



CUPE LOCAL 3906

CANADIAN UNION OF PUBLIC EMPLOYEES - MCMASTER ACADEMIC & RESIDENCE WORKERS

Tel: 905-525-9140 ext. 24003 Fax: 905-525-3837 Email: staff@cupe3906.org
McMaster University, Kenneth Taylor Hall B111, 1280 Main St W, Hamilton, ON, L8S 4M4

Annual General Meeting **April 7th, 2PM**

****Note - The Second part of the AGM took place on April 30th at 12pm. This section begins on page 9.****

Executive Committee

President:	Mason Fitzpatrick (he/him)
Vice President:	Rand Clayton (they/them)
Vice President External:	Oluwadamilola Babatunde (she/her)
Secretary Treasurer:	Saba Khorasani (she/her)
Recording Secretary:	Bonnie Evans (she/her)
Lead Steward, Unit 1:	Rebecca DeWael (she/her)
Lead Steward, Unit 2:	Dr. Hamed Afshari (he/him)
Lead Steward, Unit 3:	Dr. Bitu Pourhabari (she/her)
Lead Steward, Unit 4:	Caleb Smolenaars (they/them)
Health and Safety Officer:	Mahnaz Tajik (she/her)
Benefits & Advocacy Officer:	Dr. Kyle Morrison (he/him)
Equity Officer:	Oluwakorede (Korede) Ologun (he/him)
International Officer:	Kusum Bhatta (she/her)
Undergraduate Officer:	Elissa Cunningham (she/her)

Committee & Working Group Chairs

PAC Chair:	Vacant
Contract Action Committee:	Mitchell Lupa and Rand Clayton
Women and Gender Rights Committee:	Kusum Bhatta and Niki Sadat Afjeh
Indigenous Solidarity:	Emily Howse-Hackl
Prisoner Solidarity:	Sonia Hill and Patricia Mills
Communications Committee:	Vacant
OUWCC:	Kyle Morrison

Trustees



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exp. Fall 2024 audit: Gerard Di Trolio
exp. Fall 2025 audit: Zahra Tootonsab (she/her)
exp. Fall 2026 audit: Camden Church

Staff

Staff Representative: Brad Walchuk (he/him)
Staff Representative: Mary Ellen Campbell (she/her)
Administrator Coordinator: Francesca Brugnano (she/her)

Agenda

1. **Roll call of Officers**
2. **Land Acknowledgement and Reading of the Equity Statement**
3. **Approval of the Agenda**

Dams moves to approve the agenda

Rand seconds

Agenda approved

4. **Approval of Last Year's Minutes**

- a. 2024 AGM Minutes

Rand moves to approve last year's minutes

Mitch seconds

2024 AGM Minutes approved

Chair passed to Brad

Brad: I work as a staff person for the local along with ME, will be going over elections today. We have 14 exec positions, all up for election today. The nomination period opened a while back and we have many advance nominations. We'll do 3 calls for nominations per each position. If you have pre-nominated, feel free to nominate yourself live in the meeting. If we get to the 3rd call, we'll put it forward for you. You can nominate yourself or someone else for any position. Some positions have criteria; undergrad must be undergrad/not have an undergraduate degree. Equity officer must be member of equity seeking group. International officer must be an international student - no Canadian citizenship. For the Lead steward in each unit, you need to be a member of that unit. If there's only one person running for a position, it will be acclaimed. If you're nominated you can stand or approve. You'll have roughly 2 minutes to speak.



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Mary Ellen: The new bylaws say each person gets 3 minutes to speak.

Brad: Everyone who logs into this meeting will get a ballot. In the event it's contested by 3 or more people, we do a runoff election. Ballots will be sent automatically to your McMaster email address. Any nominees can appoint a scrutineer, you're basically just looking at a pie chart and that the results we announce are compatible with these results.

5. Executive Elections

a. President

Brad reads out [bylaws](#) for the president's responsibilities (Section 5a).

Nominees:

Rand Clayton (Self-Nomination)

Oluwadamilola Babatunde (Nominated by Onyemuche Anele Ejesu) - Stands

David Cheriyan (Self-Nomination) - Does **not** stand

Rand: I'm finishing my PhD in social work and also have worked at Sacha. I have worked closely with Mason, I've spent basically all my time getting degrees at mac and in Hamilton. I have a successful track record of building up orgs on and off campus (marching band expansion and success, MAASIN foundation successes). As CUPE 3906 VP I was able to bring back rank and file outreach by spearheading socials and connecting with members across the union. Helped restart CUPE council, want to expand events and engaged membership, expand CAT and PAC.

Dams: I believe in the power of collective bargaining, and I believe that requires a proactive and diligent leader. I will strength our solidarity. As a black woman in the union, I know what it means to be unheard. I have seen it in the local. I will fight for you. I'll be sure there is inclusivity diversity and belonging in the union. I will be sure that union funds are well accounted for and members would be prioritized. I have represented our union at other things as well.

