



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

Executive Committee Reports, March 2025

President (Mason Fitzpatrick):

Dear Members,

This month marks the last of my term as President since coming on in a by-election last September. It has been a pleasure serving as President of this local and I am proud of the gains that we have made for our members this month and throughout this academic year.

The biggest news this month was the signing of a Tentative Agreement for Unit 2, which is pending ratification at the time of writing, the results of which will be available just before this report is presented at the GMM. The bargaining team and the Strike Committee have been hard at work mobilizing members in support of potential labour action. While I cannot divulge the details of the agreement yet, I will say that our ability to wield a credible strike threat forced the employer to offer historic gains to our key bargaining priorities.

Unit 4 is still in the early stages of bargaining, and we are currently exchanging passes related to non-monetary items. I will do my best to push our priorities at the bargaining table as far as I can before my term is up at the end of the month.

On the social side, our drop-in socials have been well-attended lately and we have been connecting with lots of members and recruiting them to the local's initiatives. Our newly-formed book club is also bustling, with a great crew decorating the room and facilitating discussion on labour and imperialism.

Externally, our local has recently played a key role in reviving the Hamilton District CUPE Council, of which I have been elected Vice-President. We will be striking committees to recruit more locals to the council and work to organize non-union workers in Hamilton and support other unions in their struggles.

Before the end of the month, I am hoping to get the ball rolling on coordinating bargaining with



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at least one other union on campus alongside our Unit 4. Strategically, SEIU has the most overlap with Unit 4 workers so I will make that a priority. Forming united fronts between different unions in this manner reaped huge gains for workers at UofT last year and at Queen's this year.

This will be my last GMM as President and I am sad to be leaving you all but I will never forget our time together and am happy to have done my part for the local. Once I am no longer President, my exception to my Persona Non Grata status will lapse and so my exit from the office of President will also mean my indefinite departure from campus. It has been one of the great honours of my life to serve as your President and I will fondly observe the efforts of the forthcoming leadership. While it is bittersweet in many respects, I am excited to see the local continue to occupy a place at the very front of the progressive section of the labour movement.

In solidarity,

Mason Fitzpatrick

Vice President External (Oluwadamilola Babatunde):

Month & Year: February 2025

By: Oluwadamilola Babatunde

Submission: 10th March, 2025

Summary:

- Attended Hamilton and District Labour Council Meeting
- Attended the OUWCC at Markham, Toronto.
- Joined in hosting the drop-in session for the month of February
- Had meeting with the international officer and Women and Gender Rights Committee to discuss and plan for coming events. Also, joined the Benefit committee meeting.
- Working on the Organization flow chat as well as the handbook for the VP external role for the next person. (In Progress)
- Working on building strong relationships with sister locals (Initial phase)
- Had all officer hours for the month.



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Secretary Treasurer (Saba Khorasani):

See Secretary Treasurer's Report on GMM website for more detailed information

The Local is in a strong financial position. Our total assets have grown, mainly due to ongoing interest earnings from our savings. As expected, there have been some variations in income and expenses, but overall, we are staying within budget in all key areas. Moving forward, we will keep a close eye on spending to ensure it aligns with the Local's priorities. We are dedicated to maintaining responsible financial management, supporting important initiatives, and ensuring financial stability across all units.

Sincerely,
Saba Khorasani

Lead Steward, Unit 1 (Rebecca DeWael):

Last month, I held the U1 Stewards' Network Meeting for the semester, where we were able to chat about goings-on across campus. One thing that I was particularly struck by was the conversations around how vastly TAs vary from one department to another. This is something that I'll be thinking about a lot as I wrap up my time as Lead Steward of Unit 1, and will be encouraging my successor to think about as well.

I was able to recruit quite a few new stewards in departments where we didn't have any this month by emailing members directly to advertise the position. That said, we have room for new stewards in almost every department, so please reach out if you're interested, or encourage your colleagues to join!

As always, I attended Grievance Committee meetings and helped out at the monthly drop-in social. It's becoming more and more clear to me that the local's energy should be spent speaking with our members, and the Lead Steward position is a great one to do that.

I also want to take this space to shout out the work of the Unit 2 bargaining committee, who came to a tentative agreement!

If you have any questions or would like to become a steward, email me at leadsteward_tas@cupe3906.org.



