

VOLUME 8 // ISSUE 1

**ONTARIO FEDERATION
OF LABOUR
ACTION
REPORT**

Winter 2018

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Support Tim Hortons
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// Standing with Tim
Hortons Workers

// OFL OFFICERS



CHRIS BUCKLEY
President



PATTY COATES
Secretary-Treasurer



AHMAD GAIED
Executive
Vice-President

The Ontario Federation of Labour represents 54 unions and one million workers. It is Canada's largest provincial labour federation.

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ONTARIO FEDERATION OF LABOUR (OFL) – FÉDÉRATION DU TRAVAIL DE L'ONTARIO (FTO)

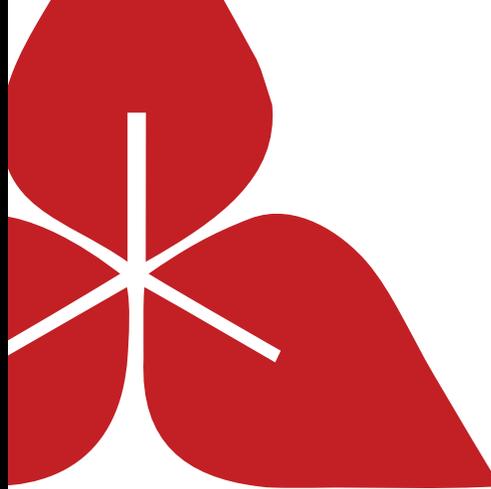
15 Gervais Drive, Suite 202
Toronto, Ontario M3C 1Y8

416-441-2731 // 1-800-668-9138
TDD: 416-443-6305
FAX: 416-441-1893

info@ofl.ca

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ONTARIO FEDERATION OF LABOUR **ACTION REPORT**

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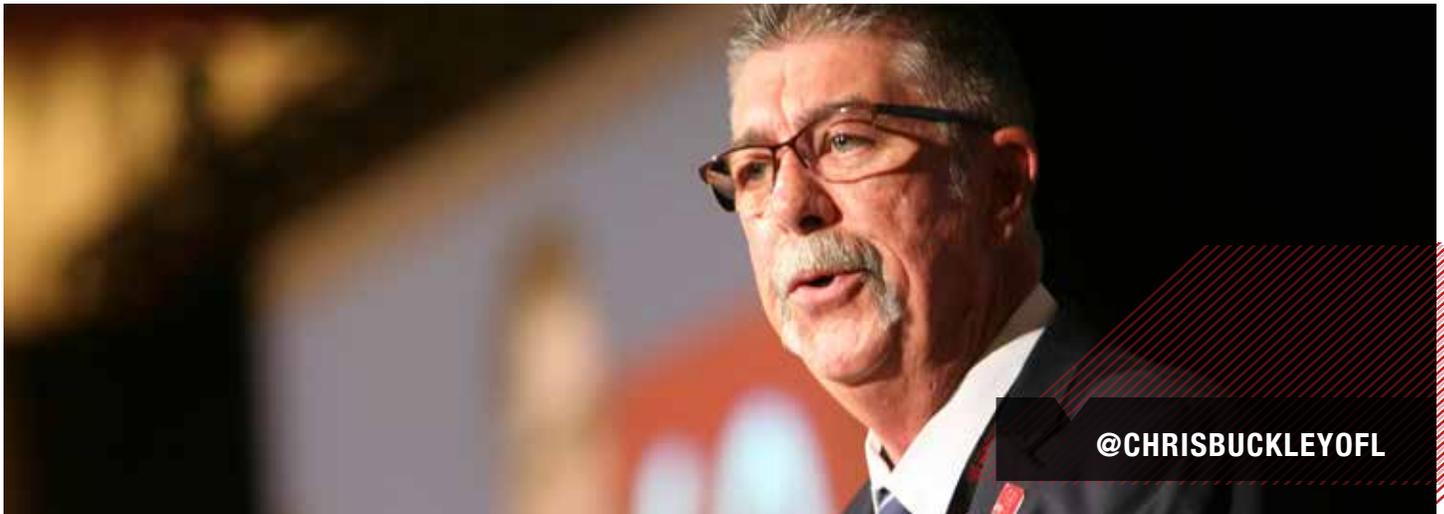
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// WELCOME TO OUR NEW AFFILIATES:

Ontario Nurses Association (ONA)

Thank you for joining the Federation! We look forward to working together to create fairness for all Ontarians.



GREETINGS,

Happy New Year!

I want to start by thanking the members of the Ontario Federation of Labour for the confidence they have placed in our leadership team. Patty Coates, Ahmad Gaeid and I want to thank you for re-electing the Fed Forward team for another term, we are honoured to be tasked with advocating for all working people in this province.

2017 was a banner year for the labour movement. Together we won positive changes in the newly-minted Bill 148. Those wins are the result of the dedicated work of labour and community activists. There is still work to do and I am proud to work alongside Ontarians until decent work is a guarantee, not just a promise, across this province.

In my speech at the 60th Anniversary #PowerON OFL Convention, I said that within 60 days we'd have a clear picture of where the next battle for workers' rights was going to be held. We didn't even need to wait that long. With the January 1 implementation of the \$14 minimum wage, some employers began bullying employees, stripping them of things like paid breaks and benefits. It might be legal to take those things away, but it is also mean-spirited and erodes job quality. It is only a matter of time before some employers break the law outright and the labour movement will be ready when they do.

The OFL's work is especially relevant during this transition to the new minimum wage. We must ensure that future increases in minimum wage are not delayed or cancelled. As unions, we will decry any reduction to employee rights and fight for decent work for every worker.

As I write this, there is a groundswell of support for workers who are paid minimum wage in this province, and we want it to continue into the upcoming election, where we will make workers' rights a key issue in the campaign.

Our message is spreading from Ontario to the rest of

Canada, and we are currently organizing with the Canadian Labour Congress and the Fight for \$15 and Fairness for a National Day of Action in support of Tim Hortons workers on January 19. We've also added a way to report bad bosses on our website ofl.ca or by phone through the Workers' Action Center: the Bad Boss Hotline.

Our movement continues to grow in strength and numbers. We are excited to welcome the Ontario Nurses' Association (ONA) back into the house of labour. We know that we are stronger together, and we look forward to continuing our efforts to build the labour movement in Ontario.

I am very proud of the gains we have made. You can read more about them in this action report. At our convention, I urged everyone to stay connected both on social media and in person with the activist community in our province. To that end, we have a new OFL app where you can follow OFL activities and updates, labour disputes and events, and solidarity opportunities.

Let's Power ON.

Sincerely,

Chris Buckley
President



// FOLLOW AND RETWEET OFL AT:

@OFLabour and @ChrisBuckleyOFL

TIM HORTONS RALLIES – SUPPORTING WORKERS’ PAY AND BENEFITS



If the parent company of Tim Hortons can regulate the price of coffee, it can regulate better treatment for Tim Hortons’ workers.

If the parent company of Tim Hortons can regulate the price of coffee, it can regulate better treatment for Tim Hortons workers. That was the message from OFL President Chris Buckley in an open letter to the CEO of RBI Inc., the parent company of the donut chain. His message was heard loud and clear across Ontario.

“The OFL calls on you, as the Chief Executive Officer of RBI Inc., and as President of the Tim Hortons brand to take immediate and corrective action to ensure Tim Hortons franchise owners respect the spirit of the new labour laws in Ontario, and immediately proceed with the full restoration of wages, paid breaks and benefits to the workers at Tim Hortons restaurants across your entire chain,” wrote OFL President Chris Buckley in the letter. “Failure to take the required next steps will further escalate this matter within our membership, your customers and the public, and will leave us no other option than to recommend continued actions at Tim Hortons locations across Ontario,” he added.