Q&A:

Mason: I have a quick q to both of you - both of you talked at length about strengthening bargaining power. I want to be direct that it requires more than words at these meetings. I have seen Rand taking on a huge responsibility running the whole strike vote. Please tell membership what you did to strengthen bargaining at the table. This is not a student club. What was happening during that time?



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Rand: Obviously, bargaining is important - I have gone to bargaining meetings for these teams, making suggestions, how these places operate. I was active in the CAT, which I helped get off the ground. Probably the best achievement was Unit 2 canvassing - it's a hard group to reach.

Dams: CUPE needs a new leader. None should feel neglected. I'm trying something unique to include everyone.

Godson N: What plans do they have to bring in the international community to feel safe? I have not seen the engagement there.

Dams: My plan is as a member of a minority racialized group, I totally understand how international students have been exploited. Our welfare is my priority. We need fairness existing within CUPE and diverse people representing us.

Rand: International students are being exploited and I'm against it. I'd like to expand the PAC - international issues shouldn't be limited to the international committee. All these battles are still labour issues. We need to engage with these decisions. Would like to work with international officer to do more outreach generally. This is a workers' union, we have international workers in all of our units. The contracts are different, but our issues are the same.

Caleb: My question relates to bargaining again. We've seen at other universities that coordinated bargaining is a strong way to create massive wins for workers. What we should be aiming for is bringing workers on campus together. There's been some discussions of creating this unity, Want to hear your thoughts? Have you worked with other unions?

Rand: Solidarity together on this is much more powerful. I will and have been working with others to organize their camps workplace, even if it's not with CUPE. Connecting with other unions on campus is a priority. Part of building CUPE council with that. I hope that MUFA will also move toward being a real labour union. Outreach is huge.

Dams: I look forward to different bargaining and working with different units. I want people to understand what is going on within the union. When I came in, people did not know what the union was doing. Now I understand how unions can make their voice heard. I am willing to work with these groups. Also I am willing to respond to emails on time.

Brad: Closing questions after this

Babafemi: What major problems have you identified with the union and the solutions?



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Dams: Number one issue is communication gap, even within the exec. Also issues with our funds, what are being done with them? We have funding but it may be being misspent. I will ensure that everybody is well-represented.

Rand: I personally see three main issues with the union. Communication has been a wild issue. Comms chair is not a real position, but want to make it exec. I want to strategize talking to remote membership, we need to recognize that people are online. I just want to find people in person too! The other is a lack of equity issue education. Equity issues are worker issues, but membership is low. I want to expand this, especially as a disabled queer member. The last is just a lack of solidarity between units, that's why I'm pushing socials so hard.

b. Vice-President

Brad reads out [bylaws](#) for the vice president's responsibilities (Section 5b).

Nominees:

Caleb Smolenaars (Nominated by Vanessa Leece) - Stands

Kusum nominated for VP by Samuel Ikueze - Kusum stands

Mary Ellen: Don't use the chat for nominations!

Kusum: The VP role is about ensuring transparency and supporting all 4 units. Every unit faces unique hurdles. Over the past few years, I've learned alongside you all. It's our responsibility to serve members, even those who do not show up to meetings. Just met people who lost 4 years of UHIP. We must do better internally. We have to see how much effort people have done, want to make sure no one is left behind. I may not be in every sector. I feel I'm equipped to take on responsibilities in fair manner. This role requires honesty, humility, and responsibility.

Caleb: I have served as the first ever unit 4 lead steward, I've been an active voice, showing up at the office every single day. I have worked with provincial and national as well. I'm in my third year in labour studies, I work in politics as a former candidate and intern at queen's park, host a queer radio show. I have many ideas like newsletters, engaging members in new ways. I'm already highly engaged, want to still do more. Want to ensure no one is left behind. I think my U4 experience will be an asset in this role.

Rand: I know from being VP that this is a time-consuming role. I know Caleb you're a CA and Kusum you're the GSA president. How can you give this role what it requires?

Caleb: As you mentioned, I'm a CA but in that role, I support first year students and build new routines. I have that skill set of supporting other people through those transitions, can apply this skill to myself. Specifically, I have already been showing up a great deal. I'm lead steward of U4,



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its brand new and we're forming our CA actively. I'm also a CAT co-chair and member of bargaining team.

Kusum: Balancing responsibilities is something I take seriously. It's 16 hours a week for GSA president, but I was still international officer and women and gender rights committee lead. It will be lesser work as a VP.

Babafemi: How do you make your ideas come to reality, especially If they don't align with president? If president is doing something not to the benefit of CUPE, how will you approach?

Kusum: You may know me for being vocal. I feel there should be no hesitancy to speak up. For example, I think that when the union endorsed NDP I wanted to limit the extent of our support even If I support personally. I sometimes stand alone. I see the unequal power dynamics between positions in the local. I will make sure I am reflective.

