

Annual Report from Sharoni Mitra
Vice President External (June 2020 – September 2021)
President (September 2021 to April 2021)

Dear members,

Below you'll find highlights of my work and accomplishments in serving you as Vice President External and President since June 2020. Amongst this variety of projects and initiatives, please know I'm most honoured in serving as an advocate for our membership - whether in difficult conversation with our Employer, amongst our executive when problem-solving, or wider campaign and mobilizing settings that work toward a more just and well-funded post-secondary sector.

Campus, community and labour movement liaising:

- Connected our local with efforts of the MSU and GSA, such as the “Fire Glenn DeCaire” campaign and addressing McMaster’s current and unfair exclusion of Out of Province TAs from their bargaining unit
- Supported our VP External (Shirleen’s) efforts to renew inter-union communication at McMaster by hosting a seasonal union between our labour unions (SEIU, UNIFOR, MUFA)
- Campus Representative to the OUWCC – coordinating with other CUPE academic sector locals on campaigns, advocacy, and actions concerning our sector. I attend monthly meetings, am a member of their funding subcommittee (which aims to regain adequate and robust public funding in post-secondary), and was a delegate to their 2021 conference this February
- Delegate to the Hamilton District Labour Council and the recording secretary of the HDLC Young Workers, which hosts organizing workshops and community actions
- Elected Representative to the CUPE Ontario Young Workers committee which is leading a “Just Recovery” campaign
- Participated in an OCUFA-hosted event on academic sector bargaining to speak about our local’s bargaining through the pandemic
- Organized a phone zap in solidarity with Laurentian University
- Facilitated the “Student Workers Will Not Pay For the Housing Crisis” inter-union event
- Guest-speaker at the HDLC’s Defund the Police Fundraiser
- City of Hamilton Delegation Speaker on Student Living Wage
- Helped coordinate a GTHA labour movement solidarity visit to Land Back Lane, and have participated in several solidarity visits from 3906

Spokesperson and Member Advocacy

- Helped coordinate a virtual action for the December Board of Governors meeting to address the unfair exclusion of Out of Province TAs – and specifically spoke up to the issue in front of the Board
- I have participated in media interviews, speaking to various issues that academic workers face
- I continue to advocate for our membership in various settings with our Employer (such as LMCs) and throughout stages of the grievance process.
- I have written a number of published letters and statements stemming from our executive or membership-approved motions (a favourite being our statement in support of Pride Defenders)
- Member of the Paid Training TA Advisory Group (working with various stakeholders to design and implement paid TA training for September 2021, one by our last round of unit 1 bargaining)

Unit 2 Bargaining:

- I supported Unit 2 bargaining through to Fall by attending conciliation sessions, strike preparation meetings, strike and ratification votes, and by reaching out to other locals to learn of strike and

organizing methods in relation to the pandemic. I also helped reach out and survey our U2 membership by phone banking.

- Alongside our U2 Chief Steward, I've also initiated preliminary steps to potentially setup an exhibit at the WAHC for the political cartoons we used in this year's bargaining campaign

Equity:

- I am thankful to have worked alongside our Equity Officer, Laurie in support her meaningful efforts to formulate a more robust and applicable equity policy concerning harassment. This will be brought forth later this Spring.
- Helped organize and participated in our annual Anti-Oppression Training (with Janelle Brady)
- I have conscientiously interpreted and applied our equity policy, and helped proactively address equity problems at our local alongside Laurie

Local's Operations

- I've helped ensure the smooth functioning of our Local by serving as staff supervisor to Brad, Mary Ellen, and Fran, as well as building relationships with various representatives from CUPE's post-secondary Ontario sector and CUPE National. I have supported process improvements recommended our Trustees (ex: a new e-motion and financial motion logging system, made by our Treasurer Chris) and advocated for transparency to our membership by calling for regular executive reports and GMM participation.
- I have led a variety of challenging conversations to problem-solve with various parties, internal and external to the local
- Benefits – helped ensure our U2 Professional Development Funds were processed in a timely way during a difficult time of transition when our Benefits Officer resigned
- Alongside our staff, Vice Presidents, and Recording Secretary, I have prepared for and organized each of our GMMs and Executive meetings (including chairing). We also helped transition to a virtual environment by figuring out technology options for virtual meetings, voting platforms, and election setups.
- In a supportive capacity, I've helped a range of committees accomplish their goals by facilitating their projects and helping them problem-solve.

Education

- I have completed "extracurricular" courses on the topics of labour law, stewardship with CUPE, and strike organizing this year to gain practical knowledge that I apply in my service to our local.

In Solidarity,
Sharoni Mitra