After that letter was sent, rallies were held at Tim Hortons across the province in support of Tim Hortons



Across Ontario, labour and community activists spoke loud and clear, saying RBI Inc. must ensure fairness for Tim Hortons workers.

workers, with labour and community groups after some Tim Hortons franchise owners took away benefits and paid breaks from employees, as well as perks such as a free coffee at the end of the shift. The franchises said that all these changes were to compensate for the January 1 rise in the minimum wage.

The OFL and its community partner the Fight for \$15 and Fairness lost no time in organizing widespread support for Tim Hortons workers across the province.

On Wednesday January 10, just two days after the story broke in the media, rallies were held at Tim Hortons locations across Ontario in support of Tim Hortons workers. From Hamilton to Cobourg, and across the GTA rallies demanded that the parent company of Tim Hortons, RBI Inc., must act to stop franchisees from bullying employees.

The rallies were widely covered in radio, television, and print media. Coverage of actions across Canada continues. The OFL and Fight for \$15 and Fairness are demanding a meeting with Daniel Schwartz, CEO of RBI Inc.

“We are going to continue to mobilize,” said OFL President Chris Buckley.

“Whether its providing a place where workers can report employers who are ignoring the spirit of Ontario’s new labour law, or taking our message to the head offices of this company, we are determined that the well-earned raise activists won for workers in this province won’t be eroded by greedy employers cutting other benefits.”

The day after the protests, the OFL started an online space, the Bad Boss Hotline, where workers can share their experiences. There is also the option to call in reports to the Bad Boss phonenumber at Workers' Action Centre. The hotline will allow the OFL to keep track of which employers are bullying their employees by removing benefits.



SUPPORT TIM HORTONS WORKERS ON FRIDAY, JANUARY 19, NATIONAL DAY OF ACTION!

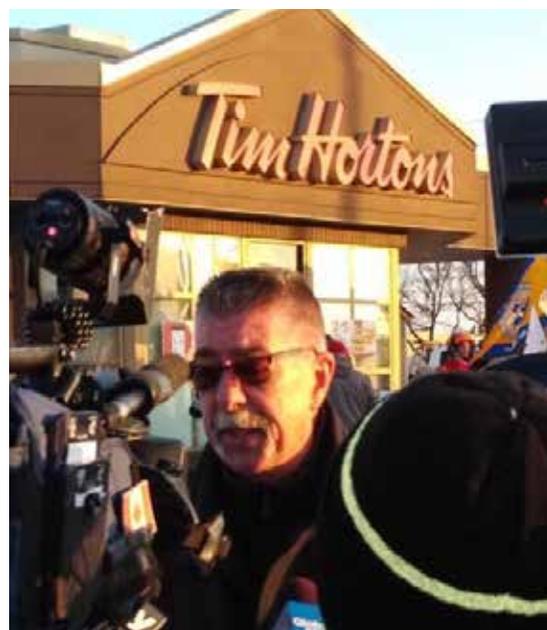
From sea to sea to sea, Canadians are taking note of the way employers have rolled back paid breaks and benefits for low wage workers. In support of Tim Hortons workers across the country, OFL, the Fight for \$15 and Fairness and the Canadian Labour Congress are organizing a National Day of Action.

“It’s time for RBI Inc CEO Daniel Schwartz to step up to the plate and make changes that will benefit every worker in the Tim Hortons chain,” said OFL President Chris Buckley. “On the January 19 National Day of Action he is going to see that the whole country is with us in calling for fair treatment for these workers.”

We encourage you to join an action near you or organize one in your neighbourhood. Flyers are available at ofl.ca. Please contact Melisa Bayon, mbayon@ofl.ca, to share your facebook event link.

Let’s come together in communities across Canada on Friday the 19 to demand that the clawbacks on workers’ wages and benefits are reversed. Let’s show our sisters and brothers at Tim Hortons that they are not alone.

Let’s make January 19 the biggest action yet! See you on Friday!



BAD BOSS HOTLINE:

If you or someone you know is facing rollbacks to breaks or other bullying by your employer because of the rise in minimum wage, tell us about it here: <http://ofl.ca/bad-boss-hotline-write-us-call-1-855-531-0778/>

JANUARY 1 CHANGES TO EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR LAW MAKE GAINS FOR WORKERS.



Last year, the labour movement celebrated the passage of Bill 148. It was the culmination of years of advocacy and mobilizing on behalf of workers across the province.

The bill made significant gains for workers, which came into effect on New Year's Day, 2018.

“The fight for Bill 148 to move toward fairness for all Ontario workers, whether they're in a union or not was an important one for the labour movement. While there is still further to go, we made a dent and showed the government of Ontario that the workers of this province won't stand for being mistreated under the law. Bill 148 will go down in history as a moment where the labour movement made very significant gains for workers,” said OFL President Chris Buckley.

Notable changes include the increase in the minimum wage to \$14 an hour, and the addition of five paid leave days for survivors of domestic violence. The bill contained a number of other positive changes for workers.

AS OF JANUARY 1, 2018 THE *LABOUR RELATIONS ACT:*

- Allows workplaces with the same employer and same union at one or more locations to bargain together in cases where the employer and union agree;
- Allows newly certified workplaces to combine with other existing unionized workplaces with the same employer and same union;
- Removes language that denied workers continued representation by their own union and undermined their right to choose their own bargaining agent;
- Provides early access to workplace information (i.e., employee names, phone numbers, and personal email addresses and in some cases, job title and business address) — provided the union has 20 per cent membership support;
- Extends card-based certification to three additional sectors (i.e., temporary help agency industry, building services sector, and home care and community services industry);
- Allows workers to vote to join a union outside the workplace, including electronically and by telephone;
- Provides automatic access to first collective agreements in cases where employers contravene the *Labour Relations Act*;
- Removes rigorous requirements to consider whether a second vote is likely to reflect workers' true wishes and whether a union has adequate membership support in cases where employers contravene the *Labour Relations Act*;
- Provides unionized workers with greater just cause protection from employers who seek to “clean house” following a union organizing campaign and a strike/lockout;
- Protects the right of employees to return to work, following a lawful strike or lockout;
- Extends protections against contract flipping to workers in the building services industry (e.g., security, food services, and cleaning) with the possibility of extending such protections to publicly-funded services; and,
- Ensures that all new protections under the *Labour Relations Act* come into effect as of January 1, 2018.

AS OF JANUARY 1, 2018 THE *EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS ACT*:

- Increases the minimum wage to \$14 per hour in 2018 and \$15 per hour in 2019;
- Mandates equal pay for equal work for part-time, temporary, seasonal, casual, and temp agency workers relative to full-time employees – with some exceptions;
- Requires temp agency workers to be paid the same as client employees with one week notice if terminated after three months on the job;
- Extends greater coverage to Crown employees under the *Employment Standards Act*;
- Prohibits the misclassification of employees as independent contractors;
- Provides an extra week of vacation after five years of service with the same employer at six per cent of wages;
- Extends Personal Emergency Leave to all workers – two of which are paid days and can be used as sick days with no medical note required;
- Provides five paid days for survivors of domestic and/or sexual violence, followed by job-protected leave;
- Provides fairer scheduling rules, including pay for on-call duty (3 hours pay at regular rate); pay for call-in shifts (3 hours pay at regular rate); pay for cancelled shifts with less than 48 hours notice (3 hours regular pay); and protection for refusing shifts with less than 96 hours notice;
- Prohibits unionized workers from being unfairly disadvantaged, requiring all collective agreement to comply with the minimum standards outlined in the *Employment Standards Act*;
- Declares Family Day a statutory public holiday;
- Provides 12 weeks leave for pregnancy loss, 1.5 years for pregnancy and parental leave, 104 weeks for death or disappearance of child;
- Makes it easier to treat related businesses as a single employer and hold them accountable to workers;
- Simplifies overtime pay calculations;
- Eliminates the requirement for employees to raise *Employment Standards Act* concerns with their employer before filing a claim; and,
- Ensures that all new protections under the *Employment Standards Act* come into effect as of January 1, 2018 with the following exceptions: misclassification (November 27, 2017); parental and critical illness leaves (December 3, 2017); equal pay for equal work (April 1, 2018); and scheduling (January 1, 2019).