Caleb: For turning my ideas into reality, I have experience with U4 already, because these processes are coming from the ground up. I've been working with our exec as a whole. I've been working with local staff, they hold us together. Have been working with CUPE national staff. Working with people even in conflict - the key thing to remember is that we have a mandate to advance the interests of our members. I have worked with execs across the political spectrum of the exec, I step up when needed and share difficult opinions when they reflect opinions of members and fellow committee member

Godson: One claim made by Kusum is that there is a problem in CUPE. Membership has been low. I have seen Kusum try to drum up engagement. What's the plan to engage remote members?

Caleb: I believe this is vital to our local. As lead steward of U4 who initiated the drive to bring U4 into 3906, I feel confident in my ability to organize people. We've had many successful U4 drop in events. We've done successful outreach. I can't not mention I was one of the main drivers for this unit, I am part of the reason it exists now! I also have outside experience running for MPP. I do have a lot of experience to wield.

Kusum: I think the most important thing is to meet people where they are. How can we engage remote people, go to peoples' classrooms? We need to get new people on exec, Korede is my friend and the first Black person on exec! You don't have to know it all!

c. Vice-President, External

Brad reads out [bylaws](#) for the vice president external's responsibilities (Section 5k).



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Mitch nominates Mira Musallah

Asim Abbas nominates Aman Kumar

Enrique: Can we adjourn and meet tomorrow?

Sean: I don't think we can tomorrow, there's not enough time.

Mary Ellen: We can't have less than 48 hours notice. If you're moving to adjourn or table, it has to be --

Enrique: I motion to adjourn the meeting until next Thursday.

Brad: I think people will want to evaluate their schedules. But Enrique if you want to amend the motion to adjourn the meeting for another one to happen in the future.

Enrique: Yes

Enrique moves to adjourn the meeting until a future date

David Hart seconds

Motion to adjourn has passes

Brad: We will reconvene at a point in the future. I will talk with Mary Ellen and our national rep Sean and let members know the next steps.

Rand: Just for clarification, are we proceeding with the ballot vote from Pres and VP or doing it all at once when we meet again?

Brad: Something that Sean and I and Mary Ellen will discuss. We have not encountered this before.

Sean: I think this meeting needs to be adjourned now.



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****NOTE: The first half of the AGM ended on April 7th and the second half did not occur until April 30th at 12PM -- the minutes from the seconds half are below****

Rand (interim president) chairing

Rand: Welcome to AGM part 2, glad to see folks came back to continue the meeting. I know the last meeting was not cool. I want to give a brief statement, please make sure we're acting respectfully to all candidates, and the election chair. We want to see the best possible people become exec. Please be respectful of this, we'll still be making sure we abide by rules of order, points of order, so please keep this in mind. and again, thanks for coming. My name is Rand I am the VP but interim president for now.

Chair passed to Mary Ellen

Mary Ellen: Thanks all. Just gonna go over a few things. If you're looking for GMM materials, they are in the chat. There are links to rules of order and procedure for meetings. I'm going to be quite strict on these. Do make use of the resources if you want to look at them. I'll be keeping folks' speeches to 3 minutes according to bylaws and 5 minutes for the q&a to the bylaws as well. When we get to the question period, it is a time for questions, not statements. I will not accept motions or nominations via the chat. If you can't raise your hand to nominate, you can put that in the chat or ask someone else to nominate on your behalf. The chair and recording secretary cannot monitor the chat. All candidates can nominate a scrutineer; they help oversee the ballot count. Please message Brad or myself in the chat. Any questions? Yes, email Staff@cupe3906.org for scrutineers too.

Mary Ellen: The first position for today is the VP external

Mary Ellen reads out [bylaws](#) for the vice president external's responsibilities (Section 5k).

Mary Ellen: This position is open to any member of the local. We didn't receive advance nominations. People only need to nominate someone once, don't nominate them again. Any questions? First call for nominations. Yourself or someone else.

Mira Musallam self-nominates

Raneem Elbarbary self-nominates

Mary Ellen: Third and final call for VPE. Seeing none, closed. Members are self-nominated, so they stand. In reverse order, I'll give each candidate up to 3 min to speak to nomination. Once done we'll have questions



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Raneem: I'm a 4th year student at mac, also part of the residence unit 4. I believe in strengthening the students' connections between the community and the union. I've served as a CA, group fitness instructor, and as course instructor lead. I've built strong relationships on and off campus, I have dedication to training and volunteering that would be good for the role. I have worked to bring external opportunities to the Kin association, reaching out to doctors offices and more. Learned better networking, and strengthened my own ability to communicate. I believe I can build strong partnerships and be well represented on and off campus. I can take on this role and challenges.

Mira: Hello all. I've been a TA for over 8 terms. Over the years I've worked across depts and connected with dozens of ta's and students. I know what it's like to have unstable work conditions, its so important to have someone carry our voice outside of campus as well. I will represent you in the broader labour community, I don't want to just attend, I want to build real relationships so we can have real allies by our side. We can build collective power. I'd like to create a unity council of all the unions across campus so we can coordinate bargaining; we have seen this power at U of T and beyond, would be amazing to build those relationships with other workers. As your VPE I want to be available, approachable, and reliable in building our connections and worker power. Let's bring everyone together and build a united front.

