



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, November 2024

President (Mason Fitzpatrick):

Dear members,

Since returning from my field research for my thesis project early in November, my activities this month were mainly confined to bargaining for our 2 units which are approaching and in the bargaining process: units 4 and 2 respectively.

We have been assembling our proposals for Unit 4 and should be finished the uncontroversial aspects of the proposal (essentially everything except for wages and hours) before the GMM at which this report will be read. We hope to make decisions about those trickier aspects by next week and should be moving along with bargaining as quickly as we can from there, hopefully wrapping up before the Winter semester ends.

On the Unit 2 side, things have escalated quickly as the employer has filed for conciliation after our last meeting with them. Our offers are still miles apart from each other and the employer is going to be playing hard ball on the contract term - insisting on a 5-year deal. We are going to be conducting a strike vote on December 2nd and have been ramping up mobilization efforts by the Contract Action Team, having finally hired organizers and recruited volunteers to knock on doors and ring phones, engaging our Unit 2 members in organizing conversations. The sooner we are in a strike position, the more leverage we will have as the employer will not be able to pull any funny business like averaging out grades to render a strike ineffective.

For the next month, I expect that preparations for the impending strike vote will occupy most of my time. With a blitz in mobilizing, I believe we will achieve a strong mandate from the membership and signal to the employer that we are serious.

In solidarity,
Mason

Vice President (Rand Clayton):

November 16th, 2024

Hello, everyone!



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I have been doing much behind the scenes work over the past month. This included:

- Filling in for Mason in his absence on the Unit 2 and Unit 4 bargaining teams
- Continuing my work with the communications committee
- Organizing the CAT making calls to unit 2 members

A few hours ago as of the time I'm writing this, I was also elected to chair the CAT. I plan to invest much of my time into getting the CAT running smoothly so our squad of mobilizers is set up for success. Additionally, I have taken an active role in reigniting the CUPE Council for Hamilton. The CUPE council gathers together CUPE locals in the Hamilton area to convene for mutual support and planning campaigns on important issues. This is an exciting opportunity for our local to connect with others and build power among CUPE members.

For the next month I will be:

- Setting up the CAT for mobilizing
- Continuing with the communications committee
- Setting up the CUPE Council

If you have any questions or you're interested in joining CAT to help out with mobilizing, please reach out to me. I can be reached at vicepresident@cupe3906.org OR messaged on Discord.

Thanks, everyone!

In solidarity,
Rand Clayton

Vice President External (Oluwadamilola Babatunde):

VPE REPORT FOR NOVEMBER 2024

I attended the Young Ontario Workers Conference at Markham

Briefing from Markham Conference

- The conference began on Thursday, 14th November and ended on Saturday 16th afternoon. There is a major take away.
- We signed a petition to show solidarity with the strike for Canada Post Workers and Here's the link to the digital petition: <https://www.cupw.ca/en/collective-agreements/urban-and-rsmc-negotiations-2023-2024/support-your-postal-workers>



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- I have also been supporting other members of the exec by attending different meeting, like the Comms meeting every Thursdays, except for last Thursday because I was in transit to Markham, I attended the CAT meeting on Saturday, 16th 2 pm to 3 pm and the Bye-law meeting, yesterday Tuesday, 19th 1 pm to 3 pm.
- I will be attending Hamilton and District Labour Council Meeting tomorrow by 7pm

Secretary Treasurer (Saba Khorasani):

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

The Local remains in a strong financial position. As anticipated, the deficit we reported earlier in the year has been largely mitigated by the return of members to work, which has stabilized our dues deposits and prevented further deficits moving forward. Additionally, with the passage of today's motion to adjust the budget, we have successfully addressed the overages in the printing and reproduction line, which were primarily due to the unexpected costs associated with the orientation notebooks. This adjustment ensures that the line now accurately reflects the actual expenditures. Last year, we posted a deficit of approximately \$56,000 in the retained earnings line due to mandatory spending, which caused our equity to fall to -\$55,000. Hopefully, we have made significant progress in addressing this, with the majority of the deficit now covered, and our financial position on track for continued strengthening. While we anticipate some fluctuations throughout the year, we are committed to ensuring that all spending remains aligned with our priorities. We will continue to monitor our finances closely, adapt to any changes, and maintain a stable and sustainable financial position for the Local.