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- Rebecca

Lead Steward, Unit 2 (Dr. Hamed Afshari):

Since the previous GMM on February 2025, I have worked on the following task:

1. Attended on full day meeting for bargaining with employer and the conciliation team, attended a couple of meetings with U2 Bargaining team, CUPE Staffs, and employer to discuss the U2 Collective Agreement proposed by employer, and alternatively presents our modifications to their proposal, and later review their response, discussed it in CUPE caucus meetings.
2. Worked with the Strike Committee Action Team, called more than hundreds of U2 sessionals and explained the picketing duties, bargaining process, Union activities, the previous collective agreement, and our new proposal, etc.
3. Attended CUPE executive meetings, Grievance Committee meetings, GMM, and other bargaining related meetings based on my availability,
4. Work with U2 Stewards, asked about their stewardship activities, asked for feedback about U2 members, explained results of the ongoing U2 bargaining, worked on their honorarium payments.
5. Communicated with Unit 2 Stewards about ongoing bargaining for U2 collective agreement, our suggestion for the wage increase, dental benefits, job security, professional development funds, etc. I talked with U2 members over the phone and in persons.

Regards,

Hamed Afshari, PhD

Lead Stewards for U2 Sessionals

Lead Steward, Unit 3 (Dr. Bitia Pourhabari):

Dear Unit 3 Members,

As the Lead Steward for postdocs, I would like to share an update on my recent activities:



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Over the last month, I have been actively involved in several local committees to support the rights and benefits of our U3 members from various angles. These committees include:

The Postdoc Support Fund Administration Committee

The Grievance Committee

The Benefits Committee

Additionally, last month, I focused on recruiting new stewards for Unit 3 to ensure that we have a strong team supporting our members.

If you are passionate about advocating for your department and making a positive impact, we encourage you to consider serving as a steward. Your involvement will not only benefit your colleagues but also strengthen our unit as a whole.

Best regards,

Bitia Pourbahari

Lead Steward, Postdocs

Lead Steward, Unit 4 (Caleb Smolenaars):

Hi friends! Much like the last few months, my focus for the past month has been on supporting Unit 4 bargaining, design work, and fielding Unit 4 inquiries. On top of that, I also ran in the Ontario provincial election, so I might have been slower to respond at times. With all of that over now, I'm glad to be back and fully available in my role as Lead Steward, Unit 4.

Within the Unit 4 Bargaining Team, we've had a few dates with the employer and have done almost a full pass of non-monetary proposals. We're making some progress, but it's slow, and there have been a few sticking points. I hope to send out a more detailed Unit 4 Bargaining Update email by the end of the week.

As always, I've also been spending lots of time doing design work as we implement the Local's updated branding. I've recently been redoing our banners, flags, and office sign. Hopefully those will be done and printed soon to show off at events on campus!

One final note - last weekend, I attended the OUWCC Conference in Richmond Hill and made many great connections with CUPE-unionized Residence Life workers from other universities. We plan to meet up again soon to discuss our bargaining progress across locals. Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or concerns relating to Unit 4! I'm always available at leadsteward_reslife@cupe3906.org.



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Equity Officer (Oluwakorede (Korede) Ologun):

Equity Action Committee (“EAC”)

We held EAC meeting this month to discuss the events calendar.

We are planning an event/drop-in session for equity seeking group members. We will be holding confidential engagements, providing resources, and follow-up support. There will be snacks and coffee for everyone.

Date: Thursday, April 3, 2025

Time: 10am - 2pm

Venue: MUSC Room 214

Please plan to attend and share within your network.

Remember, CUPE’s Union Education Program offers valuable educational materials to help us stay informed and equipped to address equity and harassment concerns effectively. These resources are always available to support our shared commitment to fostering a more inclusive environment.

See link [Union Education | Canadian Union of Public Employees](#)

In solidarity.

Korede Ologun

International Officer (Kusum Bhatta):

Monthly Report: CUPE 3906 International Committee Meeting

On March 3, our committee gathered from 1:00 to 3:00 PM at MUSC 313 (McMaster Student Centre) in a hybrid format, allowing for both in-person and virtual participation. We began with a check-in.

The primary focus was finalizing plans for the upcoming professional development event. We reviewed feedback, suggestions, and comments from our members to ensure the event would be engaging and impactful. We also addressed a funding request from the Iranian Student Association and passed an additional motion.