Mary Ellen: forgot to mention, we'll discuss how the ballot works later. Now members have the chance for questions. I will enforce 5 minutes. Rand?

Rand: Love to see new people get involved. You both want to build solidarity on campus - how will you do this with workers on and off campus?

Mazen: Similar to Rand's question, can you tell us more about your experience with advocacy/community organizing?

Mira: Thanks for the questions! I tried to touch on Rand's question - I hope to build solidarity between unions. So, this would be a unity council. If we show up for construction workers this year, they'll show up for us next year, and so on. I believe in a united front. I plan on regularly attending other union's meetings and events; I want them to recognize me and create comfortable spaces. I think it empowers all of us more. With previous experiences, I feel like I do show up. At Mac, I was involved with health equity, Muslim students' association, different social justice groups, ambassador of the innovation minor. I understand that I am representing the union and need to carry our voice outside.

Raneem: For the first part, I want to make sure that other members of the communities know that we exist and know about our efforts, greater communications and transparency. I would build solidarity with other unions on campus, creating mutual support for both sides. With Unifor and



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MUFA, we could be there as well, make sure we know that everyone knows each others' struggles. I'd like to create a unified calendar. Mazen, you asked about past experiences, I have been a fitness instructor and personal trainer, I think Kin society is relevant as well. Reaching out to past alumni and other students can fit well in this role. I also led wellness events, student campaigns across campus through kin society and EDI groups on campus.

Mary Ellen: I will cut questions off now. If you have a scrutineer, please let me know.

d. Secretary-Treasurer

Mary Ellen: I will turn to our secretary treasurer election.

Mary Ellen reads out [bylaws](#) for the secretary treasurer's responsibilities (Section 5c).

We have one advance nomination from Saba Khorasani.

Nominees:

Saba Khorasani (Self-Nomination)

The floor is open, first call. second call. Third call. ***Saba is acclaimed.*** I will keep us moving on.

Saba Khorasani is acclaimed as Secretary Treasurer

e. Recording Secretary

Mary Ellen reads out [bylaws](#) for the recording secretary's responsibilities (Section 5d).

Advance Nominees:

Bonnie Evans (Self-Nomination)

David Cheriyan (Nominated by Mit Patel) - not present

Rishav Jaiswal nominated from the floor by Shivam Gupta - stands

Rishav: I'm a 2nd year PhD student, I believe transparency is the foundation of a strong union, everyone needs to know what's going on in the union and why. I have published several articles, will ensure every meeting and every motion is understood and available to all members, info for everyone. Information is power, in short, I will be a clear voice and make our union strong.

David Cheriyan absents and did not submit a statement.



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Bonnie: I am running for re-election, previously a unit 1 steward for a year, posting socials and attending meetings. I have been rec sec for the last 7 months, have a proven track record meeting deadlines, but also go above and beyond by updating branding and union resources. I am incredibly diligent about keeping track of deadlines, but also being recsec is more than just project management and taking minutes. It also involves staying involved in the goings-on of the local, including canvassing for politicians and supporting bargaining mobilization. I am also a voting member of Hamilton CUPE council, and a delegate to the CUPE Ontario conference, the last two positions can benefit from the perspective of the rec sec who is involved in union activities.

Q&A:

Sara Swerdlyk: What experience do you have in community and union organizing?

Kyle Morrison: How many words per minute can you type?

Bonnie: I'm a labour studies grad and got involved when I first got to McMaster in 2023 by bugging lead steward Aidan McNally. No idea about my WPM but I type as fast and accurately as I can.

Rishav: I have experience organizing by connecting with other students.

f. Benefits and Advocacy Officer

Mary Ellen reads out [bylaws](#) for the benefits and advocacy officer's responsibilities (Section 5j).

We did receive two nominations in writing (below).

Nominees:

Samantha Sada (Self-Nomination)

Riya Ingale (Maisara Morshed)

Shabnam Fadaei Chatroudi self-nominates from the floor

Mary Ellen: I am declaring nominations closed. Is Riya here?

Shabnam: Hi everyone. I am a PHD student unit 1 member. Mainly running for this because I believe everyone deserves full and easy access to our benefits. Personally, I find it sometimes



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hard to navigate our benefits and getting what we're entitled to. I'd prioritize ease of access to our benefits. I would like to make sure that we have drop in sessions and can answer questions. Will fight for more benefits to suit all of our membership.

Riya not present, no speech submitted.

Sam: I am a student in the global politics program. I think I would be great for this position because I hold previous and current work experience in insurance, making sure I ask the necessary questions to ensure students get the best coverage. I've had the benefit of working with Kyle to advertise insurance to students across campus. I want to make sure students squeeze the most out of our benefits, even without buying into it. I would love to carry on Kyle's great work.