DEMANDING ACTION FROM RBI INC. FOR TIM HORTONS WORKERS



(Toronto, ON) – The Ontario Federation of Labour is demanding action from the parent company of Tim Hortons, on behalf of Tim Hortons workers in an open letter to Restaurant Brands International (RBI) Inc. CEO Daniel Schwartz. The text of the open letter follows:

RE: TAKE IMMEDIATE ACTION TO RESTORE WAGES AND BENEFITS TO ALL TIM HORTONS WORKERS

Dear Mr. Schwartz:

I write today to formally request that as Chief Executive Officer of Restaurant Brands International (RBI) Inc.– the parent company of Tim Hortons, you take the immediate steps required to ensure that Tim Hortons franchise owners respect the spirit of, as well as comply with, labour laws in Ontario.

It is our view that this can only occur with the full restoration of wages, paid breaks and benefits to the workers at Tim Hortons restaurants across your entire chain.

The Ontario Federation of Labour represents one million workers in Ontario, and we advocate for improved and fair working conditions on behalf of all working people in the province.

Like millions of Ontarians, many of whom are your customers, we were disgusted last week to learn that many



Tim Hortons franchise owners had taken steps to claw back paid coffee breaks and reduce health benefits of their minimum wage earners, saying they needed to offset perceived costs associated with the increase in the minimum wage in Ontario.

These actions against minimum wage earners are particularly galling in light of the “Canadian Values” branding that Tim Hortons trades upon. Further, it is perplexing that your franchise owners would take these steps within the first week of operating under the new minimum wage regulations, when a price hike had already been implemented in 2017 by Tim Hortons, in anticipation of the increased minimum wage.

We are aware of the corporate structure at RBI where the parent company, Tim Hortons Corporation, dictates nearly every detail of a franchise-owner’s business practice. We understand that franchise owners must have a net worth of at least \$1.5 million to be awarded a franchise. We are also aware that pricing structures are set at the corporate level, and that the parent organization, RBI, has the means and methods to ensure that franchise operators respect the law and follow policies and procedures set forth by the parent corporation.

We agree with your statement that the actions of Tim Hortons franchise owners are indeed “reckless”, and that “Tim Hortons [employees] should never be used to further an agenda or be treated as just an ‘expense.’” We also agree that this is completely unacceptable, and does not reflect the stated values of your brand.

Until benefits and paid coffee breaks are restored along with previous labour practices, such as the payment of shift premiums for overnight shifts and allowing servers the ability to receive tips instead of forcing workers to remit them to the owner of the franchise – we will be relentless in our efforts to draw attention and will continue to be critical of the predatory labour practices at Tim Hortons Restaurants across Ontario.

Stating your disdain for the actions of “rogue” franchise owners is not enough to resolve this unfortunate situation.

The OFL calls on you, as the Chief Executive Officer of RBI Inc., and as President of the Tim Hortons brand to take immediate and corrective action to ensure Tim Hortons franchise owners respect the spirit of the new labour laws in Ontario, and immediately proceed with the full restoration of wages, paid breaks and benefits to the workers at Tim Hortons restaurants across your entire chain.

Failure to take the required next steps will further escalate this matter within our membership, your customers and the public, and will leave us no other option than to recommend continued actions at Tim Hortons locations across Ontario.

The Labour movement is calling on you to take immediate corrective action instead of simply blaming this situation on the reckless and greedy actions of your franchise owners.

Respectfully,

CHRIS BUCKLEY

President

Ontario Federation of Labour



KNOW YOUR RIGHTS UNDER BILL 148!

Ontario’s labour and employment laws have changed. What will that mean for you and workers across Ontario? Join the Ontario Federation of Labour for a telephone town hall to talk about the new rights workers have won across the province, and how to keep up the fight for fairness! RSVP at <http://www.makeitfair.ca/events>

What do Ontario’s new labour laws mean for you?

Know your rights!

Join a telephone town hall
January 30, 2018 at 6:00 p.m.

MAKE JANUARY 29 A DAY OF REMEMBRANCE AND ACTION ON ISLAMOPHOBIA



The Ontario Federation of Labour is one of the signatories to an open letter calling on the Canadian Government to declare January 29 a day of remembrance and action on Islamophobia.

“We cannot forget the six worshippers murdered in a racist attack last January and declaring this day will underscore this government’s commitment to ending racism, and creating a country where no one need live in fear,” said OFL Executive Vice-President Ahmad Gaied.

The letter, signed by over 100 individuals and organizations, reads as follows:

Re: Designating January 29th as the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Islamophobia

On behalf of the National Council of Canadian Muslims (NCCM), I am writing to you about the upcoming first anniversary of the Quebec City mosque attack that will take place on January 29, 2018.

One year on, Canadian Muslim

communities are still reeling from the devastating terrorist attack that claimed the lives of six Muslim men worshipping in their mosque - fathers, husbands and sons - and gravely injured many others. For the first time in Canadian history, a place of worship was targeted by a horrific act of violence solely because the victims were Muslims.

The question on so many minds is how do we prevent such a violent hate-motivated attack targeting Canadian Muslims, or any other religious community, from ever occurring again?

With the rise of far-right extremist groups that continue to threaten the safety of Canadian Muslim institutions and congregations, it is critical that our elected leaders stand firmly against Islamophobia and the agents of bigotry who aim to foment hateful division between Canadians and their fellow Muslim citizens. We must not allow voices of hate, even ones that may initially appear to be on the margins, to permeate our public discourse and damage our social fabric.

As you have eloquently stated, in these difficult times we must always remember the bonds of unity as Canadians and protect the diverse and open nature of our society.

To that end, we call on your government to designate, by order-in-council or by proclamation, January 29 as a National Day of Remembrance and Action on Islamophobia, on or before the first anniversary. This call is supported by a host of other Canadian Muslim organizations and community partners.

Such a designation will enable Canadians to collectively remember the victims of the attack and to enhance public education about the perils of hate, bigotry and Islamophobia.

We look forward to your response to this important issue.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Ihsaan Gardee, Executive Director, National Council of Canadian Muslims (NCCM)