Sincerely,

Saba Khorasani

Lead Steward, Unit 1 (Rebecca DeWael):

Over the last month, I've continued to work with Jeff, the chair of the Communications Committee, to work on our digital communications strategy. This work will be ongoing for a while. I've also participated in the Communications Committee, Benefits Committee, Bylaws Committee, LMC, and CAT.

I've received the order of stickers and posters that stewards can use to identify themselves in their departments! Get in touch to pick yours up if you haven't yet.

We'll be having a Unit 1 Stewards' Council meeting on Wednesday, November 27th at 2pm. This



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will be a hybrid meeting; stay tuned for more logistical information. If there's anything in particular you'd like to discuss at this meeting, please get in touch and I'll add it to the agenda.

As always, if you have any questions, or would like to become a steward, please reach out! leadsteward_tas@cupe3906.org.

-Rebecca

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

Since the previous GMM on October 2024, I have worked on the following task:

1. Attended three 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. Attended CUPE executive meetings, Grievance Committee meetings, GMM, and other bargaining related meetings based on my availability,
3. 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.
4. Schedule a meeting with U2 Stewards at McMaster University to review the bargaining process.

Regards,

Hamed Afshari, PhD
Lead Stewards for U2 Sessionals

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

Overview of Activities and Involvement:

As a member of the General Meeting, I have actively participated in several meetings as well as taking initiative in planning social events for the postdoc community. I have attended the Executive Meeting as part of my regular Additionally, I participated in the Health and Safety Committee Meeting, which focused on university health protocols, ensuring that postdocs and other university members are well-informed and supported regarding their health and safety on



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campus. I also attended the Laboratory Management Committee (LMC) Meeting.

1.Event Planning:

- In my effort to foster community engagement and provide postdocs with a social networking opportunity, I am currently in the process of organizing an **End-of-Year Lunch for Postdocs at Phoenix**. The event is scheduled for **December 13, 2024**.
- An **email invitation** has been sent out to all postdocs to inform them of the event and encourage attendance. This email provides all the relevant details, including the date, time, and the goals of the gathering.
- Additionally, a **formal proposal** for the event, including catering and logistics, has been **written and submitted** to the General Meeting members for review and approval. This proposal includes a breakdown of the event budget, and anticipated attendance, ensuring that all necessary aspects of the event are planned and budgeted for appropriately.

Bitu Pourbahari
Lead steward Unit 3

Lead Steward, Unit 4 (Caleb Smolenaars):

Hi friends!

The grind continues in Unit 4 without much change from my October report. I've been continuing to communicate with members and our Local's staff, as well as Employee/Labour Relations (E/LR) and University Health & Safety (UHS) about health & safety issues within residence buildings (bed bugs, black mould, and lady beetle infestations) and concerns about reprisals among members.

For Unit 4 members: please continue sending in UHS Hazard Reports. That documentation is incredibly important, especially as we ramp up our actions in support of Unit 4 bargaining. Additionally, if you have any concerns about reprisals or other issues within the workplace, please reach out to me at leadsteward_reslife@cupe3906.org. We can't make things better unless we know about the issues. Remember, you can't get in trouble for talking to your union.

Outside the official responsibilities of the Lead Steward, Unit 4 role, I've been working on a strategic bargaining plan as a member of the Unit 4 Bargaining Team. I also revamped the design of the Local's website, with updates to the content coming soon.



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Don't hesitate to reach out if you have Unit 4 related questions or concerns!

Benefits & Advocacy Officer (Dr. Kyle Morrison)

Dear Comrades,

Little has changed since my October report. We had some issues with Unit 1 Dental due to errors with the Employer's payroll system however, we believe these have been cleared up. As noted in October, we do not expect any changes in Unit 2 until bargaining wraps up. I am reviewing some possible increases to the Unit 3 PDF, so please keep an eye out for that in our mailer. Unit 1 remains status quo at this time. As usual, I remain open to any questions or concerns.

In solidarity
Kyle Morrison

Equity Officer (Oluwakorede (Korede) Ologun):

As planned, I attended the AGM of the Hamilton Anti-Racism Resource Centre (HARRC) last month as an opportunity to meet with the team. They have a new programs director who is eager to work with us. HARRC's mission is to foster a Hamilton free from racism, discrimination, and oppression by providing resources, education and support to individuals and communities to actively confront racism. They are doing so much in Hamilton, for example working with the Centre for Civic Inclusion (HCCI) they launched WeSupportHamilton.ca an online reporting platform designed to support individuals and groups impacted by hate in Hamilton. They are also doing some work with xewcthe Hamilton Board of Health to promote equity in healthcare. They are also involved in efforts to reform the citizen selection process for the Police Services Board, to address ongoing community concerns, particularly around police use of force data.