Kyle: We don't pay into our benefits, so just the HSA. We are also dictated what we can do in the CA. What improvements directly are you looking to make given our limits?

Sam: For clarification, I was directly referencing the dental benefits. In my current role, the HSA had been huge, I love talking about it. My big thing would be talking to people about how to access them, when they also have UHIP, GSA, etc. I want to give anyone who needs it a crash course on coverage. I do think there's need for improvement; I do think we can improve the coverage. But I do think my top priority is advertising and communication so there's no unnecessary pending.

Shabnam: I know some benefits are defined, but I have heard of improvement; Postdocs can now get a laptop! I think there definitely is room. I will talk to those who define the limits and stretch these limits. I will make sure to try for that.

Mary Ellen: Any other questions?

Sara: What's your vision for the non-health fund benefits? Keeping in mind there are non-students in the union. I'm unit 2, and want to do development, training, etc.

Kyle: How many unopened emails do you have in your inbox? I made it a priority to make sure it's covered within 72 hours and opened.

Samantha: One priority is professional development. With myself from a lower income background, I make it a priority. But it's a democracy, so I'll take into account anything that people say to me. I have no unopened emails.

Shabnam: I think in the case of conferences, the amount they have is \$1k and it's not enough, especially for an international conference. I will try to improve the non-health benefits so people



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can actually use it. For the second question, I think in my inbox I have around 30-40. I have a specific schedule, and dedicate 4-5 just to go through emails, so I know I will see it quickly.

g. Undergraduate Officer

Mary Ellen: There are restrictions on this, you do need to be an undergraduate member to run and to vote.

Mary Ellen reads out [bylaws](#) for the undergrad officer's responsibilities (Section 5f).

Any questions? No restrictions on who nominates you, but you can only hold as an undergraduate. We have one advance Nomination. any others?

Nominees:

Elissa Cunningham (Self-Nomination)

Second call. Third and final. **Elissa is acclaimed!**

Elissa Cunningham is acclaimed as Undergraduate Officer

h. Equity Officer

Mary Ellen reads out [bylaws](#) for the equity officer's responsibilities (Section 5g).

Nominees:

Ologun Olakunle Oluwakorede (Korede) (Self-Nomination)

Haram Akram (Nominated by Mason Fitzpatrick) - stands

Alizah Ali (Maisara Morshed) - stands

Alizah: I am a PhD student in health sciences. I'm a students and active community member, I understand everyone feeling included and accepted. At the Hub I see over 3000 students daily. I also apply these as a CA. One of my most impactful experiences was advocating for a more inclusive holiday celebration with a school board, for over 21,000 students working with Stephen Lecce. I want to increase transparency in the union, increase mental health supports. I want to make sure all students are supported.

Haram: I am a third-year undergrad in health sciences. I hope I am a familiar face to many. I think someone needs bargaining and activism experience in this role. I have participated in talks with lots of equity group.

Haram: I've also focused on women and gender equity work. Worked on safety marshalling, protest work, working with vulnerable members of CUPE and our communities. I have also



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worked with SVPRO. Seeing how Mac spends its budget. All things I have worked on at Mac and want to continue. As EO I want to improve understanding of accessibility and resources; I think students don't quite understand the work that EO is responsible for. I think getting the working group up and moving is a priority as I've heard it's a bit stagnant.

Mary Ellen: Korede are you here?

Korede: Yes.

Korede entered the meeting late, was meant to speak before Haram

Korede: I am seeking to continue as EO. This past year we did more than talk. We resolved conflicts within the union, it's about accountability. We established safe spaces like the safe forum event before the semester was over in April. We're trying to extend our reach beyond our union halls into the broader community. Ensuring our bylaws reflect this as well, as I am chair of that committee. I am running again because our work is far from finished. Want to extend our trainings and partnerships and embed equity in every part of our union. Fairness must be lived and not promised.

Q&A:

Rand: Thanks all for chatting and sharing your ideas. Equity committee has sat more or less vacant since October, which has limited effectiveness. How do you plan to recruit members and build this back up?

Caleb: I'm curious about how the candidates plan to ensure gender diverse members are included? There's been instances in the past when people have been misgendered. I want to know about these commitments.

Korede: Thanks for the questions. Equity action committee, yes membership is low. We've tried as much as possible, just seems like members are not interested. But the drop in was well attended over 25 came. Good way to get to know who is involved with equity planning within CUPE. Have been inclusive in our approach. Tried to plan development with international officer. We are collaborating beyond the union too. So much work to be done but trying to create safe space to interact with the union.

Haram: Both really good questions. Equity can be a scary idea for people to engage with for the first time. I like the idea of people interacting with the equity officer. Low-commitment ways to engage to start is a great idea. Then we can develop that base into the working group. It will take time but is not something we can cast aside either. CUPE-run book groups have been super successful. Just more drop-ins in general got more people engaged. Mirroring that in equity is a priority. Can do joint session with benefits, etc. People just don't know the extent of the work that must be put in on the team. I think transition from lower to more commitment is good.



