

GMM Report – Arghyadeep Sarkar, Health and Safety Officer

Continuing on, as Health and Safety Officer from June 2020, I have attended monthly meetings of the Central Joint Health and Safety Committee of the university over various issues in regard to health and safety. I have also completed all sort of adequate training (**approved by Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development Ontario**) over last one year. These trainings authorised my position to be on any joint health and safety committee. In my opinion, these meetings are an important avenue for workers especially at Mac to raise our health concerns. But we require effective representation on each of the Joint Health and Safety Committees across various buildings and departments in the campus. According to our records(dated July' 20), the following Joint Health and Safety Committees are without CUPE 3906 representatives: DeGroote (Units 3), Engineering (Unit 2 and Unit 3), Ivor Wynne/David Braley (Units 2 and 3), Libraries and Museum of Art (Units 1, 2, and 3), McIARS (Units 1, 2, and 3), Science (Unit 2). If you work in one of these zones and are interested in serving on your Joint Health and Safety Committee, or if you would like more information about your Joint Health and Safety Committees, please send an email to healthandsafety@cupe3906.org.

Since the dawn of the new year, the world awakened to a gripping news of the outbreak of corona virus in China. It had created a great sense of panic in the global community as the deadly virus has claimed over 700,000 lives worldwide. The risk is still prevalent in Canada. Our prayers with their family who have bearded the brunt of this pandemic. I would also like to remind our members that the university is still in shutdown, even though some of the research lab have opened since 1st June. The University will conduct Fall 2020 semester online. The University has laid out a clear plan in terms of research labs which will operate with proper social distancing protocol being retained. For more detail knowledge, please visit (<https://hr.mcmaster.ca/resources/covid19/workplace-health-and-safety-guidance-during-covid-19/>) for more info. The members who require experimental research are being only being allowed and that too self-voluntarily. However, if certain members are still being enforced to work under these extremely difficult circumstances without proper personal protective equipment, please do contact us. We, as a union rep are ready to help to the best of our capacity. If any members would like to come forward and request any health and safety concern, the union would be happy to assist in that process.

As executive member for local CUPE 3906, our Units 2 Bargaining Teams had been set up and they will go into bargaining pretty soon. They are working hard to identify areas for improvement in our collective agreements especially in a very serious matter of health and safety. The lack of standardized training for Unit 1 members continues to be an area of concern, as it directly affects those of us working in potentially hazardous lab situations and indirectly contributes to overwork, stress, and other work-related health risks. Any members experiencing problems of this nature are encouraged to send an email to healthandsafety@cupe3906.org and share their stories.