

Convention Capsule

Thursday, May 26, 2016

Agenda Highlights

DAY 2

AM Elections for President and Secretary-Treasurer

Guest Speaker: Sandy Hudson, Black Lives Matter

PM Sisters in Solidarity Award

Election of Vice-Presidents

Racialized Workers' Award

First Action Plan Debate



"It's time to take back what's ours," says President Fred Hahn

In a rousing report, CUPE Ontario President Fred Hahn paid tribute to the hard work and dedication of members across the province over the past year.

"There is just no way I could cover all the amazing things our members have done this year," Brother Fred told delegates who packed the hall to hear him speak.

While highlighting CUPE members' many victories over the past year, Hahn paid particular tribute to school board workers for their success fighting off concessions demanded by the province and school boards during bargaining. He took aim at Kathleen Wynne's Liberal Government, its agenda of austerity and their sell-off of critical assets like Hydro One to wealthy bankers.

"This is the largest transfer of collective wealth—something we all own in common—into private hands in our province's history," said Hahn.

"We cannot allow this to be the end of THIS story. It is not too late to Keep Hydro Public," he added.



"Let's agree to do more to fight for economic and social justice" - Rennick

"We have big challenges coming. It's up to us to work harder. Organize more. Involve members in new ways to fight for economic and social justice," CUPE Ontario Secretary-Treasurer told convention delegates.

She reported that CUPE Ontario finances are on a solid footing and ready to take on the community mobilizing needed to improve the working conditions of precarious workers.

Rennick said she is particularly proud that after years of struggle CUPE Ontario has succeed in getting a Bill introduced in the Ontario legislature for a minimum four hour standard of care for long-term care residents.

She also noted that new membership growth has enabled CUPE Ontario to begin building its own campaign capacity and grow sector committee spending to support the increased campaign work.

Dramatic progress in our finances has "gone to defend our members' interest and that's exactly how it should be," she said.

PAVING THE WAY TO POVERTY OUVRE LA VOIE À LA PAUVRETÉ



Together, we can build a better Ontario



Together, we can make a difference

In his first address to CUPE Ontario's annual convention, National President Mark Hancock pledged CUPE National's commitment to build safer workplaces for members; to fight income inequality and precarious work; and to stop the privatization of public assets like Hydro One.

Citing the importance of working with each other and with our allies, Brother Hancock stressed: "Together, we can make a difference – we can build an unstoppable movement."

"CUPE members across Canada are so proud of your work to keep hydro public. Your passion and determination are inspiring us all," continued Hancock. "The fight to stop this short-sighted and dangerous privatization – and to defend the interest and rights of all Ontarians – is far, far from over."



CUPE is a strong union -- we know how to win

National Secretary-Treasurer Charles Fleury encouraged members to work together and continue to build activism and mobilize to fight attacks at the bargaining table, government cutbacks and funding freezes.

"CUPE is a very strong union," said Fleury. "We have the people and financial resources to fight and we know how to win." Brother Fleury listed different ways that CUPE National is assisting CUPE members in Ontario.

In 2015, CUPE National provided almost six million dollars to Ontario locals and the region, for campaigns, strike aversion and strike support, along with precedent setting legal costs.

Brother Fleury also reported that National contributed almost two million dollars to the CUPE Ontario to help with fight back and anti-privatization campaigns, election organizing and sector campaigns.

Bill Young: winner of this year's Health and Safety Award

Bill Young, the recently retired chair of Local 4400's Health and Safety Committee, was awarded this year's Health and Safety Award at the Ontario Convention in Toronto.

The life-long activist was recognized for living his motto 'Health and Safety – by any means necessary' in CUPE's 'Year of Health and Safety.'

CUPE Ontario delegates applauded Brother Bill for fighting tirelessly for a safer and healthier workplace for all our members.



Democracy in action: all-candidates forum

An impressive line-up of passionate CUPE activists addressed delegates in last night's all-candidates forum.

Members offering for every position, from president to member-at-large to trustee, spoke movingly of their commitment to public services, increasing CUPE's presence in every community and standing up for fairness.

Many raised the vital role of educating and

mobilizing members to join the fight against privatization and P3s, two-tier contracts and precarious work. Candidates also shared personal stories of how they came to be activists, often inspired by witnessing other CUPE leaders in action.

This was the first CUPE Ontario election forum to include candidates for six equality positions. The candidates moved delegates with stories of overcoming adversity, fighting for justice, and the importance of speaking with a common voice.