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Alizah: Agree that gender diverse programming should be prioritized. We can do trainings, normalize the use of pronouns in meetings, understanding why attendance is lower. Anti-oppression 101 and so on. I think that visibilizing the EO and letting people know what it is important.

Mary Ellen: We'll take your question Ori.

Ori: The last year has been hell for Jews on campus, supported by CUPE 3906. On our chat is a post by our interim president reflecting antisemitism. This is textbook antisemitism. How would you treat violent racism by the president?

Korede: To be very direct, I don't support any of those rhetorics, my goal is not to alienate anyone. I have engaged with you in the past. We as a union unequivocally reject all forms of hate. We welcome feedback, I have always said you can get involved, share your feedback, reach out and we can ensure all our efforts are inclusive.

Haram: I'll keep it brief. I think it's important to recognize that it's important to have all equity concerns pushed forward and respected. We unequivocally reject antisemitism, so making sure that people getting involved reflects the interests of all members. There wasn't much going on in Equity throughout the year, even though I wanted to get involved. Hopefully these things encourage all folks to get involved.

Alizah: Agree with both, especially Haram. It is important to advocate for all folks. Standing against one form of oppression does not mean being silent on another. It is important that all voices are heard.

5 minute break

i. International Officer

Mary Ellen reads out [bylaws](#) for the international officer's responsibilities (Section 5h).

Nominees:

Samuel Ikueze (Nominated by Oluwadamilola Babatunde) - stands

Malvika Krishnamurthy (Self-Nomination)

Mary Ellen: Normally we'd do reverse order, but I don't think Malvika is here.

Malvika not here, no speech submitted.



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Samuel: I am here to bring a new approach. We pay higher fees, more restriction, are excluded. The IO meetings have helped me understand our issues, but our diverse voices are often not heard. The rising anti-immigration sentiment has been harmful. This cannot continue. I want to amplify international voices, push for true unity in diversity, will ensure our concerns are heard at every level of the union. Vote for me as your IO. Let's make sure the union works for everyone.

ME: I don't think that Malvika submitted anything. Questions for samuel? No? You can email us if you want a scrutineer.

j. Lead Steward Unit 1

Mary Ellen reads out [bylaws](#) for the Lead steward responsibilities (Section 5e).

Nominees:

Mitchell Lupa (Self-Nomination)

Muhammad Nabil Rajput (Self-Nomination)

Zeinab Vosooghi (self-nomination from floor)

Zeinab: Hello, I'm Zeinab, a 5th year DeGroot PhD. My motivations are I've been here for almost 5 years, surrounded by lots of unit 1 members. They need a better, clearer understanding of what they have available to them. It is somehow missing right now. They don't even know they have a steward in their department. I have been a unit 1 and unit 2 member. No steward of our program talked to me before. I ended up doing unpaid work for these professors, being humiliated. It was an unfair situation. What I want to do here is create a better coordination. I did not feel protected and supported, I want to give that to others.

Nabil: Apologies for my camera off, tech difficulties. My name is Nabil. Over the past 3 years, I've had the opportunity to TA more than 13 courses across departments. Despite this, there was a time I had no idea what my rights were. Did not know what and who I could reach out to. Only did the one training. That changed when I had a department problem. Over the last 3 years I was only a little involved, but I had an insightful conversation with Brad where I felt empowered. Beyond the classroom I've worked as a project assistant for res life, have had countless conversations with CAs, etc. fighting for the union. I also campaigned with my federal candidate. I was a proud member of CUPE 905 in Richmond Hill. I attended meetings as a librarian. I'd advocate for mental health and work protections.

Mitch: Greetings friends and comrades. Some of you know me, but I'm a second year M.A in the department of labour studies, steward, Co-chair of the CAT, part of grievance committee, and CUPE ON delegate. Most of my work has come through the Contract Action team. We had great



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success with unit 2, working closely with unit 4. Some departments are trying to divide up TAships partially to Professor RA funding, promote undergrad TAs for less costs. Fighting scholarship reductions in TAship money. All these issues reflect austerity, and we deserve adequate compensation for our work. I went to a steward training with CUPE, I'm currently in a Niagra for another training. No one should be afraid to participate in our union, I know the last meeting was hard. United we bargain divided we beg. We need to unite in our fight against austerity.

Rand: Being the u1 lead steward is the main bridge between the union and our biggest unit. How have you engaged with the local to support our members?

Mahnaz: We all know Rebecca did a great job. How can you improve her work and involve more people?

Mitch: To Rand's question, I've been doing all the HDLC meetings, grievance committee. U2 nights in the office calling members. Have been knocking on doors, committing to members. Rebecca has done a fantastic job. I've been getting her advice. It is difficult to connect across departments. It's important the lead steward acts as a bridge. I think having more than just the stewards meeting is good. More support.

