

# COORDINATING OUR FUTURE – 2010 AND BEYOND



**Ouwcc 2009 Conference, February 20 – 22, 2009  
Windsor, ON, Hilton Windsor**

## CONFERENCE REPORT

Over 100 delegates for OUWCC members and staff across Ontario gathered in Windsor, Ontario to discuss 2009, into 2010 and beyond. Our conference agenda allowed participants the opportunity to discuss the successes and challenges of 2007 and 2008, providing consideration of our future direction.



Brother Tim Brown, a traditional Mohawk teacher, welcomed our members with stories about facing challenges and provided us lessons for consideration.

“We are always amazed at what we can accomplish when we embrace our collective intelligence,” he told the conference.

Sister Janice Folk-Dawson addressed delegates with some opening remarks.

“We face many challenges over the next two days and we will face them together, head on and with respect,” she said.

“Working together we can accomplish whatever we set our minds to, our strength is in our dedication and our

ability to work together for the interest of our members”

Brother Sid Ryan, President of CUPE Ontario, also welcomed members and candidly addressed sensitive issues that were foremost in many delegates’ minds.

He was also very supportive of OUWCC coordinated bargaining pledging both moral and financial support.

Brother Ryan committed CUPE Ontario resources for an upcoming campaign that will focus on the chronic under-funding of post secondary education.

“We have met with representatives of the Ministry and begun conversations on the issues that are important to us including under-funding, pensions and benefits,” he told delegates.

## **SUCSESSES IN BARGAINING**



The first panel discussion featured Sister Terri Preston, Chair OSBCC and Sister Cora-Lee Skanes, CUPE National Servicing Representative from Sudbury, On.



Sister Skanes spoke about two different methods of bargaining. The first dealt with the Ontario Council of Hospital Unions (OCHU) and central bargaining. She gave a brief overview of their method of gathering information and finalizing their proposals. She explained the structure of OCHU, how representation at the bargaining table is determined and the impact on local autonomy.

The second method reviewed her direct participation with 8 Extendicare CUPE Locals, 11 collective agreements and their participation in coordinated bargaining. Sister Skanes also reviewed the Extendicare method of information gathering, finalizing proposals, local autonomy and how it differs from the OCHU model.

Sister Terri Preston of the Ontario School Board Coordinating Committee (OSBCC) spoke of the sector's recent success of bargaining 106 collective agreements through a Provincial Discussion Table (PDT). She spoke of the political context in which the discussion table was established as well as some of the lessons the sector learned in their first attempt at centralized bargaining.

Through this process school board workers were able to achieve major improvements for large classifications of workers who had seen their working conditions erode over the previous 10 years. The PDT also provided for ongoing dialogue with the government and school board associations on issues of violence and the establishment of one common provincial benefit plan for all school board support staff.

## **OUWCC BARGAINING SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES 2007-2008**

Saturday morning, Sister Joanne Martin facilitated a discussion circle to hear comments of Brothers Jack McCann, Graham Potts, Ron Hoinkes, Robert Ramsay and Sister Kelti Cameron on successes and challenges they faced as they negotiated collective agreements, in 2008.



Members broke into smaller groups to harvest key principles related to the successes and challenges to help us advance and develop strategic plans, reporting back to the conference participants.



## CHALLENGES

- Employer actions/tactics including stalled talks, use of lawyers, No Board, bad faith charges, threats of lockouts
- Getting our members involved, engaged and supportive
- Economic climate, budget cuts continuing into 2010
- Underfunding impacts on job cuts over the next few years
- Failed strike votes
- Public perception of unions as greedy, difficulty of getting student support
- Chronic underfunding of Post-Secondary Education sector, particularly grad programs
- Local 3903 strike fallout
  - Return to work legislation and interest arbitration
- Fear of impact on coordinated bargaining
  - need to educate our members
  - university funding and budgets
- Employers offering incentives to alter expiry date
- Making gains for contract faculty
  - benefits, pensions, job security
  - long term strategy
- strike vote process in some local
- Achieving job security
- 2 year term
- Getting message out during bargaining, to members, students, campus community and public
- Separate fact from fiction
- Local Unions are different, creating a challenge for coordination and the sharing information
- Other Unions on campus not necessarily coordinating with us
- Economic impact on members if on strike for long period of time
- Use of internet/Facebook
- Community/student backlash
- Employer's concessions on the table
- OUWCC
  - disconnect from OUWCC
  - communications gap
  - no visible support from OUWCC



## SUCSESSES

- No Concessions
- 2010 expiry date achieved
- Direct work with NDP, particularly Rosario's office
- OUWCC sent 2 speakers to address members
- UofT communication strategy, what can be learned
- "Stakeholder" meeting, bring information to everyone
- Power gained by Employer's fear of strike
- Ministry has taken notice
- Good gains being achieved despite current economic crisis, especially