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We talked about the venue and other logistics for the professional development event. Currently, we are exploring options for a free space and are waiting to hear back from the panelists regarding their availability and requirements. Alongside this, we are reviewing and discussing the final proposal revisions to ensure that all details aligned with our shared objectives. Coffee and light snacks were provided to create a welcoming environment in the meeting for everyone. The minutes of the meeting and the receipt were submitted to our treasurer, Saba.

Best,
Kusum
International Officer

Health and Safety Officer (Mahnaz Tajik):

Health and Safety Officer Report – March 2025 GMM

As the Health and Safety Officer for the executive committee, my role is to ensure the occupational health and safety of our members. This involves serving as a resource for members, utilizing my expertise to identify and mitigate hazards, revising the health and safety clauses in our Collective Agreement, and participating in the University Central Joint Health and Safety Committee (CJHSC)

This report outlines my activities and contributions since my election in November 2024.

I began my role as Health and Safety Officer by reading the CUPE 3906 by-laws, meeting with former officers, and learning about CUPE's responsibilities related to the position.

Coordination of CUPE 3906 JHSC Appointments

My primary responsibility has been enhancing CUPE 3906's understanding of McMaster University's Joint Health and Safety Committees (JHSCs). I focused on attending to the meetings and get involved with departmental committees.

To strengthen this, I plan to complete JHSC certification and WSIB Part 1 training through CUPE Ontario Education in June. I will also coordinate introductory health and safety courses and certification programs for interested members.



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Engagement in CJHSCs and Member Communication

The CJHSCs meet monthly and include worker representatives from SEIU 2, UNIFOR 5555, CUPE 3906, as well as management representatives from various human resources departments. I participate in these meetings as a representative of CUPE 3906. During these three month I advocated for multiple initiatives, including:

- CUPE 3906 representation in Housing and Conference Services JHSC.
- Ensuring Unit 3 representation in CJHSC.
- Addressing temporary hazardous conditions in laboratory workplaces.
- Reviewing and suggesting updates to Risk Management Manuals and emergency protocols.
- I also addressed and followed up on incident reports involving CUPE 3906 members

Additional Activities

During this term, I supported Unit 1 orientation presentations, provided steward training. I also participated in monthly executive meetings, contributing to discussions on campaigns, strategies, and organizational improvements. Also, I conducted an inspection of the TSH building's 4th and 5th floors, where we assessed various safety measures, including fire exits, emergency lighting, the condition of walkways, and shelving units. During the inspection, we identified several hazards, such as blocked emergency exits, insufficient signage for evacuation routes, loose electrical wiring that could pose a fire risk, and unstable shelving units that were improperly secured and overloaded. To enhance safety, it is essential that these issues are addressed promptly by ensuring all emergency exits remain clear, improving signage for better navigation during emergencies, securing or replacing hazardous wiring, and properly anchoring shelves to the walls while ensuring they are not overloaded beyond their weight capacity. Regular checks should also be conducted to ensure shelves remain stable and safe for use.

Future Recommendations

To further enhance health and safety and align with CUPE 3906's goals, I recommend:

1. Enhancing recruitment strategies to ensure robust representation on all JHSCs.



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2. Establishing accountability mechanisms for JHSC members, including report-backs.
3. Utilizing the developed orientation materials for efficient onboarding.
4. Expanding the officer's role to address workplace-produced pollution.
5. Maintaining regular health and safety meetings for JHSC and general members.
6. Initiating periodic reviews of hazardous waste management protocols to ensure they align with current best practices.
7. Promoting awareness campaigns to educate members about common workplace hazards and preventive measures.
8. Collaborating with external health and safety organizations to bring in fresh perspectives and training opportunities.
9. Advocating for increased mental health support and resources within the workplace.
10. Developing a feedback system where members can report safety concerns anonymously, ensuring prompt action and resolution.
11. Organizing workshops focused on ergonomic safety, especially for workstations that may lead to repetitive strain injuries.

Conclusion

It has been an honor to serve as the Health and Safety Officer during these short month. I am committed to continuing my efforts to build a safer and more informed community.

In solidarity,

Mahnaz Tajik

Health and Safety Officer

healthandsafety@cupe3906.org

Undergraduate Officer (Elissa Cunningham):

Hello friends!