For a full list of signatories, go to: <https://www.nccm.ca>

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY PINS AND POSTERS

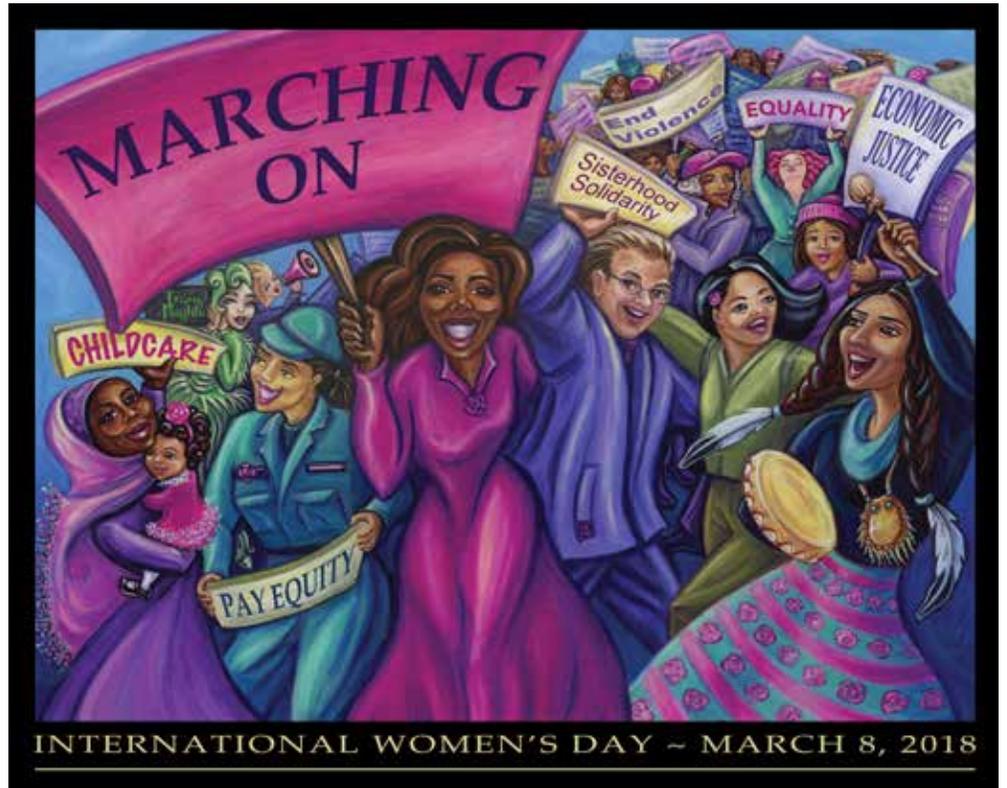


2018 is the eighth year of the OFL's exciting March 8 Project, developed by the OFL Women's Committee celebrating International Women's Day (IWD).

This year's theme is "Marching ON". Both the pewter pin and poster are a work of art that our members and community partners will value for many years to come.

"Last year, we sold a record number of pins and posters, and were able to provide funding to projects advancing women's equality across Ontario as a result," said OFL Secretary-Treasurer Patty Coates.

The projects that were funded included: Equal Pay Coalition's Equal Pay Day Campaign, five girls were sponsored to attend the CBTU Summer Youth Program, the OCBCC's Child Care Worker and Early Childhood Educator Appreciation Day, Northwestern Ontario Women's Centre, Ontario Native Women's Association, co-sponsorship of Rise Up! A Women's History



Digitizing Project, and the Pay Equity Supreme Court Challenge.

This year's pin is being sold at cost plus 25 cents. Any surplus of this added cost will be donated to a provincial women's organization recommended by the OFL Women's Committee.

The price per pin for orders of 500 or more is \$3.50. Orders of less than 500 is \$3.75 per pin. Unions that place orders of 500 or more pins will have their union logo added to the poster. Posters (11x17) will be available in limited quantities in both English and French for \$1.00 per poster.

All orders must be placed by February 11, 2018, in order to have the pins produced and shipped in advance of IWD. Orders can be placed after February 11, 2018, however, we would not guarantee receipt of order before March 8, 2018.

To order, go to: myunionstore.com/iwd or maboutiquesyndicale.com/8mars. You can find ordering information at ofl.ca. If you have any questions, please contact the OFL at info@ofl.ca or 416-441-2731.

ANDREA HORWATH'S VISION OF HOPE AND OPPORTUNITY



Monday afternoon, delegates warmly welcomed Ontario NDP leader Andrea Horwath to the OFL 14th Biennial Convention. Horwath's introduction was met with loud cheers and a standing ovation, as she greeted delegates on her way to the main stage.

"I want to thank President Buckley for your strong leadership and your incredible dedication to the labour movement in Ontario," said Horwath. "The OFL is leading the charge for the progressive change that workers need," she added.

Horwath commended delegates for their commitment to improving the lives of workers. She spoke about the OFL's Make It Fair campaign, and its community partner the Workers' Action Centre and their campaign, the Fight for \$15 and Fairness as examples of strong movements led by Ontario activists.

She said that the Ontario NDP recognizes the labour movement as a founding partner, and that the party will continue to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with workers and unions.

"We stand with you against anti-labour, regressive back-to-work legislation that tramples the rights of working people," she said of the legislation that passed Sunday night, ordering Ontario college faculty, members of OPSEU, back to work.

"We knew we would take some heat but we were proud to stand



for what is right," said Horwath. "I would do it all over again."

Horwath said that if she is elected Premier in the 2018 election, the Ontario NDP will champion good jobs, decent wages, and safe workplaces.

"No worker should ever be injured or killed on the job in Ontario. Even one death is too many," she said.

Other priorities included paid sick days and emergency leave for every worker, restoring card-check certification to ensure that all workers in Ontario can join a union, and paid leave for victims of domestic violence.

"Survivors of domestic violence who have to keep their kids safe shouldn't have to worry about losing their paycheques or their jobs," said Horwath.

"The labour movement is not a movement built on fear. It is built on hope," she said. "Let's deliver change together."

LOVE AND COURAGE: JAGMEET SINGH PLEDGES SOLIDARITY TO BUILD A JUST SOCIETY



Leader of the federal New Democratic Party, Jagmeet Singh, brought an invigorating, progressive message to the Ontario Federation of Labour's Power ON Convention on November 21, 2017.

To a packed and buzzing crowd, Singh opened his address with, "big ups," for labour's principled and effective activism in Ontario.

Singh referred to both the tireless work of people across the province, but also to the essential amendments that their activism, in coordination with the Ontario NDP, made possible in the final iteration of Bill 148.

Singh congratulated Andrea Horwath's team in defending workers' rights, saying, "The only party that stood up for workers was the Ontario NDP and Andrea Horwath."

"Society is better, stronger, and more vibrant when people are empowered," said Singh.

He pledged to oppose inequitable funding that continues to leave Indigenous children behind, to address the challenges of climate change, to end carding and racial discrimination, and also to address the opioid crisis facing communities across the country.

"If our goal is harm reduction, let's save people's lives," Singh said. "That's why I'm calling for the full decriminalization of all personal possession offences."

The federal Bill C-27 proposes changes that would give employers a pathway to transfer workers' pensions from defined-benefit to unreliable target-benefit plans, in a move that betrayed election promises. Singh pledged to strongly oppose this bill, and also to fight to improve protections.

"We're going to oppose the continual and ongoing pension theft in this country," he said. "We need pension protections and banking laws that put workers first over banks and profits."

In closing, Singh pledged his party's support for workers, but also asked delegates to join the federal NDP's push for a progressive future, saying that, together, "We can build a society in which there's justice for all."

CONVENTION DELEGATES WEAR PURPLE, SHINE LIGHT FOR WOMEN

As a gesture of support for survivors of violence against women, delegates at the OFL's final day of convention wore purple as a sign of courage.

Lights were dimmed and delegates shone their phone lights which flickered like candles throughout the hall.

"December 6 is an opportunity to reflect on the tragedy of what took place in Montreal and to reach out to all families of these victims whose lives have been forever altered by acts of violence," said OFL Secretary-Treasurer Patty Coates. "We must use the act of remembering to fuel collaborative efforts across our country to build a better, safer, and more inclusive Ontario and Canada."

Fourteen female engineering students were gunned down at l'École Polytechnique de Montréal on December 6, 1989. Canada's Parliament later declared December 6, the National Day of Remembrance & Action on Violence Against Women.

RISING AGAINST HATE: WE MUST ACT



“The rise of hate, white supremacy is not new to the labour movement, but we need to be concerned. We must act,” said moderator, Walied Khogali, Leader with the Coalition Against White Supremacy & Islamophobia.



Panelists took to the OFL Convention stage on November 22, 2017 to discuss strategies to mobilize and work against rising oppression and racism in today's society.

Mohammed Hashim, Senior Organizer with the Toronto & York Region District Labour Council opened up the discussion by highlighting the need to create safe spaces for marginalized groups. He told delegates about the creation of a safe space for Muslim community members inside the Toronto City Council Chambers, at a time when anti-Islamic protesters were gathered outside City Hall.

Canadian Federation of Students Ontario Chairperson, Nour Alideeb told delegates about first getting involved with her own student union: “I was drawn to my students' union because of the work that they were doing, bringing people together to stand up against systems of oppression and hate,” she said.

