

REPORT OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT CRYSTAL WARNER, TO THE APRIL 2019 NATIONAL EXECUTIVE

Since my last report to the members of the National Executive (NE) in October 2018, I have been excited for the opportunity to provide this update to the members of the NE, and to the members of CEIU.

Immediately prior to the last meeting of the NE, I spent two days in Montreal addressing health and safety concerns of our members at the local Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) offices, as well as participate in the AB/NT/NU regional women's conference as a guest speaker and facilitator in Calgary. While in Calgary, I had the opportunity to visit several worksites including front end Service Canada offices, and the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB).

Following the last NE meeting, I had the privilege of participating in the Ontario Presidents Conference, attend the National Board of Directors (NBoD) meetings of the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC), and participated as a delegate at the British Columbia Federation of Labour Convention. I was also asked to be a guest speaker at the PSAC BC Young Workers Conference.

In December, I also was able to visit worksites and activists in the Toronto area, including a visit to the new Service Canada office in Richmond Hill, and meet with members and the local executive. I participated with the CEIU national women's committee who was able to benefit from PSAC training on domestic violence in the workplace. This

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training left a big impact on me, and I want to thank the committee for their efforts in tackling such an impactful subject, or critical importance to the members of CEIU. Also in December, I oversaw the launch of CEIU's new national website! We are now in the final stages of releasing new regional and portfolio websites.

In February, I was able to visit Edmonton and visit several work sites in the area, both Service Canada and IRCC. In the NCR, I participated as a facilitator and guest at the regional women's conference. I had the opportunity to lobby Liberal MP John Aldag regarding issues EI legislative reforms and collective bargaining, along with Brad Stoodley, CEIU member of the PA Bargaining team. As well, I was happy to participate and assist in coordinating efforts for the PSAC rally held in the NCR on Feb 28<sup>th</sup>, attended by over 500 members of our union, angry about the lack of action on Phoenix.

Over the last several months, I have also met on several occasions as well with Magali Picard, NEVP of the PSAC, to discuss on going issues of concern to CEIU members.

In AB/NT/NU we said good-bye to Michelle Henderson, who has moved onto a role working for her community in Vegreville. We wish Michelle all the best and thank her for her service to the members of CEIU. In the same regard, we welcomed Arlene Ewaniuk to the NE!

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In March, I visited the IRB offices in Montreal, meeting with our PM-06 decision makers and the local executive to discuss issues specific to this group of our members.

As a result of absences with NE leadership, for the month of March I oversaw the BC/YT region. It was a privilege to oversee my home region and have an opportunity to do a deeper dive into issues affecting our members. During a year of transition for the region, I want to acknowledge the regional leadership in BC/YT, who continued to provide a high level of service to our members.

There is a lot of hard and diligent work occurring in house at CEIU by members of our staff. An ambitious backlog reduction initiative is currently being undertaken to clear up the administration of our grievance files, to close on both the union and employer side any necessary files, and to reactivate grievances long held in abeyance. The next piece of this initiative will include provide support and recommendations to the staff and our NE on how we manage files at CEIU and provide representation to our members.

Part of this backlog initiative has also included a review of outstanding job content grievances. At the NE meeting, PSAC classification and job content experts will be providing training and information sessions regarding outstanding grievances.

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In house, we are also working on new training manuals to provide training sessions to our members.

We also recently introduced a program called Westlaw to CEIU staff. A program currently exclusive to PSAC staff, as well as the employer, Westlaw is an online research service that provides proprietary database services. This program will provide our staff much needed tools and resource to assist them in providing support to our members.

I am currently overseeing a rebrand initiative for CEIU, working with our membership engagement officer as we give our union a modern look and feel with a new logo.

In my capacity as NEVP, I am proud to announce to our members that we have worked collaboratively with our staff union, COPE 225, and have drafted an employment equity policy and an employment equity plan for CEIU staff. Additionally, the standard operating procedures (SOP) for Unionware (the system we maintain our paperless grievances and informal complaints from our members) have also undergone a review and new release in efforts to continuously improve file maintenance. As well on the staff side, as employer co-chair of the health and safety committee, we are focusing on mental health, and successfully completed the Guarding Minds survey (a mental health assessment tool) with our staff, to identify concerns in the workplace. We take our staff wellness

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seriously and will continue to work with the employee representatives on our health and safety committee to improve working conditions for our employees.

In the coming months, staff in the regions are being invited to Ottawa to receive group training, including facilitator training, FPSLREB, job content, and other critical training to ensure our staff can continue providing a high level of service to our members.

As National Vice-Presidents (NVPs) begin conducting second level grievances, I am working with the NVPs and our staff to ensure a smooth transition into a new approach to representation for our members.

