



CUPE BC Skilled Trades Committee Report to Convention – May 2019

Only five months into 2019 and the Skilled Trades Committee remain focused and committed to promoting Red Seal trades and access to apprenticeships, with a focus on women and indigenous workers in the trades, working to better collective agreement language, and playing a larger role in our participation with the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum.

Over the past two years our committee has had a significant role as members of the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum (CAF).

Starting with our presentation by Randy Anderson-Fennell and Kirk Mercer “Public Sector Apprenticeships: How to Change the Culture to make Apprenticeship work for Unions and Employers” in June 2018 in Montreal. Showcasing CUPE BC on the national level with CAF. Then sister’s Leah Murray and Shannon McKenzie attended the first ever CAF Supporting Women in Trades Conference held November 6-7, 2018 in Halifax strengthening our ties with groups like Women Unlimited. Recently our chair attended the CAF Best Practices for Inclusive Workplaces round table February 2019 in Vancouver and met with the Policy Group on Tradeswomen’s Issues from Boston. Continuing in this direction we have two members that will attend the June 2019 CAF Supporting Women in Trades Conference held in Vancouver and would encourage any trades persons in CUPE to attend.

The Skilled Trades Committee have been making a difference in how public sector apprenticeships are perceived and we are proud to be seen as leaders in this.

Our committee, working with the CUPE BC Action Plan 2017/2018 and resolution 81 passed at last year’s convention, will have a document produced to help CUPE locals with starting apprenticeships. We continue to build solidarity throughout our relationships with the BC Federation of Labour, affiliated Unions and other progressive related organizations like BC Centre for Women in Trades Training (look for their Facebook group). We will continue to look for programs like Aboriginal Initiatives Skills

Training Plan 2015-18 that includes Enhanced Construction Craft Workers Program (E-CCW) and the Aboriginal Initiatives Canada Jobs Fund (CJF) Program - all run through the Industry Training Authority to help assist our members.

This year at the Union of BC Municipalities we had an opportunity to meet many local politicians and senior administrators to discuss the importance of apprenticeships. The information we shared sparked some positive conversations over the need for more participation from the public sector in training their own apprentices. Through the Vancouver Island District Council, we were asked to make a submission to the Association of Vancouver Island Coastal Communities, although not selected this year we will continue to engage with these groups on apprenticeships. With the provincial government bringing Community Benefits Agreements to big infrastructure projects, we can expect to see more and more apprenticeships started throughout this province.

Under an NDP government we have seen changes to the Industry Training Authority taking back a stronger leadership role in working with Unions and The Canadian Council of Directors of Apprenticeship (CCDA) who is responsible for the Red Seal Program. As well as the new leadership of the BC FED with Laird Cronk as new president and Sussanne Skidmore as Secretary Treasurer, we know trades will be in good hands over the next few years. As active participants at the BC Federation of Labour Apprenticeship and Skills Training Working Group, we have met with both the Minister of Advanced Education, Skills and Training Melanie Mark and the-ITA CEO Gary Herman and current ITA Board Chair Roberta Ellis to give our concerns on the apprenticeship system and our thoughts on compulsory trades.

2019 is a year where we would like to see trades related "Be More Than A Bystander" training. We know the Ending Violence Association of BC ground breaking partnership with the BC Lions that started in 2011 has been effective in "Break the Silence on Violence Against Women" in schools and now its time to talk with adults in trades that have been in a typically male dominated job.

With the introduction of electric vehicles in the past 10 years and employer's now looking to change over to more electric vehicles, we have questions. Will there be multi Red Seal tickets needed to perform the repair and maintenance? As these required skills are due to innovation of new technologies and - how that effect job descriptions and required tickets?

Respectfully submitted:

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