



# Convention Capsule 3

49th Annual CUPE Ontario Convention - Caesar's Windsor - May 26, 2012



## Renewed mandates for Hahn and Rennick to lead CUPE Ontario

Delegates at one of the largest CUPE Ontario Conventions in history showed their confidence in Ontario leaders by renewing the mandate of division officers, including Fred Hahn as President and Candace Rennick as Secretary-Treasurer.

The CUPE Ontario executive board will have a busy year ahead with continuing fights against the Ontario government's job-killing budget and acts that will erode retirement security and stomp on our collective bargaining rights.

Both Hahn and Rennick thanked their respective partners for their support and promised delegates to continue the fight for workers' rights and to work hard to advance the agenda of CUPE members in Ontario. Here is your new CUPE Ontario Executive Board:

- Fred Hahn – President
- Candace Rennick – Secretary-Treasurer
- Michael Hurley – First Vice-President
- Yolanda McClean – Second Vice-President
- Andrea Madden – Third Vice-President
- Henri Giroux – Fourth Vice-President
- Joanne Webb – Diversity Vice-President Aboriginal Workers
- Veriline Howe – Diversity Vice-President Racialized Workers
- Executive Member At Large**
- Vern Andrus—Darrell Day—Helen Fetterly—Denise Hammond—Jenn Mizerovsky—Don Postar

- Trustee**
- Lisa Edwards

## LGBTQ workers get new Diversity VP

Following several passionate speeches in support, a constitutional amendment from the Pink Triangle Committee passed with near-unanimous approval

from delegates. The amendment adds a new Diversity Vice-President, LGBTQ Workers to the CUPE Ontario Executive Board.



## Equality, social justice, compassion must guide union in renewed mass activism

In Ontario we face a stark choice – either do nothing and allow governments and the wealthy to justify harsh cuts to public services and growing inequality, or mobilize and fight back, said guest speaker Natalie Mehra, director of the Ontario Health Coalition (OHC).

Mehra said she faced a similar choice when she was a young activist working at a community agency in the Kingston area. A couple who could not access home care supports for the disabled wife were cut off welfare and eventually lost their home. They “disappeared” from the community.

“I knew then, I had to leave the job I was in,” said Mehra. “I wanted more freedom to fight for the core values of equity, compassion and an inclusive society.”

In her role as OHC director, Mehra did just that. She organized and mobilized in communities across Ontario to roll back many of the Mike Harris government funding cuts for hospitals and the privatization of health care services.



Today, under a Liberal government, Ontario faces the most severe cost-cutting since the Harris era, said Mehra.

Through mass outreach, thousands of signatures on petitions and post cards, and community rallies, “we restored all the funding the Tories cut from health care. We stopped the privatization of cancer care and hospital sector jobs. We need to go back to mass outreach. Restore the solidarity between labour and our communities. So, call people. Talk with them, person to person and provide people with the tools and the ability to resist increasing inequality.”

## A call to solidarity

Élise Carrier-Martin, Secrétaire à l’Interne de CLASSE (Coalition large de l’Association pour une solidarité syndicale étudiante), gave a rousing report on the student strike in Québec, preceded by a video-collage of the daily demonstrations in Montreal’s streets, and across the province, to fight tuition fee increases proposed by the Charest Liberal government.

“Our movement started because of the tuition fee increases, but it has become much more than that, representing a common stand against the Charest government’s attack on the people of Quebec – we have truly become a social justice movement,” said Sister Carrier-Martin.

By March 31, 2011, 60,000 students had voted to strike and daily actions from strikes to information pickets were occurring around Quebec.



After 15 weeks of strike, daily mobilizations and actions continue, and have accelerated since the Charest government forced emergency legislation to curb the rights of demonstrators and even affected the rights to strike and free assembly.

“We are calling on the labour movement and civil society across Canada to join our movement for a free and socially-just Quebec,” Sister Carrier-Martin told delegates.

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