Patti Dalton, President of the London & District Labour Council, spoke about the

important role labour councils play in organizing and mobilizing against fascism and oppression in their communities.

“Labour has a long history of mobilizing around social justice issues. This is exactly what unions do,” said Dalton.

Hamilton & District Labour Council President Anthony Marco told delegates that fifty union locals had already committed to participating in future anti-racism and anti-oppression activities in the Hamilton area through the Shut Down Hate initiative. He said that they were also approaching local organizations and businesses to sign the pledge.

“As union members, we would never accept racism or oppression in our workplaces, and we should not accept it in our community,” said Marco.

“The appetite for anti-racism and anti-oppression training was greater than we expected. I encourage unions to offer training opportunities and for members to take advantage of these opportunities,” said Hashim.

“Coalition building is so important. If we're not working in unison, we're working against each other. It has to be all of us or none of us,” said Alideeb.

CHRIS BUCKLEY, PATTY COATES, AND AHMAD GAIED TO LEAD THE OFL FORWARD TO 2019

Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL) delegates at the 14th Biennial Convention have elected incumbent Chris Buckley and his leadership team, Secretary-Treasurer Patty Coates and Executive Vice-President Ahmad Gaied to lead the Federation until 2019.

“It’s a tremendous honour that the OFL delegates have elected this team to move the Federation forward into the next two years,”

- OFL President Chris Buckley

“It’s a tremendous honour that the OFL delegates have elected this team to move the Federation forward into the next two years,” said Ontario Federation of Labour President Chris Buckley. “Patty Coates, Ahmad Gaied, and I have pushed strongly for fair employment and labour laws over the last two years and we are going to continue to build on what’s been won until there is fairness for all in this province.”

“I’m humbled to know that our members appreciate and share our commitment to addressing

precarious work and standing up for working people. I believe our team has made a difference and we will collaboratively continue to fight for the Ontario we want,” said Ontario Federation of Labour Secretary-Treasurer Patty Coates.

“I am committed to continue the work of the Federation to mobilize all workers whether they are unionized or not to obtain fairness and equity in the workplace,” said Ontario Federation of Labour Executive Vice-President Ahmad Gaied. “Together we can build on our wins and stop the rise of

precarious work in this province.”

Since winning a unanimous mandate from Ontario’s labour movement in 2015, the OFL’s leadership team has pressed the government on workers’ rights during the first comprehensive review of labour and employment laws in over 20 years, pushing for equity, good jobs, and stronger labour rights.



ONTARIO'S UNIONS CELEBRATE PASSAGE OF BILL 148 AT QUEEN'S PARK RALLY



Several main streets in Toronto's downtown core were unrecognizable on the afternoon of Wednesday, November 22, 2017, brimming with over a thousand union activists on their way to rally for decent work at Queen's Park.



cheers. "It's very appropriate that we are here at Queen's Park standing up for fairness for workers in Ontario. We must Power ON to make this the Ontario we want." Buckley acknowledged that the bill doesn't go far enough, and pledged to continue to advocate for further rights and protections.

I was a regular worker. The more the employer stepped on me, took away my rights, the stronger I became. My union supported me.

-Malka Paracha

Chants and whistles ricocheted off buildings while union flags and placards bobbed as the stream of delegates, observers, and guests of the Ontario Federation of Labour's 14th Biennial Convention headed towards the legislature. They were gathering to demonstrate their commitment to advocating for the province's working people.

Once they arrived, rally participants were greeted with news that the *Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Act*, known as Bill 148, had just passed. The bill will raise the province's minimum wage to \$14 dollars an hour as of January 1, 2018, and to \$15 dollars an hour by January 1, 2019, and includes other hard-fought gains and protections for Ontario workers.

"Today is a very important day for workers in this province," said OFL President Chris Buckley to deafening





Malka Paracha, a UNITE HERE Local 75 member, told the rally that today's win symbolizes her own transformation into a strong advocate for herself, and for others like her.

"I was a regular worker," said Paracha. "The more the employer stepped on me, took away my rights, the stronger I became. My union supported me," she added.

Students have played a key role in the struggle for decent work and this will continue, promised Nour Alideeb, Chairperson of the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) Ontario. "We vigorously push for equal pay for equal work, we push for respect in the workplace," she said.

Alideeb criticized the government of Ontario for, this week, ordering college teachers and staff back to work before they had negotiated fair contracts. "That is not okay," she said to loud shouts of "Shame!".

Despite setbacks, the successful passage of the new bill will be an inspiration to non-unionized workers who may consider joining or creating their own unions, said Pam Frache, coordinator of the Fight for \$15 and Fairness campaign.

"When ordinary workers stand up now and say we want a union, are we going to organize them?" asked Frache. "Yes!" responded the crowd.



SUPPORTING TIM HORTONS WORKERS – TWITTER DIARY



@GORDLEYT

"@TimHortons and RBI: You can do a lot better to protect workers. A lot better. #IStandWithTimHortons Workers"

@BELLA_LISAB

"Standing up for the rights of #TimHortons workers who are facing the shameful backlash of their employer who opposes the modest increase in min. wage. @TimHortons @fairwagesnow #CEO6million\$man"



@MEGW613

"Are big businesses going to stand on the right side of history and treat their employees with respect and dignity, or is this kind of behaviour showing their true colours? The eyes of the world are watching now. #15andFairness #canlab #TimHortons"

@ALIANKARIM

"At the @TimHortons in Oakville interrupting business as usual. We love workers at Tim's! Shame on their CEO #DanielSchwartz #boycottTimHortons #canlab"

DESMOND COLE: WE ARE FIGHTING FOR A SAFER, MORE EQUITABLE PROVINCE



Thursday, November 23 political activist and journalist Desmond Cole made a surprise and welcome appearance at the OFL Power ON 14th Biennial Convention.

He began by thanking, on behalf of Dafonte Miller, and all those who have experienced police brutality, the people who supported his court appearance.

Cole was arrested in July after staging a sit-in during a Toronto Police Services Board meeting. His action was in protest of the way police handled the investigation of Const. Michael Theriault who was charged in the beating of 19-year-old Dafonte Miller in December 2016.

“Maybe they want to make an example out of me, I’m very happy for them to try. They have no idea who they are messing with,” said Cole. “The point is that they are not messing with me. When I saw people outside the courthouse today that’s what I realized. We are fighting back.”

Cole recounted the words of his lawyer, Julian Falconer: “there is no doubt about



who is responsible: a Toronto police officer and his brother.”

Cole elaborated that “Miller was attacked and brutally assaulted by individuals while he and his friends were walking.”

In calling on convention delegates to support radical Black activism, Cole stressed that the new provincial legislation on police brutality doesn’t go far enough but credits Black Lives Matter Toronto (BLMTO) for the strong advocacy efforts that helped establish the foundation for the law. This year, BLMTO’s political actions ensured that uniformed police officers did not march in the Toronto Pride Parade.

“There are people in this city who are not ready to stand side-by-side with the police while the police are brutalizing them. I want to ask all of you in this room, whatever union you belong to: I am asking you to open up your wallets and support radical Black activism where you live,” said Cole.

“It’s true, through practices like carding, black children are disproportionately affected. We need to strengthen oversight, and that’s for all of you. Change is being made by strong, committed groups of Black people and their allies. The Black people who are fighting in your communities are not just fighting for themselves, they are fighting for all of you. We are fighting for a safer, more equitable province in Ontario.”

FARRAH KHAN: A WORLD WITHOUT VIOLENCE NEEDN'T SOUND LIKE SCIENCE FICTION



Farrah Khan says she wants her job eliminated. It was an odd statement to hear, until she talked about why. As a long-time advocate and the current Co-Chair of Ontario's Roundtable on Violence Against Women, Khan told delegates at the OFL convention that it's sadly not likely to happen.



"Equity, consent culture, the end of violence against women, or of gender-based violence ending, is science fiction right now," she said.