Nabil: I have been a TA since 2nd year, this was when the picket line happened; I was actively engaging with members but didn't have much information. About a month ago I had a convo with life sciences about putting a brochure of information in the TA contract. They just include the link right now, with a 52-page CA. Dr. Anna Campos was receptive, they hire a lot of TAs. One more thing to mention. I want a safe space for people to just talk to other TAs, I didn't see the coffee and chat drop ins for just unit 1. I know TAs working overtime. Many people are penalized for working over 260 hours as well. For a lot of people, they feel very underrepresented. I have not been involved but now I have the time, and I wasn't to push these issues.

Zeinab: I have been here for 5 years, I know many students and u1 members. I know plenty of people. What is important for me is creating a better system and making better use of all of our stewards in each department. I think the support and connection is missing right now. I know in business we have students with more than 360 hours per semester. Others are not getting any. Something is missing here. It is the responsibility of the union to take care of it -- I am sure people are doing a good job, but there is no connection, so we do not feel supported.

Muskaan: I also see a lot of disconnection as well. What tangible things will you do to connect them?



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Caleb: I'm curious, can you give a pitch like a training, maybe 30-second pitch about what our union can do for you?

Mitch: To the first question, I'm not so sure how big the leads responsibilities alone are to connect all members, but as the co-lead of the CAT, it's about actually doing it. The only effective way to reach people is to talk to them, go to them, call them, and explain to them what the union does. The union is not a separate entity, it is us, we are the union, so it takes everyone. Engaging members is not about offering services but can encompass it. 30-second pitch - the union is your representative in your employment relationship with any problems you have. If you have a boss asking you to work too much or do things you dislike, we will fight for you. There's a political element too. The union is so much more than 30-seconds, its' a big deal.

Nabil: I would like to start off with small tangible items to be done. Like creating a coffee and chat session, like every 2 months. Caleb has been sending updates regularly from U4, but I didn't see much of that from unit 1. I know TAs are super overworked, telling them about mental health resources, maybe we can get someone from the wellness center to the drop ins. I think a 1-2 pager instead of 52 pages, pushing for health/safety and promoting safe space. For the pitch - the union is here for full support you have access to health and benefits, you can come to me in my office hours, you can reach directly out to me, and I will be here for you.

Zeinab: I would not do emails because I think TA's are already overrun with it. What I plan to do is ask stewards to contact the TAs personally. The programs are not so big that this is unachievable. We need to make sure, most TA's are afraid to speak up, we need to make them sure we are on their side. In 30 sec, CUPE is formed from students, we are on your side, You have health and dental benefits, some people will try to overuse you, you need to talk to us instead of doing work for free, we are here for you.

Mary Ellen: Don't be shy about appointing scrutineers! Thank you candidates.

k. Lead Steward Unit 2

Mary Ellen: We require quorum of unit 2 to hold this election, can you raise your hand to indicate unit 2. (5 raise hands) Ok we have quorum! We have one advance nomination (below).

Nominees:

Hamed Afshari (Self-Nomination)

*Hamed Afshari is **acclaimed** as Unit 2 Lead Steward*

1. Lead Steward Unit 3



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Mary Ellen: We do need 5 unit 3 members for quorum, can you raise your hands? (4 raise hands) Unfortunately, we do have to put this off to next GMM in the bylaws. We will try to get quorum for the next GMM. Exec will appoint someone to be the interim.

m. Lead Steward Unit 4

Mary Ellen: Do we have quorum (at least 5 raise hands)? We do!

We did receive a nom from Vanessa Leece, but I did see a message she is withdrawing.

Nominees:

~~Vanessa Leece (Nominated by Caleb Smolenaars)~~ Withdrawn

Mazen Afify self-nominates from floor

Caleb Smolenaars Self-nominates from floor

Caleb: My name is Caleb Smolenaars pronouns they/them and I'm running for re-election. For the last 6 months, I've served as the first ever lead steward of unit 4. I have tried to be transparent through regular emails, shown up at as many exec meetings, communities as possible. Also the chair of the unit 4 bargaining team and co-chair of the contract action team. I'm in my third year of work and labour studies, I've worked as a provincial candidate, queer radio host, and work interning at queen's park. I hope to bring these skills back to the position. I'll continue modernizing communications from the union. I'll remain as a member of the CAT and lead mobilization. I want to be sure every member is heard, none left behind. We have lots to do, let's keep rolling.

Mazen: I am running for U4 lead steward. I've been a CA for 3 years and a TA for years as well. I have firsthand experience with issues in the workplace on campus, it has not only deepened my understanding but deepened my passion for creating positive change. That's why I want to take on this role. I want to ensure those after us will take charge. I did serve on the Mac engineering departments. I did serve on the Canada association for Armenian relations. I will work hard to ensure our concerns are heard. Would love the opportunity to support our members. Shoutout to Caleb as well.