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As the AGM is quickly approaching I've been reflecting on the great past few months I've had in this position and what I think this role should represent moving forward. After talking with so many of you I see that having events is something that many of you value.

On that note, we recently had our Undergrad event on March 12th which was a huge success! It was so nice to get to see so many of you and have great conversations! I definitely believe this should become a monthly/bi monthly event moving forward as it's a great opportunity to connect with other members, stay in touch with the locals' updates, and ask any questions.

In addition to the event, this month I've been attending the usual meetings and checking emails regularly to ensure any questions are answered and members feel supported. It's been a pleasure being your undergraduate officer and I hope to have the opportunity to do it again after this upcoming election! I'm very much looking forward to the AGM and rerunning for this position!

In solidarity,
Elissa Cunningham

Reports not received from Vice President (excused for personal emergency) and Benefits Officer

Additional Reports

Ouwcc Conference:

At the CUPE Ontario 2025 University Workers Coordinating Committee (OUWCC) Conference, we as delegates (Dams, Caleb, Kyle, Vanessa, and Kusum— with Caleb and Dams as the voting representatives) went to represent, learn, share ideas, and strengthen our union. The conference offered a welcoming space for discussions that were both practical and inspiring, especially at a time when postsecondary education faces numerous challenges.

Some of us began with a three-hour workshop on Action Network, a user-friendly platform that connects members through emails, mobile messages, petitions, and events. During this session, we explored how to improve our communication, map community engagement using data, and take advantage of free training opportunities provided by CUPE. This hands-on experience



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showed us new ways to streamline our efforts and build a more connected local.

Another session focused on Solidarity with Indigenous Workers, where we took a closer look at Canada's colonial history and worked to debunk longstanding myths. This workshop encouraged us to stand in true solidarity with Indigenous colleagues and find practical ways to support reconciliation in our workplaces.

The third three-hour workshop, titled Conflict Skills for Union Activists, was both informative and interactive. We discussed how conflict is a natural part of human interaction and practiced strategies to handle disagreements constructively—from choosing the right response to preventing personal biases from interfering. Outgoing Benefits Officer, Kyle enriched the conversation by leading sessions on resolving conflicts and boosting member engagement, making the discussion even more relatable and actionable.

A major highlight of the conference was the successful passage of a few motions submitted by several locals. One of those commits CUPE Ontario to push for greater transparency from higher education institutions regarding upcoming cuts to jobs and programs, address the decline in educational quality, and protect union jobs through stronger job security and fair wage measures. The motion reflects our shared concern about the financial pressures and policy decisions that are forcing cuts in our institutions.

We were also given useful resources, including a link to sign up for the AI Bargaining Guide, information about the new AR/AO Framework and Curriculum, and ways to connect with other locals and support each other.

I was also impressed by various local's commitment to advancing sustainability and green energy usage in universities while fighting for better working conditions. In the informal gatherings, we also discussed the historical win for residence workers. Carleton residence fellows received union cards from their campus local, only to later learn from CUPE National that they did not qualify for representation in 2014. Later, they were recognized. Our own local has established Unit 4 for residence workers now—a development that depicts the importance of continuously evolving our approach both within and beyond the union to ensure all members feel fully represented and supported. OUWCC was a collaborative effort that not only equipped us with new skills but also reaffirmed our commitment to quality education, secure union jobs, and a transparent, united approach in these challenging times.

Best,
Kusum
International Officer



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Women & Gender Rights Committee:

We met in-person at MUSC 313, Student Centre on Wednesday, March 5, from 11:30 AM to 1:00 PM. Light snacks, coffee, and hot chocolate were available, and a Zoom link was shared for those who joined virtually.

Our recent meeting was a productive session. We approved support for the WISE group's International Women's Day event and finalized additional support for our International Day event. We also went over the final proposal revisions and tackled the remaining preparations for these events. I really appreciate everyone who sent in feedback, comments, and suggestions for our upcoming International Women's Day event. Your input is essential, and we are moving quickly to implement your ideas.

On March 8, we also set up a CUPE information table at the WISE Women's event. In my role as Chair, I took the opportunity to speak about the challenges faced by women and gender diverse members and stressed the need for proper support and resources for our community. Based on your suggestions, our next meeting will also be in a hybrid format to make it more accessible.