

CUPE's own Lyn Edwards takes on John Tory



Lyn Edwards, President of CUPE 855 (municipal workers), has been nominated as the NDP candidate in the upcoming Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock provincial by-election. Election day is Thursday, March 5, 2009.

This race matters, not only because the NDP has an outstanding record of success in by-elections, but because of the timing, issues, and the candidates who are running. Collectively, we face a deteriorating economy and mass layoffs. Corporate greed and previous Conservative governments created the problems this riding faces: education underfunding, doctor shortages, wait-times, and deteriorating public services.

At a time when working families need a government that is protecting public services and local jobs, Dalton McGuinty is missing in action. Meanwhile, John Tory, the seat-less leader of the PCs, is removing a woman MPP from her seat and forcing a costly by-election.

Sid Ryan, President of CUPE Ontario said, "This by-election can't change the provincial government, but it is a golden opportunity for union members across Ontario to send John Tory and Dalton McGuinty an important message about investing in people. CUPE members support politicians who understand that investment in public services and local jobs are two of the best ways to kick-start the economy."

Personal donations and cheques from CUPE locals can be made out to the **Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock riding association** and mailed to 18 Cambridge Street South, Lindsay, Ontario, K9V 3B6. The maximum campaign donation is \$1200. Please pass a motion at your next local meeting to make a donation to Lyn's campaign. Individual donors also get a great tax credit, so please give generously.

Send a message to overpaid CEOs and their political friends by helping Lyn get elected. Your local's donation of \$1,000, \$500, or whatever your local can afford, will help Lyn stand up for public services and local jobs. To volunteer on Lyn's campaign, please call 705-328-0111.

CUPE Compensation Workshop

In today's marketplace, we're seeing rapidly rising levels of executive compensation. This is leading to a greater disparity between a CEO's average pay and a typical employee's average pay.

On February 4, CUPE Ontario partnered with Murray Gold of Koskie Minsky L.L.P. – Barrister and Solicitors to educate employees on the variables that affect their wages and their pensions.

We're seeing the 100 highest paid CEOs in Canada earning an average of \$10,408,054 based on 2007 stats while the average Canadian's annual pay in 2007 was \$40,237. That's an embarrassing ratio of 258:1.

This extraordinary inequality offends basic norms of common decency, especially when social needs are going unmet. Even President Obama refers to current Wall Street bonuses

as "shameful" and "the height of irresponsibility."

The first workshop was extremely well received, and we're in the process of planning how we can bring this information to more people. Keep checking cupe.on.ca for more details.

UnBottle It! tour adds Northern Ontario dates

We're happy to report that CUPE Ontario and the Council of Canadians' Unbottle It! tour has exceeded even our expectations.

Tireless speakers Sid Ryan, CUPE Ontario President, and Maude Barlow, Chair of the Council of Canadians and a United Nations special envoy, toured 15 Ontario cities to promote banning the sale of bottled water.

Ontario has thousands of municipal workers whose job it is to keep our local water clean. They're seeing their labour being undermined by a misconception that what comes in a bottle is safer than what comes from our taps. This province has hundreds of thousands of lakes, but Avian, Dasani and Nestlé are telling us we need to spend \$1.50 per litre for drinkable water.

While the UnBottle It! tour's attendance was encouraging, it was the participation from each community that inspired us. We were treated to everything from Queen's University students performing an audit on the quality of the campus drinking fountains to "Bottled Water Dancers" in Guelph, to Faith Nolan and the CUPE Ontario Drum and Song Group's musical performance in Toronto.

More importantly, we saw spirited discussion between Sid Ryan, Maude Barlow, local city councillors, mayors, university professors and everyday citizens who proved that this issue is important.

Now that the first phase of the tour has been such a success, we're ready for the Northern Ontario phase to begin soon.



Tap into public drinking water.

Unbottle It! will be in Sault Ste. Marie, Sudbury, Kenora, Thunder Bay and North Bay in April, with dates and venues to be announced at: http://cupe.on.ca/doc.php?subject_id=149&lang=en



CUPE Ontario President Sid Ryan speaks to the press on the issue of post-secondary underfunding

For more information on all labour news in the University sector, feel free to visit: http://cupe.on.ca/doc.php?subject_id=36&lang=en

Fix University Funding

In the wake of one of Ontario's most publicized strikes, the dispute between CUPE 3903 and York University brought our universities to headlines and TV sets across Ontario.

The chronic underfunding issues faced at York University are still alive across the province as Ontario ranks last in all of Canada on university funding. Many of the university workers educating young minds lack not only fair wages, but also job security of any kind. They're living below the poverty line and having to re-apply for their jobs, year after year.

When these courageous Teaching Assistants (TAs) and university workers picketed for 85 days, they weren't just standing up for themselves. They stood up for every university in Ontario that cares about the people educating our next generation.

We will continue to work with our sister locals to protect the rights of our universities' workers, students and hard-working parents who continue to pay escalating tuition fees.



CUPE Ontario Convention 2009

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 27 TO SATURDAY, MAY 30
AT THE SHERATON HOTEL, TORONTO**

WHERE ARE MY CREDENTIALS?

If your local has its per capita payments up to date as of December 31, 2008, your local should receive its credentials by the end of February. If your local's per capita payments are not up to date, the local will have received two reminders by the end of February. For your local to be seated at convention, you must have your credentials AND your per capita must be paid up to the end of March 31, 2009.

If you have any questions about your per capita payments, please contact Kelly Belbin at:
kbelbin@cupe.on.ca or call **416-299-9739 x 306**