Maisara: As a CA myself, have you guys had a chance to advocate for CAs and what actions have you taken?

Mazen: one example I'm proud of is that before CAs were unionized, I noticed that we were frustrated with the mandatory meal plan. brought these concerns upward, they said it was out of their control. I reached out directly to meal services, was hard to meet with him, and I showed up at 7am to meet with him. We had a convo about how the system was not good for CAs, I think this led to reduced rates in the following year.



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Caleb: I've been in the role a couple months already, getting back to folks in a timely way. We've been dealing with horrible health and safety issues, mold and insects in residencies. We have met with employee and labor relations and across the union to work this out. My previous work definitely rests in the actual organizing of this bargaining unit. We chatted with nearly every CA and res life member, we knocked doors, got union cards signed, and certified. This was thanks to those initial people, myself, included, who got us there. With regard to the meal plan, we are trying to get it paid for or at least optional in bargaining, so it's a top priority. Been really involved in getting over 500 signatures on our petitions, chatting with members. Can't wait to continue this work, win big.

Mary Ellen: You'll only get a ballot if you're a member of that unit!

n. Health and Safety Officer

Mary Ellen reads out [bylaws](#) for the Health and Safety officer responsibilities (Section 5i).

Nominees:

Ilya Kierkoszi (Nominated by Mason Fitzpatrick) - **does not stand**

Maisara Morshed (Self-Nomination)

Mahnaz Tajik self-nominates

Haram nominates Muskaan Kharod - stands

Muskaan: My name is Muskaan, I work as a TA and CA. Over the past 2 years, I've experienced mold and lack of care when concerns were brought forward. Have impacted out health, safety and dignity. I want to build on the work of the bargaining committee. I want to challenge the systems that allow these problems to go unaddressed. Many CUPE members are unaware of these issues, hard to keep up. I plan to create clear pamphlets, casual office hours, and build protections. I worked in the safety department for trucking, so it has taught me much about speaking up. As a WOC on campus, I've been involved with those groups and advocating. Thanks for considering me.

Mahnaz: Hi all, I am your current health and safety officer. These issues have been my priority, I've advocated for better safety across campus. I will continue to push for safer, healthier work environments for any of us. Anything about our members' mental health, I have ensured that members know their rights, I have seen firsthand the importance of having someone dedicated and knowledgeable in this role. Not just about McMaster, it is important everywhere. We're working with the hospitals too. You can trust I'll work in your best interest. I want to ensure your wellbeing is never overlooked. Thanks so much

Maisara: I'll be entering my 3rd year. I have been a member of u4, a CA, and work in conference services. It has been eye-opening. Mold infestation, bugs, removal of SVPRO. There is a



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disconnection between employees and their employer. It's our right to receive responses about safety in a timely manner. Both my parents are union members, I see the value in working together, and working for our collective agreement. I want to be an open transparent source, send monthly emails so folks know who to contact. I will work on communicating with you all. I plan to do this through inspections, education/awareness. Thanks everyone.

Kyle: What is on each of the candidates' minds at this time?

Maisara: Can you clarify?

Kyle: Yeah, anything on your mind, anything you want to add.

Maisara: Health and safety is serious. In unit 4 as CAs, we live where we work. This extends to working for all folks on campus as well as students.

Mahnaz: Good to hear from the other candidates. During the winter semester and since that, I started making connections with the joint committee at the university, how can we help? We start by checking the protocols first, we did an inspection in Togo Salmon Hall, many problems like mold came up. It is my responsibility to follow up on those fixes. I am feeling it is my responsibility to follow up in the kinesiology department where there was an issue accessing the elevator -- a student had no access to the main elevator. Good news, we have solved that problem with the help of the joint health & safety office at Mac. We are looking to make connection with the hospitals because we have many TA and RAs there. Unfortunately, we have yet to receive their report. This is another thing to face. Some of the papers haven't been updated since 2011. The lead steward's id like to work with, they are the main connection to TAs. I hope I can collaborate with the next lead steward as well.

Muskaan: What's been on my mind is the fact that it's been great to have everyone speak. There's so much power in collective action. I think there's great points that have been brought up. I'm leaving this meeting on a high note, but I'm excited for all the possibilities for collaboration.

Mary Ellen: Thanks again to all candidates. I encourage all candidates to nominate scrutineers. It's really important for our union democracy. I'll put the email in the chat again. The other thing to mention is, everyone who attended this meeting or the past meeting, will receive a ballot in your email. Please check your spam and other mailboxes. The ballots will be sent in the next 24 hours and will remain open for at least 72 hours. If you don't receive a ballot in the next 24 hours, please email us. I'll turn it back over to Rand.

Rand re-chaired



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6. Other Elections

7. Annual Reports

Rand: These are on the website. please check them out. Also let's get unit 3 members out for quorum! We'll take care of non-exec member elections at the next GMM.

8. Adjournment

Ilya motions to adjourn

Dams seconds

Meeting adjourned