a bitterly cold day, David Tenty and Mary Green joined thousands of students gathered at Queen's Park to protest the Ford government's OSAP changes and cuts to post-secondary education. The Ford government's announcement of an 'opt-out of student organizations program' means a reduction in students' unions that represent and serve their members. OSAP changes affect some of the most vulnerable students, whether they are pursuing second-entry programs, are mature students, or are from low-income families; and non-repayable grants are decreasing, while loans are increasing. Universities in Ontario face a 360 million dollar cut, which as we well know becomes downloaded onto students and contract faculty. A few politicians came out in support of the rally and signed a petition to stop the cuts.



Ontario University Workers Coordinating Committee (OUWCC) Annual Convention, 2019

From February 21 to 24, Kelly Train, Rob Bajko and David Tenty attended the OUWCC Conference held in Markham, Ontario. The approximately 4 - 5 % cut in university budgets may mean cutting and/or outsourcing services, and increased precarious employment and/or layoffs for custodial staff. For contract lecturers, we face increased class sizes, cuts to sections and courses, and possible job reductions. OSAP changes will result in massive increased student debt. And the optional student union dues and ancillary fees could result in funding being removed/reduced for student unions, student newspapers, and student centres (Pride, Women's, etc.).

Ryerson's Women's Day Events, March 4-8, 2019

The Women's Day events at Ryerson were many and varied, including "An Evening with #MeToo Movement Founder Tarana Burke," who spoke on the fight for gender equity worldwide. On March 8, Mary Green attended a panel of racialized women, Muslim women, and women in STEM titled "Womxn Empowering Womxn." These inspiring women are creating change and advocating for gender equity.



Women's Day March, 2019

On March 9, an estimated 50,000 people participated in the Women's day march, which ended at Ryerson with celebratory music and dancing in the streets!



CUPE Winter Social, March 12, 2019

Once again, the CUPE Winter Social was a great success!



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