On the employer front, immediately following the last NE meeting, I met with senior management at ESDC to discuss CEIU's concerns regarding security in our Service Canada centers, as well as our ongoing and long-standing concerns with the CSO job description. At that meeting I made several demands on behalf of our members to improve working conditions. In January, we increased our pressure by appealing directly to the Deputy Minister at the National Labour Management Meeting (NLMCC) on the same topics. Immediately following this meeting, the employer agreed to several of our demands – they agreed to form an ad hoc national committee with CEIU to address and action security concerns, agreed to form a separate ad hoc committee to allow CEIU a significant and meaningful

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opportunity to provide input into the upcoming review of the CSO job description, and hold formal consultations with CEIU on the working alone guidelines, amongst others. We are satisfied that this is a significant starting point for tackling ongoing issues affecting our front-end workers. I want to thank all members of the NE who have been pushing at the local and regional levels, allowing us a necessary and critical platform to put pressure on the Deputy Minister to finally take action.

We are also holding a series of conversations with senior management at Service Canada regarding the distribution of overtime in EI across the country, raising many concerns from our members, and to ensure that overtime is distributed equitably to available employees. ESDC is also consulting with CEIU on their discipline grid and employee code of conduct policies. I would like to take this opportunity to remind our members to review these documents, as efforts by the employer are increasing in identifying breaches. Finally, the issue of the regional structure for the health and safety committees appears to be ending as the employer has accepted our proposal to resolve this long-standing dispute.

At IRCC, at the National Policy Health & Safety Committee (NPHSC) we continue to express our concerns regarding the employer's umbrella committee structure that exists in Sydney, Nova Scotia, and its application of the Canada Labour Code (CLC). We will continue to advocate for our

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members safety, and ensure the employer is held accountable. We are also concerned with the lack of information sharing in Montreal, where the employer only appears to want to share information following enormous push back from the union at multiple levels.

The IRB has a new Chairperson and Executive Director, who CEIU was finally able to meet with in December and express our concerns about the lack of effort on the part of the employer to establish a good working relationship with the union. The jury is still out on whether we will be able to re-establish a collaborative working relationship, and though we acknowledge and recognize that the IRB is under tremendous scrutiny by Parliament, CEIU continues to raise significant concerns about the wellness of employees as harassment concerns are on the rise at the Board.

CEIU has requested and is holding consultations with all three employers regarding their internal harassment complaint process. We are also running a grassroots campaign to get AED's in our workplaces and continuing to find opportunity to run push back initiatives on the Phoenix pay system, such as our Valentine's Day 'valentines' drive for Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, encouraging him to 'break up' with Phoenix.

Right before Christmas Eve, CEIU released hundreds of Phoenix grievances from abeyance to continue the fight

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back and put pressure on our employer to provide damages to our members who have been victims of Phoenix. We also advised the employer in all three departments, at the urging of our membership, that we will no longer be waiving Phoenix grievance levels. Aside from adding pressure to the employer, I can only hope that by forcing the employer to hear grievances at ever level, some of the lost humanity in this process can be restored in our workplaces.

In February, after an eleven-year battle, CEIU was advised by the employer of our victory in an CR-04 SMSM re classification. A fifty-million-dollar victory, we must take a moment to thank the people who fought the good fight for so many years, including special consideration to Sylvain Archambault from our Quebec Regional Union Office. The fight, however, is not over, as CEIU/PSAC are taking Service Canada to court to force the employer to do the necessary and right thing and pay all affected employees.

I am look forward to an upcoming visit to New Brunswick, to participate in the Western regional conferences being held in Winnipeg, and the national HRRR conference in the coming months. I also look forward to welcoming our administrative assistants to a conference in June.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our staff, and to thank all our activists. Our union is made strong by your efforts and from the bottom of our hearts, we thank you. I also want to say, to the members of our National Executive,

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what an extreme pleasure it has continued to be serving along side you on behalf of our members, and to our National President, who I am privileged to service alongside with and benefit from an extremely good working relationship.

We are currently in final preparations for CEIU's first ever joint meeting of the national women's, young workers, and human rights committees. It is our hope that this meeting will serve to allow our union a moment of reflection on the way we provide representation and advocacy to our members, using an equity seeking lens.

Over the last few months, I have been working with various stakeholders on completing work on a report of the CEIU trusteeship, which is being presented at this NE meeting and will be shared with our members. This has been an emotional project and journey, and one which I am proud to ensure lessons and legacy will remain on public record, so future generations of union activists can learn from past mistakes, and benefit from the positives that came out of our experience.

As we continue to move forward, in a new era of CEIU, even with a new logo, I am incredibly proud that we are making significant progress and gains for our members, pushing forward on new ideas, and learning from our past mistakes. I want to call on all our activists, to be gentler with each other, recognize we are all experiencing the struggle in

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different ways, and to always be respectful and mindful of the way we interact with one another. United, we will not only serve as equals to the employer when we sit across the table, but we will become dominant.

In solidarity,  
Crystal Warner  
National Executive Vice-President