As a next step, we want to see what programs we can develop together leveraging their network in Hamilton knowing that most of our members reside in Hamilton, it is an important work and partnership for the union.

In solidarity.
Korede Ologun

International Officer (Kusum Bhatta):



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The International Committee discussed strategies for combating racism against international students and enhancing their experiences in both academic and community settings. Housing challenges emerged as the most pressing issue, deeply affecting the well-being and academic success of international students. Key issues included limited affordable housing options, discrimination in the rental market, lack of awareness of tenant rights, unsuitable living conditions, and insufficient on-campus housing. To address these challenges, the committee proposed actionable steps, including awareness campaigns, tenant rights education, and advocacy for expanded on-campus housing. Additionally, the committee highlighted the urgency of combating racism, emphasizing initiatives such as educational workshops, anti-racism training, and awareness campaigns to foster inclusivity. Collaboration with key stakeholders was agreed upon, including the Hamilton Anti-Racism Resource Centre (HARRC) for anti-racism training, the Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion (HCCI) for cultural sensitivity workshops, YWCA Hamilton for supporting women-identifying international students, and the South Asian Heritage Association of Hamilton and Region (SAHAHR) for promoting multicultural awareness. Discussions also began on creating a centralized resource information hub for international students, encompassing housing, healthcare, and legal aid information, alongside developing mechanisms for incorporating feedback and representation in decision-making processes on newly updated CUPE website.

Kusum Bhatta
CUPE 3906

Undergraduate Officer (Elissa Cunningham):

For the past two months I've been serving as undergraduate officer for CUPE 3906. I've taken the past two months to better my understanding of the role and learn my duties and responsibilities.

I've been attending regular meetings and have been planning ways in which I can reach out to undergraduate members. Specifically, I'm investigating the different ways I can engage with unit 4 in preparation for bargaining. I'd like to make more people aware of the union and how we can help support them. I hope to receive their feedback and answer any concerns and questions they may have.

Additional Committee Reports:

Women & Gender Rights Committee - Chaired by Kusum Bhatta and Niki Sadat Afjeh:



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Key takeaways included the importance of creating spaces for dialogue on gender equity and human rights. The committee also finalized plans for a self-defense training workshop aimed at empowering participants with practical safety skills. The workshop details, including venue, dates, and participant sign-up process, were confirmed, and a promotional campaign will soon begin to encourage participation. Further details will be discussed in the next meeting, as members have been assigned tasks to follow up on.

Initial planning for International Women's Day (March 8th) and Pride Month was also discussed. The committee focused on themes of intersectionality, empowerment, and LGBTQIA+ advocacy for both events. Potential partnerships with local organizations were identified to enhance impact and inclusivity. Logistics such as venue selection, guest speakers, and event activities were considered to ensure both events are meaningful and well-executed. Members have been assigned follow-up tasks, and further planning will continue in the next meeting.

Kusum Bhatta
Chair

Communications Committee - Chaired by Jeff Arcand:

The Communications Committee has been working with the Unit 2 Bargaining team to craft messaging about the ongoing negotiations for a new contract for sessional instructors. The Employer has decided to file for conciliation (although, as of today, it is not confirmed whether they have filed yet). This move on the employer's part means that comms must ramp up outreach to Unit 2 members, including working with CAT to reach members on the phone and in person in preparation for a strike vote in early Dec.

Comms met with the digital comms rep from CUPE national, Matt Stella. Of the many interesting subjects discussed, the main point of interest is switching from Mail Chip for mass emails to a newer platform called Action Network. Action Network is specifically made for union email comms and allows for a high degree of targetability and data collection for reaching members. It is also potentially free of cost, since CUPE national already has a subscription that we can piggyback onto. This will likely be a good switch for unit 2 and 3 members because their social media usage is unclear at the moment. Lead Steward for Unit 1, Rebecca DeWael, and I both recommend the switch.

Comms would like to set up coffee tabling for the end of the semester in MUSC, BSB, and engineering buildings. This will be used to distribute information/literature, Unit 2 thermos (if they arrive, which is questionable due to Canada Post strike), and general Q&A for the end of the semester.



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Jeff Arcand
Communications Chair
Nov. 18, 2024