But Khan added that the labour movement has had a very positive impact for many women, who have and continue to benefit, from each new campaign that supports fairness and equity for all.

"Labour has lately had two huge wins that I want to name for advancing women's empowerment," she said. "I want to name the Fight for \$15 and Fairness, that means we have \$15 minimum wage that is coming to Ontario and that will change the lives of everyone."

Khan explained that economic equity means that women won't be forced to stay in the homes of abusers if they can afford to leave.

Secondly, Khan highlighted the recent victory of securing five days of paid leave for survivors of sexual or domestic abuse.

"I can tell you that as a survivor, I lived with domestic abuse," she shared.

"If I had known that I could have taken that time off and not be penalized, what a change that would have been."

"This allows us to give breathing space to survivors," she added.

Ontario's unions, can continue to support survivors of sexual violence and harassment by looking to remove barriers to reporting and to empowering women to walk away from abusive relationships. Instead of asking survivors why they didn't report: "a better question is: what are the conditions in our workplaces that make it so hard for people to say that something happened to them," she told the crowd.

Beyond training, it's about the "in-between conversations" that are needed in all spaces.

"How do we envision a world that is free of violence? Is it talking to each other?" asked Khan.

"Yes, but more importantly, it's about listening."

Khan shared that the question of 'what next?' must be about 'how we heal', which includes understanding what and who may cause harm in our lives and how to move towards transformative change. Including abusers in the conversation is painful, but crucial.

"I want to live in a world without violence," she concluded. All of us, she said, still have much work to do.

PANEL OFFERS USEFUL LESSONS ON ACTIVATING VOTERS

If there was one central message from Thursday afternoon at the OFL's 14th Biennial Convention, it was this: democracy takes work.

Chris Watson, a CUPE National Representative, told the convention that last spring, with a provincial by-election approaching, people were wondering how new election finance laws would impact their campaigns to support a party of their choice.

After some research, they came to understand that they wouldn't be able to simply write a cheque to support a party or candidate as they had done previously. They also faced "severe restrictions" when it came to speaking to the general public as a third party through paid ads. Yet, what they discovered was they could speak internally within CUPE to "say whatever we want and spend as much as we wish."

They developed the "SOO" Model out of the new paradigm. They reached out heavily to their own members to engage them on key messages, and to encourage them to present the messages to their families, friends, and colleagues. Using postcards, meetings, and canvassing, the model was successful, and could be useful for the upcoming 2018 provincial election, said Watson.



That person-to-person contact is key, said Nuvi Sidhu, Campaigns Field Director for the NDP. "When people are invested in the issues, they want to speak to others," she explained, citing the way the party deliberately set out to nurture leadership among their volunteers. With a systematic approach that included 73 organizers, two campaign offices, 3,259 volunteers, and 1147 "Growth Captains", the campaign for Jagmeet Singh's leadership bid made history by signing up 47,000 new members within a short span of time.

"We were building up capacity and making a community," said Sidhu.

Building leaders is key, said Tyler Downey, Director of Member Engagement at SEIU Healthcare. "Engagement is not an event. It is a continuing evolving process," he added.

He described building a leadership academy that provides education and connection. Over one four-day period, they were able to organize members to knock on 4000 doors and talk to people about key issues. It was an opportunity for members to recognize their own potential in raising awareness and in helping to bring about positive change.

Without full inclusion of the diverse membership, said Downey, these types of efforts will fail. "We must grow organically through inclusion. We are leaving a lot of people behind."

Moderator Melisa Bayon, OFL Director for Political Action and Outreach, concluded the panel by reminding delegates the value of civic engagement by recalling her home country of Argentina which went through upheaval as its people struggled to restore their democracy years ago.

"Here in Ontario, we must challenge ourselves to mobilize action across the province, to engage labour councils across the province, to focus on resources and mobilization," said Bayon. "That is what we are committed to doing at the OFL."

"We hope to build a movement with you," she said.

YOUNG WORKERS FORUM TALKS ORGANIZING AGAINST POOR CONDITIONS



Acid burns that blacken skin, sixteen-hour workdays with no overtime pay, racial slurs, even physical assault: those are some of the horrific experiences precarious workers in Ontario endure.

The Decent Work Now and in the Future panel described these all-too-common experiences on Monday afternoon at the OFL Convention. As panelists described their experiences with unscrupulous employers, OFL delegates could be heard repeatedly calling out “Shame!” The young organizers and Toronto Star journalist Sara Mojtehdzadeh described the realities faced by so many Ontario workers.

“The whole experience to me was eye-opening,” said Mojtehdzadeh of her undercover reporting of a Fiera Foods industrial bakers plant as part of a Toronto Star investigation. “It was an insight into this large employer, but also, more broadly and more importantly, into a system that is, in most cases, entirely legal. A system of using a temp agency to avoid workplace injury liability,” she said. “Workers are paying the price for that,” she added.

Mojtehdzadeh told the audience that the mostly newcomer and racialized workers she toiled alongside for a month, are often ill-equipped to push for their rights.

“The role of the labour movement is to show what is possible to people who have no other way, or no other



interaction; that something better is out there,” she explained. “That is something incredibly powerful.”

Panelist Suleman Basharat told the convention that organizing takes a lot of coordination. As a server at the Rogers Centre and a leader in UNITE HERE Local 75, Basharat explained that there are three key ingredients necessary to successfully organize precarious workers: leadership development, committee building, and innovation.

“Things have evolved, so must we,” said Basharat.

By uniting a workforce primarily comprising of first and second-generation Canadians, they were able to successfully negotiate contracts for food workers at multiple locations as part of the UNITE HERE campaign, Basharat explained. Their organizing was so successful, the workers even managed to ensure that an abusive chef who had assaulted a black woman was eventually fired.

Kara Manso, a caregiver and organizer with the Caregivers Action Centre said she believes it is racist to require migrant workers to work for several years for one employer before being granted permanent status.

“We are treated as servants,” she shared. “A lot of us caregivers are women of colour so we experience this, and not only in the workplace but our work is our home; so it’s an endless experience of racism, sexism, Islamophobia.”

Moderator Mina Rajabi Paak, President at York University Graduates Students’ Association, acknowledged the many gains that are being made. She spoke about the anticipated passage of Bill 148, which will increase the minimum wage to \$15 by 2019 and guarantees sick days and equal pay for all temporary and contract workers. She pointed out that the labour movement clearly has much more work to do to push the government to go further.

“The stakes are really high for workers in this province. I hope that you will go back to your unions and go back to your communities and continue that fight,” concluded Paak, smiling as the delegates who rose in a standing ovation, whistling and cheering in support.

PANEL TACKLES “MOST PRESSING ISSUE OF OUR TIME”: CLIMATE CHANGE

Teacher Joy Lachica described listening to the radio with her seven-year-old daughter and hearing the announcer talk about a “letter to humanity” signed by over fifteen thousand scientists warning that life on this planet is in dire jeopardy.

“Mama, what does that mean?” her daughter demanded to know.

“How do I answer my child?” asked Lachica, who sits on the Provincial Executive Board at the Elementary Teachers’ Federation of Ontario (ETFO). “What do you say? What hope do we offer our youth at the tip of our tongues? It’s not a quick answer.”

Lachica urged teachers to educate themselves in order to educate young people about building green economies and a hopeful future.

Hope also lies in the power of today’s workers and communities to ensure a seat at the table, posited Jamie Kirkpatrick, of Blue Green Alliance Canada. Formed in 2008, the alliance comprises of several major unions and organizations including the United Steel Workers (USW), Unifor, Clean Energy Canada, the Broadbent and Pembina Institutes, and Columbia Institute.

Showing a slide with images of three puzzle pieces, Kirkpatrick said that the first piece symbolizes government, the second piece represents industries, and the third piece represents workers, allies, and communities.

