BCYT has continued to be very active through the last few months. The members continued to be affected on an ongoing basis by Phoenix. From long term disability payments, to overtime, to day to day standard pay there continues to be ongoing issues biweekly. While we are seeing some Managers continue to do all they can to assist members every day, we have others in the region that have seemingly experienced what I can only hope is compassion fatigue vs the lack of empathy, or understanding as to how their own actions or inactions led to many of these situations, Albeit hopefully unintentionally. Long term disability payments where the member is working part time continue to be the worst scenarios as often the members continue as to get paid full time hours and the LWOP approval from the pay center is weeks if not months behind getting to sun life.

Mobilization continues to be an area of focus for the region. I have had the opportunity to meet with most of my locals again over the last few months in order to reconnect with the executive and determine the needs of the local. Given the potential job action looming, and on going Phoenix issues this was timely. Additionally within PSAC BC CEIU has a large number of mobilization coordinators so it was important to connect to ensure that they also knew that CEIU will be standing with them and mobilization around potential job action would be a priority through out the region. We had an event this summer at our second largest local. We did a rolled ice cream food truck and bargaining updates. The owner of the truck was a brother from CIU in the region. We had a great turn out despite some logistical issues and had the opportunity to speak with members directly about the concerns, the looming election and bargaining.

Admin investigations continue to be an ongoing challenge for the region. We have only started to see the results of these investigations through out the region. It has a bit of a trend that longer term employees are making the decision to retire versus facing an ongoing investigation. Additionally there appears to be a difference in dicisipline rendered depending on the perceived authority of the position.

I have been representing on all the level two grievances in the W-T region since June. Being able to do this has provided a significant insight into the trends in the region throughout and across business lines/ departments. Mental health concerns throughout all the departments have continued to be at the forefront of many of the grievances. It has also highlighted areas that could use improvement with management. it has also shown where we have training gaps on the union side as well. Overall the experience and knowledge gained by the NVPs doing these grievances will be irreplaceable and gives the added credibility when we face the Employer as we see first hand the issues facing our members.

Additionally as I have completed more grievances and people become more aware I have been brought into the process with the locals at an earlier stage than I had previously been as NVP. It has also resulted in many members coming to me as NVP with issues they would have previously potentially seen an NUR about. Things like DTA reviews that several members are undergoing, where the Employer appears to be attempting to have Members moved from full time to part time when there is continued absences despite the DTA in place.

At IRCC in Vancouver they have made the decision to decommission the earthquake kits. It has been raised at the RLMCC and the decision has been made due to the fact that there is no national requirement to have an earthquake kit. While this is correct, not all regions/provinces/cities are right on fault lines that could at any time result in a large earthquake. It is something that is so significant for the province that there is a yearly province wide earthquake drill.

IRB continues to feel workload pressures. Especially at the PM06 decision makers. They are continuing to hire, and the local has actually significantly expanded in size. Mental Helth in the work place continues to be a focus at all three departments as members continue to work hard with less resources, a pay system that doesn't work, and fear of retribution from their Employer.

In June BCYT held their presidents conference as a part of the larger Western Presidents Conference. For the first time the regions all came together and it was successful. BCYT had approximately 50 attending in Winnipeg. The conference was very well received by the delegates. The training was fantastic, a huge thank you to all the staff who were there to support us whether it was through training, or admin support. It made a difference. BCYT would love to host the conference should we choose to do this again in the future. I know relationships were formed across regions that will assist as activists reach out and support each other. The opportunity to meet with the senior leaders of the regions for all departments was also well received. Members appreciated that the Employer cared to come, but also that they were able to ask questions that would be relevant to the work they do.

I have continued my work on the CLC EI committee, and related work with the EI Commissioner. Many of you have already heard this but we are seeing the SST (Social Security Tribunal) replaced with a system that is once again tripartite. This means that labour, the Employers and the community all return to the table together to render decision on files at that level. It is a return to a client based system that focuses on their experience and ease of access versus often the beaurocratic, complex system. It also means a return to a system where labour, unions have a seat at the table ensuring the system is administered fairly in a system they helped build and have a clear stake in. This is a huge win, as when we started out this was a seemingly impossible task.

 I will be resuming my meetings with the EI Commissioner mid October and the intent is for us to meet at the very least quarterly going forward. October 18 is a forum on EI Legal and Administrative issues such has reconsiderations and the appeal process. This will be a one day forum that I will attend and I will be meeting the Commissioner the day prior to this meeting. December 5 th is tentatively the EI forum with ESDC and the community/ labour stakeholders. Both the EI Commisioner for Workers and the EI Commissioner for Employers will be in attendance for part if not all of the day. I would welcome any issues/concerns to raise at each of these meetings but especially when I will be meeting with the Commissioner for Workers. He truly has been an ally when I have brought issues forward that have impacted our members.

Casual to term hiring

In the coming weeks I will be encouraging our activists to engage with our memebrs. To have discussions around the need to vote for an NDP government. I believe that we can point to the BC government as an example of the fact that the NDP can govern unlike the common rhetoric. Further to this, I will be encouraging all our activists in the region to work directly on NDP campaigns.

Two weeks ago Sister Sargy Chima was acclaimed as alternate fr BCUT. I want to take the chance to welcome her and say that I am looking forward to working with Sargy in this new capacity.

Thank you to the staff from across Canada who supported our region over the summer as we have dealt with lower than normal staffing levels. Each staff members who was asked to help stepped in seamlessly and made the last few months possible for our members. It was and continues to be greatly appreciated by all our members and myself.

In solidarity,

Vanessa Miller

NVP BC/YT