

Report to National Executive –Spring 2021

This past six months have been spent adjusting to the new reality that we live and work in. They have brought big changes within the region and workplaces. We have resumed in person services – not without some significant concerns. We have had offices moves, and changes to how we operate in both our union and work lives.

In November the BC Federation of Labour Convention occurred and BCYT was able to sponsor several members attending. This reconfirmed the current leadership for another term. It also started what is the delayed convention/conference cycle starting with the PSAC Bargaining conference, PSAC BC Regional, our Presidents Conference and then the CEIU National Triennial Convention.

January we were able participate in the Western Territories and Quebec bargaining conference. This event allowed us to prioritize our bargaining demands that were submitted and start the conversation around bargaining. This was preceded by several townhall sessions. A huge thank you to Charito Humphery and Chris Gardiner for taking the lead on this and allowing us to join in what was supposed to be a MBSK event, and all the staff that made this happen. This event was great and was well received. Most of the feedback that came was that it needed to be a longer event to allow for more fulsome discussions to occur. We had almost 100 people in attendance when we included the NVPs and our Staff support.

Throughout the last six months I have continued the work that I do on the regional Occupational health and safety committee. In recent months this has included ensuring through a variety of way, and combined efforts with our staff, the local and myself were able to reverse a decision and finally see construction finished on access to washroom/hot water in our of spaces. We had previously received guidance that the other washrooms were close enough despite being through two doors and another entire office. Another ongoing issue that is being addressed through our regional osh is the building refit in Victoria. We have seen this new design be very inaccessible and unacceptable on multiple levels. We are working towards resolution on this issue as well.

Across all three departments there have been discussions around what is necessary for inperson services. We continue to work to ensure that each of our members are safe in their workplaces and only in the office where necessary, or needed for mental health etc. Additionally I have continued to participate in the RLMCC for all three departments. Where I have been unable, I have been fortunate that Sargy Chima A/NVP has been able to step in for me. Thank you Sargy, it is appreciated. In the RLMCC I have been bringing issues such as administrative investigation both inappropriate accesses as well as CERB investigations.

BCYT will continue to focus on engagement and building our network as we move into the summer/fall with upcoming training. We are working on a training schedule that will allow access to as many members as possible and will include two days of training at our upcoming Presidents Conference.

BCYT is about half way through AGMs at this time with most of our locals passing both 2020 and 2019 finances. Zoom has been a challenge as we have adjusted to virtual events and depending on degrees of confidence with zoom it has been seamless, and others presented more challenges. Across the region there has been a significant turn over in our local executives. We have seen significant turn over in our district coordinators positions as well, with longtime activists moving on to different opportunities. I want to thank all those who have chosen not to reoffer for a variety of reasons. Thank you for the years and time that you have given the region. To all those joining us, you are a part of a larger team as a whole and I look forward to working with each of you. Thank you for volunteering your time with us.

In solidarity,

Vanessa Sandsmark

NVP BCYT