“We’re the ones who only have power

when we are together,” he said of the third piece. “And we are sometimes not included,” he pointed out, highlighting how the Alberta government initially spoke only to industries about the coal phase-out.

“That was a mistake,” he suggested, explaining that the provincial government eventually reached out to unions. A similar trend has played out at the federal level as well, said Kirkpatrick, pointing to the Canadian Labour Congress’s recent announcement that it will work with the Environment Minister on a Just Transition Task Force.

Governments pose a challenge, said Patrick Rondeau of the Fédération des travailleurs et travailleuses du Québec (FTQ), but they aren’t the only ones who do.

He described how many non-governmental organizations told Quebec unions that a “just transition” must be about more than workers concerned about their own jobs. “We told them they are right, we have to think further than just the workers, but for entire communities,” said Rondeau.

Quebec unions also had to modify their messaging with the government – creating a new narrative that links the economy to social justice. He said the FTQ is organizing a forum in May to bring a full agenda on just transition to the government.

Canada’s postal workers are also involved in helping advance a green economy, said Megan Whitfield of CUPW.

“We want a 100 per cent renewable economy that addresses inequalities, puts power in our hands, and improves the lives of all Canadians,” said Whitfield.

John Cartwright, President of the Toronto and York Region Labour Council, wove in his own views on the urgency of climate change, encouraging delegates to read the Council’s Greenprint for Greater Toronto, which applies to every region in the province, and in the country.

“We have to redefine the world that we are living in,” said Cartwright.



PANEL: THERE IS NO HEALTH WITHOUT MENTAL HEALTH



“No workplace is immune to mental illness,” said Vinay Sharma, National Representative, Health & Safety with Unifor. “Much like diabetes, heart disease, or a broken leg – individuals can recover from mental illness, but it must be treated.”

Sharma was moderating Mental Health: Health & Safety / Workers’ Compensation Forum at the OFL convention on Thursday morning. He was joined by Terri Aversa, Health & Safety Officer with the Ontario Public Service Employees Union, John Oudyk, Occupational Hygienist with the Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers, Maryth Yachnin, staff lawyer with the Industrial Accident Victims’ Group of Ontario, and Jennifer Ralph, a paramedic.

Aversa told delegates that the approach to Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) must be broadened and reminded everyone that trauma at work affects not just first responders, but all frontline workers. “But more than just



trauma at work can lead to workplace mental health issues,” she said.

Oudyk said that it’s in everyone’s best interest – workers and employers – to address and prevent mental health issues caused by workplace stress. He used the example that workers under stress are more susceptible to physical injury on the job.

He also encouraged delegates to visit the Stress Assess website (www.stressassess.ca) and take the survey on psychosocial factors in the workplace.

Yachnin explained new legislation that is aimed at helping workers suffering from psychological injury and mental illness. She spoke about recent gains in terms of opening entitlements for workers who have chronic or traumatic mental stress and who suffer on the job. But she said the standard for proving injury is much higher for chronic or traumatic mental stress, and the testing requirements are much more vigorous.

Sharma introduced Ralph, telling delegates: “It takes a lot of courage to share your own personal story publicly.”

Ralph, an advanced-care paramedic in the Peel region for over 20 years, shared her emotional story of being diagnosed with PTSD as a result of years of work stress and trauma. She said it wasn’t one singular incident that caused her PTSD, but a whole career of witnessing traumatic events and injuries. She said there had always been a workplace culture by which paramedics should deflect how they felt about the calls they attended, and sweep it all under the rug at the end of their shift, returning to their personal lives as if nothing had happened.

“We are still more reactive in the management of mental health injuries, than proactive. But the job description isn’t going to change,” she said. “It’s time we take care of each other.”



OFL AWARDS



YOLANDA MCCLEAN

Cliff Pilkey Labour Activist Award

Yolanda McClean's work for Ontario labour recognised with Cliff Pilkey Labour Activist Award

The award recognises the outstanding contributions of a worker or retiree who has made a significant impact in the labour movement and community.

McClean serves as the Second Vice-President of CUPE Ontario, position she has held for almost ten years, and was re-elected as CUPE National's Diversity Vice-President, representing racialized workers, a position she has held for more than a decade. She is also the President of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU) – Canada Chapter.

"The fight for representation is truly the most important fight," said McClean, reminding delegates that taking real action and having a diversity of voices in leadership roles is vital.



STAN RAPER

Bob Borch Human Rights Award

The late Stan Raper was awarded the Bob Borch Human Rights Award today at the OFL's biennial convention for his work advocating for the rights of migrant workers.

The award recognises individuals who promote the human rights of workers.

Raper dedicated his life to the goals and aspirations of the Ontario labour movement and the human rights of Ontario's agricultural workforce in particular.

The award was accepted by Raper's wife Terry who, in her statement, thanked the OFL and said her late husband would hope that others will pick up where he left off.



VALENCE YOUNG // Linda Jolley Lifetime Achievement Award for Health and Safety

Linda Jolley Lifetime Achievement Award for Health and Safety: Valence Young, a recently retired Executive Assistant at the Elementary Teachers Federation of Ontario, was presented with the Linda Jolley Lifetime Achievement Award at the Ontario Federation of Labour's 2017 Power ON Convention.

Young's advocacy in health and safety began as a worker representative on a Joint Health and Safety Committee where she participated in work refusal, supported co-workers, and involved herself in several Ministry of Labour investigations dealing with asbestos, mold, and indoor air quality.

Young stressed that as a labour movement, "We share a tenacity, that Linda Jolley exhibited, to lobby for healthier and safer workplace for all Ontario workers."

OFL AWARDS



EUGENE LEFRANCOIS
OFL Cultural Award

The OFL presents the Cultural Award to an artist or union member whose work has featured or furthered the goals of working people in Ontario. Eugene Lefrancois is the 2017 recipient of this honour. He is a Métis Woodland Artist and was born in Beardmore, Ontario in 1959. Lefrancois is a self-taught artist and has been drawing all his life

He started painting seriously in 1985 after a workplace injury. His father brought him some paper and acrylic paint with a few brushes and said, "Now, you will have time to paint".

In accepting the award, Lefrancois said, "I am an artist to make change for people."

He further challenged locals to, "adopt an artist," saying that, "You need them as much as they need you. They can tell your story."

To view some of Lefrancois' current works, available for purchase, visit <http://www.ahnisnabae-art.com/artists/category/72-eugene-lefrancois.html>.



CARRIE-LYNNE POOLE-COTNAM
Olivia Chow Child Care Champion Award

Carrie Lynne Poole-Cotnam, the chair of CUPE Ontario's Social Services Sector, is this year's winner of the Olivia Chow Child Care Champion Award.

Poole-Cotnam supports the work of the child care advocates on a Social Services Committee responsible for working with the Ontario Coalition for Better Childcare on many projects and initiatives such as the "Childcare Worker Appreciation Day," celebrated in dozens of municipalities across the province .

Poole-Cotnam is instrumental in building capacity throughout this entire sector of CUPE, became more active in the Ontario Coalition for Better Childcare many years ago, and currently serves on the Board of Directors as the Treasurer of the OCBCC. Working with academics, childcare activists, NGOs and government policy makers, she has also been instrumental in advocating, at both national and international conferences, for the establishment of affordable public childcare systems, both in Canada and around the world.



ALEC FARQUHAR // Prevention Link's Disability Prevention Activist Award

Alec Farquhar, Director of the Office of the Worker Adviser (OWA), has been awarded this year's Prevention Link Disability Prevention Activist Award at OFL's 2017 Power ON Convention, in Toronto. Farquhar's lobby efforts over the years have influenced legislation, policies and protocols at many levels of government in many departments, not only dealing with injured workers and advocacy for compensation for mesothelioma victims but also with prevention efforts to fight to ban asbestos to support workers' rights to a safe workplace. The Princeton graduate and University of Toronto, Faculty of Law alumni, has applied his expertise in prevention and compensation issues through positions he has held and his volunteer efforts as a sought-after speaker, educating and increasing awareness throughout the province.

