



CUPE BC Indigenous Committee Report to Convention – May 2019

The Indigenous Committee has been working hard collectively and independently in our locals. The committees focus has been on: creating resolutions; engaging in community events; educating members and the community on TRC (Truth & Reconciliation); building our Indigenous resources on the CUPE BC website; and ensuring the acknowledgement of Indigenous territories at all meetings and events. The Indigenous committee continues to grow, learn and share our culture. I am honoured and proud to have been a part of the Indigenous committee for the past two years. Each member brings their own experience and voice which only strengthens us as a whole. Below is a snapshot of what each member has been participating in.

As Indigenous Diversity Vice-President I had the honour and opportunity of participating in various events around British Columbia. In September 2018, I travelled to Fort St. John and Dawson Creek to engage with the members of CUPE Local 2403 and participate in Walking with Our Sisters ceremony. In October 2018 and April 2019, Brother Michael and myself attended the CUPE National Aboriginal Council (NAC). The council's main focus has been to work on Truth and Reconciliation (TRC), Missing Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG), National Indigenous Day and Anti Privatization. We were honoured to be a part of the Sister in Spirit Vigil for the MMIWG at Parliament. One of our sisters had the honor of reading all the MMIWG names of the missing women since last year.

In November 2018, myself and Shelley Saje-Ricci attended the Indigenous Women Conference Leadership Summit in Ottawa. There were many great speakers and advocates present to engage in dialogue within relation to Indigenous issues.

In July 2018, Sister Danica Hansen-Hughes (Alternate Diversity Vice-President) and Sister Debra Merrier attended Think Tank. There were discussions of Action Plan

(Strengthen our membership, build capacity and solidarity, CUPE National Task Force on Governance, and engage in political activity).

Sister Danica Hansen-Hughes (ADVP) had a great opportunity with CUPE National to attend the International solidarity tour of the Philippines and meet with students and Indigenous representatives from around the world. Thank you CUPE National for the amazing opportunity.

Sister Shelley Saje-Ricci has been attending the BC Federation of Labour events in her local community. Sister Shelley attended: Vancouver Pride & two spirited parade; Longshoremen conference; Indigenous Committee; Panel of Trades for BCFed Renewal Conference; the Lancaster's House Panel on Indigenous dispute resolution process.

Sister Haley Irwin and Sister Gloria Lepine (National Diversity Vice-President) worked tirelessly to organize Walking with Our Sisters in Taylor, British Columbia. It was a memorial in remembrance of the over 1,100 missing or murdered Indigenous women from across Canada and the United States. 1,800 moccasin vamps were made by the family members of those missing and murdered women to symbolize their loved ones. In August 2019, the moccasin vamps will be sent to Batoche, Saskatchewan, where they will be laid to rest in a closing ceremony.

Brother Michael Lupo attended an Aboriginal Veterans Day ceremony in Vancouver at Victory Square Cenotaph on November 8, 2019. The ceremony began with a march from Carnegie Centre to Victory Square for a wreath laying ceremony which was followed by performances from the Vancouver Fire and Rescue Services, and the Regimental Pipes and Drums of the Seaforth Highlanders of Canada. Thank you to CUPE BC for the donation of the wreath. Brother Michael also attended Indigenous Day at Trout Lake on June 21, 2018. He spent the day gathering signatures in support of creating a National Indigenous Statutory Holiday.

Sister Deea Bailey continues to advocate and educate in her local, CUPE Local 1936, to have the indigenous territories acknowledge at every meeting and event; educate the

members on cultural considerations; and advise on how to engage Indigenous members. As a result of all her efforts, her local recently added acknowledgement of the indigenous territories to their website. Sister Deea also gathered many signatures from her community in support of creating June 21st as a National Indigenous Statutory Holiday. The signatures will be brought forward at the CUPE National Aboriginal Council in Ottawa.

Sister Lisa Gregory has been working hard in her community and schools. On September 30, 2018, Sister Lisa's community hosted Orange Shirt Day in support of Indigenous people. It was greatly received by community members and students. A very important accomplishment was reached by Sister Lisa at their local union meetings where they now acknowledge the Indigenous territories at every meeting.

The Indigenous Committee has put forward three resolutions this year at the CUPE BC Convention. The committee would like to thank CUPE staff, Paula Faoro, Trevor Davies, Darci Schmid, Sharon Prescott and Lori Watt for all their support and time. Personally, I would like to thank the Indigenous committee members for all their hard work over these last two years.

Respectfully submitted:

Debra Merrier, Chair
Danica Hansen-Hughes, Co-Chair
Deea Bailey
Cynthia Bosdet
Jeanette Burdeniuk
Luke George
Lisa Gregory
Haley Irwin
Michael Lupo
Liza McKay
Shelley Saje Ricci
Mitch Guitard - Staff Advisor
Cheryl Colborne - Staff Advisor
Clay Suddaby - Staff Advisor

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