- Non-monetary language eg. Harassment, employment equity
- Started to expose tensions and contradictions in the system
- Rebuilding campus coalition
- Successful strike votes
- Increased visibility of contract faculty
- Better educated membership on issues
- Education about OUWCC - paid off in bargaining
- UHIP - indexation and 100% coverage
- Strong support from University's Federation of Students



## OPPORTUNITIES

### Communications

- Develop a consistent message
- Debunk the myths
- Find new means of internal organizing
- Improve intra-CUPE communication structures
- Expose Employer dirty tactics
- Clear messages on economic crisis
- "quality of education" message
- communicate successes
- Campus Tour
- Turn fear into actions

- More positive messaging
- Coordinated campaign showing what workplaces are like
- Vision of what coordination looks like
- Promote quality of education, value of workers in the sector
- Focused, strategic limited set of objectives
- Potential to get general public to see our issues more clearly



### Networking

- Build coalitions, improve networking, create mentoring relationships
- On campus, small locals, Toronto locals
- Opportunity to move support and academic locals closer to rely on each other's strengths, sharing of resources (technical, financial, research)

### Research

- financial analysis
- research/info by OUWCC
- How to do Freedom of Information requests

### Educationals

- Be proactive, not defensive
- Showcase what we can achieve and raise collective standards
- Great attention to key issues - underfunding
- exploit McGuinty stance as "education leader"
- York issues were read into by the public record when legislated back to work
- Awareness of issues, take advantage of raised awareness



### ***Presentation on the Economic Climate***

Sister Shelly Gordon, CUPE National Researcher, presented a comprehensive report on the *Current Economic Climate*. The presentation included bargaining trends, wage settlements in Ontario, inflationary information and most importantly forecasting on where the economy is heading and what locals can expect at the bargaining tables.



Sister Erinn White, CUPE Local 1281 member, who has been assisting OUWCC with research work for the conference, made a presentation on *Bargaining in a Time of Economic Crisis*. This comprehensive report provided a breakdown of the impact on budget cuts and underfunding in universities across Ontario. The downturn in our economy will provide significant challenges to locals bargaining in 2009 and 2010, and are a major consideration in our coordinated bargaining strategies.

## **FOCUS GROUPS**

Participants were provided the opportunity to select a focus group, to engage in discussions on a variety of issues. Each focus group was hosted by members and staff who have specific interest in the subject matter presented for consideration.



Each of the Focus Groups reported back to the conference as a whole.

## **EMPLOYMENT STATUS - SESSIONALS**

- Wage parity
- Scope clause
- Multi year appointments
- Permanent Status
- Pensions/Benefits
- Lobby Government for Legislation
- Service
- Research
- Resources
- Media Campaign, multi-level, including facebook, myspace, viral marketing
- OUWCC serves network host

## **EMPLOYMENT EQUITY**

- Casualization of work
- Language
  - Continue to gather current Collective Agreement language
  - Get commitment from Locals to table “common” language at next round of bargaining
  - Develop “common” language
  - Identify other language relevant to Employment Equity principles eg. Childcare, UHIP, contracting out, over 65 benefits, across the board wage increases

- Education/Training
  - Education at Local/Executive level
  - Training and support for local representative on Joint Employment Equity Committees
- Networking
  - Include Employment Equity on campus and other coalitions

### **BARGAINING TOOLS**

- The group outlined the bargaining process and be accompanying legal requirements
- There is a need to establish mentoring relationships between locals
- Locals who are bargaining in 2009 and 2010 indentified specific needs including:
  - Research and support on the issue of job security, contracting out, and the economy
  - Training on the bargaining process and strike preparation



### **TRADES**

- Trades recognition - in terms of education, e.g. BA equivalency are aspects of hands on learning properly understood
- Wage Issue
  - 1600 job classes
  - job descriptions for various
- CUPE Job Evaluation recognize trade appropriately?
  - Gender neutral system does not evaluate trades schooling
  - System not properly valuing/measuring ongoing training
- Sector Response to College of Trades
  - Government wants to set up a college
  - Just another hurdle - have to pay for licenses
  - We should oppose it
- Apprenticeship Programs
  - Should we keep negotiating them or are we creating designer trades?
  - In the building of new sites on campus, could apprentices work with them?
    - Advancing experience in our membership and on campus, contract-in work
- Growing the trades replacement
  - Pay/retention
  - Trade groups paid 5% less than private sector



### ***International Solidarity Panel Discussion - A Cultural Event***

The International Solidarity committee hosted a panel discussion geared at educating delegates on the conditions under which Palestinians in Gaza live. The proceedings were opened by and moderated by Rafeef Ziadah, who did a phenomenal job. We also heard presentations from:

- Dania Majid, who discussed the legal and diplomatic side of the occupation.
- Yafa Jarrar, whose speech painted dark and grim picture of the day-to-day struggles for the people of Gaza.
- Mary Jo Nadeau, who stressed the need to remain politically active and support the Palestinian people.