UPCOMING EVENTS

January 19, 2018 – Canada

NATIONAL DAY OF ACTION TO SUPPORT TIM HORTONS WORKERS

A day to show support for Tim Hortons Workers and call on RBI Inc. to demand fair treatment for workers from franchisees. For more information: ofl.ca. This event is sponsored by OFL/CLC/Fight for \$15 and Fairness

January 20, 2018 – Canada

WOMEN'S MARCH

On Saturday, January 20, 2018, women will again march with people of all genders, ages, races, abilities, backgrounds, and orientations will take part in the Women's Marches across Canada. For a list of marches: ofl.ca

January 29, 2018

DAY OF REMEMBRANCE AND ACTION ON ISLAMOPHOBIA

A day to remember the six people murdered at a Quebec Mosque and enhance public education about the perils of hate, bigotry and Islamophobia.

February 1–28, 2018

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

This month events are held across the country to celebrate Black History in Canada.

February 13, 2018

PAY EQUITY SYMPOSIUM

Time's Up on Wage Discrimination: Close the Pay Gap and End Gender Wage Theft! 9:00 am to 4:30 pm, USW Hall, 25 Cecil Street, Toronto. To register contact phazel@ofl.ca.

February 14, 2018

WOMEN'S ANNUAL MEMORIAL MARCHES FOR MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN (MMIW)

Each February 14, marches and ceremonies are held across Canada to remember Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and girls, and to demand action to improve conditions for Indigenous women and girls across Canada.

February 20, 2018

WORLD DAY FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

The United Nations' (UN) World Day for Social Justice is annually observed on February 20 to encourage people to look at how social justice affects poverty eradication. It also focuses on the goal of achieving full employment and support for social integration.

February 21, 2018

BLACK HISTORY MONTH EVENT: CELEBRATING OUR PAST CREATING OUR FUTURE

6:00 – 8:30 PM United Steelworker's Hall 25 Cecil Street, Toronto. This event is sponsored by CBTU/OFL/CLC

February 28, 2018

INTERNATIONAL RSI AWARENESS DAY

Workplace injuries such as repetitive strain injuries (RSI's) account for 42% of all lost time claims and 50% of all lost time days.

March 8, 2018

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Community events across the province..

March 21, 2018

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

The International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination is observed annually on 21 March. On that day, in 1960, police opened fire and killed 69 people at a peaceful demonstration in Sharpeville, South Africa, against the apartheid pass laws.

April 10, 2018

EQUAL PAY DAY

On this day a woman, on average, has worked enough to earn as much as a man made the previous year.

April 11, 2018

DAY OF PINK (ANTI-BULLYING DAY)

The International Day of Pink is a Canadian anti-bullying event held annually on the second Wednesday of April.

April 28, 2018

NATIONAL DAY OF MOURNING

Events are hosted by labour councils across Ontario. Contact your local labour council for more information.

May 1–31, 2018

ASIAN HERITAGE MONTH

In December 2001, the Senate adopted a motion proposed by Senator Vivienne Poy to officially designate May as Asian Heritage Month in Canada.

May 17, 2018

INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST HOMOPHOBIA AND TRANSPHOBIA

The International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia is observed on May 17 and aims to coordinate international events that raise awareness of LGBTQI rights violations and stimulate interest in LGBTQI rights work worldwide.

STEPHEN LEWIS: “THE LABOUR MOVEMENT HAS A VITAL ROLE TO PLAY IN FIGHTING FOR HUMAN RIGHTS.”



Human rights have never been more important in this world, Stephen Lewis told delegates in his keynote address on Wednesday, at OFL’s 2017 Power ON convention.



The co-founder and co-director of Aids-Free World, and Board Chair of the Stephen Lewis Foundation discussed the critical role of the labour movement in the struggle for equality.

“What most of the world fails to understand is that the trade union movement does not consist purely of collective bargaining and labour relations. You fight for justice at every front,” said Lewis. “I’ve been a proud ally of the trade union movement for a very long time.”

A Companion of the Order of Canada, Lewis stressed that violence against women increasingly grips the world, and that there’s a growing understanding that gender equality is one of our great struggles. He further noted that it is up to activists to set the example within the trade union movement and within workplaces by ensuring gender equality is a fundamental human right.

Lewis elaborated on the important work Aids-Free World is doing to fight homophobic legislation in Jamaica, legislation he described as “profoundly intolerant and discriminatory.”

But he noted that Canada is not exempt from discriminatory laws, public harassment, even violence. He referred to the attack on a Quebec mosque in January of this year, and Quebec’s recent passing of Bill 62 in Quebec which he said is an attack on the human rights of Muslim communities.

“Bill 62 has no place in the fabric of Canadian life,” he said.

Lewis recalled witnessing testimony given during the Truth and Reconciliation hearings for survivors of the residential school system, and wondering if the world had gone mad.

“What we have done to Indigenous people here in this country, is a scar on the landscape of the Canadian heart,” he said. “What is it that allows people with a kind of demonic colonial mindset to do such harm to the First Peoples of this country,” he asked.

Lewis said he believes that unions can be “the pinnacle of angelic common sense,” in fighting racism and discrimination in this country.

“In the trade union movement, you can do something to correct these injustices.”

OFL TEAM

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO THE OFFICERS:

ROB HALPIN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, OFL

JANE LIU, Controller, OFL

OFL & PREVENTION LINK STAFF

(In alphabetical order by last name)

MELISA BAYON, Director of Political Action and Outreach, OFL

JUDY CHOW, Executive Secretary (Secretary-Treasurer & Administration, OFL

ERIN DOUCETTE, Return-to-Work Coordinator, PL

VERN EDWARDS, Health & Safety Director, OFL

SUE FRATRIC, Secretary, PL

LAURIE HARDWICK, Executive Director, PL

PAULETTE HAZEL, Secretary, OFL

OGHO IKHALO, Senior Communications and Outreach Specialist, PL

JODY JONES, Return-to-work Coordinator, PL

BRIAN MORGAN, Production Coordinator

KATHY NEUMANN, Executive Secretary, OFL (President, Exec. V.P. and Exec. Assistant)

MEAGAN PERRY, Communications Director, OFL

RENATA PUCEK, Bookkeeper, OFL

CARROL ANNE SCEVIOUR, Human Rights and Women’s Director, OFL

ETHIRAJU RAMACHANDAR, Administrator/Finance, PL

THEVAKI THEVARATNAM, Research and Education Director, OFL

AMALIA SAWA, Administrative Support, OFL

MEGA SCHOOL »»» SPRING SESSION

UNIFOR Family Education Centre PORT ELGIN

Take a comprehensive week-long workers' compensation training that offers courses to certify you in preventing and reducing the impacts of workplace injury/illness and occupational disease.

COURSES OFFERED:

- » Level 1, Rights & Obligations
Level 2, Benefits & Services
(no pre-requisite)
- » Return to Work
(pre-requisite Level 1 & 2)
- » Medical Orientation
(pre-requisite: Appeals or Return to Work)
- » Occupational Disease
(pre-requisite: Level 1 & 2,
Appeals & Medical Orientation)
- » Workers' Compensation Vitals:
Workers' Compensation 101,
Disability Prevention Strategies,
Occupational Hearing Loss,
Mental Health and Illness 101
(no pre-requisite)

Who should attend?

WSIB representatives, RTW specialists, H&S reps., union leadership and union stewards.

APRIL 22-27, 2018

Location: UNIFOR Family Education Centre
115 Shipley Avenue
Port Elgin, ON

Cost: \$1,150* (based on double occupancy)
\$1,295* (based on single occupancy)

*Includes room plan and meal

For further information:

Tel. (416) 443-7683
Toll-Free: 1-800-668-9138
Fax: (416) 441-0722
e-mail: info@preventionlink.ca

