



CONVENTION DELEGATES MAKE HISTORY

Anti-Racism Organizational Action Plan passes unanimously

Cheering, Convention delegates made history, unanimously passing CUPE Ontario’s Anti-Racism Organizational Action Plan. After the motion passed, AROAP sub-committee chair Yolanda McClean made an impassioned speech from the floor. She began by thanking the committee members and the outside facilitators, “We laughed. We cried, and then we learned”. She concluded on a personal note, “This is a historic moment. We have many stairs to climb, but today made me feel like we were going to do it and we were going to do it together”.

Building community alliances was key to U.S. strike success

Following the election of US President Donald Trump, a wave of strikes by American education, health care and hotel workers rocked the country. The repercussions have changed the conversation about the value of public-sector workers and transformed public policy for the better, said convention guest speaker Eric Blanc. In 2018 alone, those strikes involved nearly half a million workers, most of them women.

By focusing on issues that affect students, like class size and communities beyond the classroom, “these strikes punctured the myth that there is not enough to go around,” said the former teacher and author. Blanc’s book, *Red State Revolt*, chronicles the deep workplace organizing, intense mobilizing and community-alliance building behind the successful strikes.



Day 4 highlights

- Final debate of Action Plan
- Youth Camp report back
- General resolutions
- Indigenous closing



A welcome start to the day

Sharing, renewal, and positive energy have been part of the daily smudging ceremonies at this Convention. On Friday, Larry Giffin provided the smudging and retired CUPE Ontario Executive Board member Joanne Webb offered guidance and teachings. Throughout the week, delegates have used the ceremony for reflection and unity.



EQUALITY LUNCHEON HIGHLIGHTS THE NEED FOR ALL WORKERS TO UNITE AGAINST RACISM



CUPE Ontario’s Human Rights Committee hosted a sold-out Equality Luncheon for over 150 guests. The event featured committee reports, music from the Solidarity Squad, and a compelling discussion with Syed Hussan, coordinator of the Migrant Workers Alliance for Change, and Larry Rousseau, executive vice-president of the Canadian Labour Congress. They focused on the experience of migrant workers and Muslims in the face of resentment stoked by right-wing politicians. Both stressed the need to unite against racism and to fight employers and politicians who pit us against each other and drive down working conditions for all workers.

Injured Workers Award

Michelle Thompson lives in Oshawa and has spent the last 20 years as a leader and a strong voice advocating for the members of CUPE 6364. Since receiving her health and safety facilitator training in 2016, Michelle used these skills to mentor a new generation of union activists on how to identify barriers for injured workers. “There is no better feeling than being able to reverse an unjust decision or return an injured worker back to their own occupation,” she said in her acceptance speech. Thompson also explained her motivation for being such a tireless advocate: “I thought, could this be my own face or that of someone I love? Could that be you or someone you love?”



Trustee elections

From a strong field of candidates running for positions as CUPE Ontario trustees, Convention delegates elected Mike Felice, treasurer of CUPE 1571, to the position of three-year trustee and Jennifer Goodine of CUPE 1880, who will serve as trustee for an interim one-year term.