The floor was then opened for questions. Discussion was fervent, but all comments and inquires were well-informed and respectful in nature.

The possibility of bringing forward a resolution asking for education, research campus mobilization and to affiliate with the Right To Education campaign was discussed at some length.

In keeping with our proud tradition of cohesion and solidarity, the conference then addressed the concerns and questions members may have had regarding the possible tabling of the resolution. CUPE Ontario is a union that belongs to its members. We will also welcome healthy debate, and encourage our members to educate themselves.



### ***OUWCC RESOLUTIONS AND MOTIONS***

#### ***MOTION # 1*** **OUWCC will:**

1. Affilliate to the RIGHT TO EDUCATION campaign at Birzeit University to defend the right of Palestinians students to have access to education and educational institutions in the Palestinian territory, and seek to raise awareness about the issues facing Palestinian education, students and teachers under Israeli military

- occupation, and further that it will encourage member locals to affiliate to the Right to Education campaign.
2. Encourage its member locals to hold public forums to discuss an academic boycott of Israeli academic institutions, and
  3. Ask campus representatives to work with locals to investigate both research and investment links between Ontario Universities and the state of Israel's military, and
  4. Mobilize campus allies to pressure universities from engaging in acts of cooperation that assist and aid military research at the institutional level with Israeli universities;
  5. Work with campus and community allies to pressure Ontario universities to refuse collaborations, corporate partnerships and investments that would benefit, either directly or indirectly, military research or the Israeli state military;
  6. Request funding and support from CUPE Ontario to conduct an education campaign on the academic boycott, coordinate education sessions and assist in the implementation of resolution 50 as passed in 2006

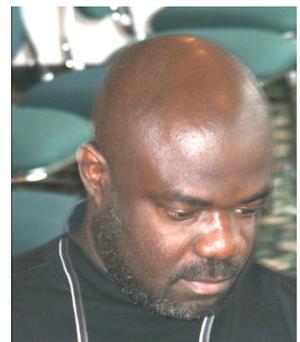
Because, in response to a call from Palestinian civil society and trade unions, CUPE Ontario's Resolution 50 (in 2006) calls upon the Union and its locals to support boycotts, divestments and sanctions (BDS) of the state of Israel, so long as that state continues to occupy Palestinian territory and refuses to respect and uphold international law and covenants, and

Because the latest Israeli attack on Gaza killed over 1300 people, wounded thousands, and destroyed hospitals, schools, roads, power plants, sewage and water infrastructure, and thousands of civilian homes, and as a direct consequence of the attacks by the Israeli military, the Gazan education system has been unable to function, and

Because Israel's direct bombing of universities and schools and its years-long blockade forbidding educational supplies, fuel and other basic necessities, or movement of people including students and teachers, has brought about the collapse of the education system in Gaza, and

Because all three major Palestinian trade union federations are signatories of the Palestinian Civil Society for Boycott Divestment and Sanctions call including: The General Union of Palestinian Workers, PGFTU, and the Federation of Independent Unions.

Moved by: Denise Hammond, Local 1281  
Seconded by: Ajamu Nangwaya, Local 3907  
Carried: Yes



**MOTION #2**

Because campus administrators have taken actions that seek to limit free speech and repress public discussions and campus dialogue about the occupation of Palestine.

Because students, staff and faculty members have been threatened with punitive measures for speaking out or organizing events against the state of Israel and have placed obstacles that prevent/limit public debate on campus.



The OUWCC shall;

1. Issue a public statement about our support for free speech on campus and the right of students and campus workers to speak out and organize events that support Palestine and bring awareness to the occupation.
2. Locals of the OUWCC be encouraged to write letters to the administrations of Carleton, Ottawa, York and the University of Toronto to protest the silencing and repression of public debate on campus.

Moved by: Denise Hammond, Local 1281

Seconded by: Ajamu Nangwaya, Local 3907

Carried: Yes

**MOTION #3**

The OUWCC commit to working with the Canadian Federation of Students to lobby the provincial and federal governments to address the chronic underfunding of post-secondary education and to make universities and colleges accessible to all, and further

The OUWCC shall work with students' unions, campus allies and members of the Canadian Federation of Students to eliminate all fees, including tuition fees and ancillary fees, and to regulate fees for all international students, and further

All member locals of the OUWCC shall take an active role to establish campus wide coalitions that include, but are not limited to students' unions, other campus trade Unions or associations and campus allies.



Moved by: Denise Hammond, Local 1281

Seconded by: Will Dechert, Local 3905

Carried: Yes

**MOTION #4**

Ouwcc will call on CUPE Ontario to support Ouwcc's coordinated bargaining by providing resources through the Planning and Priorities Process for committee member book offs and committee driven campaigns including campus tours and special focused sectoral coordinated bargaining strategy sessions and

Call on CUPE National to assign financial resources, a full-time Researcher, a full-time Organizer and a full-time Communications Rep to the sector for coordinated bargaining and wall-to-wall organizing.

Because CUPE Ontario supports the principals of coordinated bargaining and

Because coordinated bargaining is a complex process that requires sustained time, energy and commitment and

Because CUPE Ontario supports member involvement and

Because the Ouwcc still does not have a full time coordinator and

Because other sectors have had the support of five (5) National Reps at provincial bargaining tables.

Moved by: Lori Guest, Local 1281  
Seconded by: Jack McCann, Local 1356  
Carried: Yes



**MOTION #5**

Whereas Campus Reps are the key to building the Ouwcc on campuses;

Whereas Campus Reps are important to promoting coordinated bargaining at locals;

Whereas Campus Reps provide an important link between the Ouwcc, locals, and campus communities;

Whereas Campus Reps are crucial to building campus coalitions;

Whereas the Ouwcc believes strongly in the principles of social movement unionism, and Campus Reps are important to realizing these principles;

Whereas Campus Reps can provide important leadership on campuses;

Whereas many Campus Reps need empowerment and support,

Be It Resolved that the OUWCC will create and deliver a training program specifically for campus reps.

Moved by: Dayn Gray, Local 4207  
Seconded by: Will Dechert, Local 3905  
Carried: Yes



**MOTION # 6**

Whereas, there is a need for greater financial and economic analysis at each university to compliment the valuable sectoral and regional analyses already conducted by CUPE,

And Whereas, greater analysis will help us strengthen coordinated bargaining,

Be it resolved that, that the campus locals strike an ad-hoc working group focused on individual institutional financial analysis, and may it be composed of the following members:

Moved by: Sean Field, Local 3913  
Seconded by: Nick Gielen, Local 1334  
Carried: Yes

**MOTION #7**

OUWCC will find the funding options for, and launch a nation-wide legal challenge to UHIP and similar discriminatory health insurance plans.

Because UHIP and other similar plans violate the statutes of the Canada Health Act by allowing discriminatory practices and user fees for health care for international student workers

Because CUPE National included the fight back against healthcare privatization and the exploitation and discrimination of international students in its 2007 Action Plan

Because universities in Ontario have at last recognized the extraordinary burden carried by international students who pay UHIP premiums for themselves and their families.

Moved by: Robert Ramsay, Local 3902  
Seconded by: Nick Gielen, Local 1334  
Carried: Yes



**MOTION #8**

Be it resolved that, CUPE Ontario strike a committee from the jurisdictional groups to address trades related issues (similar to Health and Safety or Injured Workers)

Be it resolved that, the chair of the trades committee be given a seat on the Ontario Division Executive Board.

Be it resolved that, CUPE Ontario continue to hold an annual trades conference.



Moved by: Jack McCann, Local 1356  
Seconded by: Luis Figueredo, Local 1356  
Carried: Yes

**MOTION # 9**

As Trade Certification can be considered as equal to a Bachelor's Degree;



Be it resolved that, CUPE Ontario lobby CUPE National to revise the CUPE Job Evaluation system to properly address the value of Trade certification

Moved by: Jack McCann, Local 1356  
Seconded: Luis Figueredo, Local 1356  
Carried: Yes

**MOTION #10**

Be it resolved that OUWCC call on CUPE Ontario and CUPE National hold a one or two day conference to discuss issues affecting sessional workers in our sector.

Moved: Sharon Davidson  
Seconded: Lykke de la Cour  
Carried: Yes

**MOTION #11**

Be it further resolved that Job Security for sessionals be a primary focus of this conference and how it can be incorporated into coordinated bargaining.

Moved: Sharon Davidson, Local 3903  
Seconded: Lykke de la Cour, Local 3903  
Carried: Yes



**MOTION #12**

Be it further resolved that OUWCC make links with other CUPE Locals representing sessionals across Canada.

Moved: Sharon Davidson, Local 3903  
Seconded: Lykke de la Cour, Local 3903  
Carried: Yes



**MOTION #13**

Be it further resolved that OUWCC apply to CUPE National for resources to a mobilization campaign around job security for contract faculty in ontario universities.

Moved: Sharon Davidson, Local 3903  
Seconded: Lykke de la Cour, Local 3903  
Carried: Yes

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**ON BEHALF OF THE OUWCC EXECUTIVE WE OFFER SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR HOST LOCALS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR:**

CUPE LOCAL 1001, SUPPORT SERVICE  
CUPE LOCAL 1393, SUPPORT TECHNICAL  
CUPE LOCAL 4580, ACADEMIC



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