

# The Transmitter

The Official Publication of the Telecommunications Workers Union, United Steelworkers National Local 1944



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**FALL  
2017**



# LETTER FROM THE NATIONAL PRESIDENT

## THE TRANSMITTER

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE  
TWU, USW NATIONAL LOCAL 1944

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I am happy to say that amid challenges and economic uncertainty, the TWU, USW National Local 1944 has accomplished a lot this year in defending our members' rights. The hard work of our members and Local Union Representatives has been rewarded with successes that we can be proud of. I extend my warmest thanks to all for your relentless dedication. I sincerely believe that if we come together, work together and stand shoulder to shoulder, we can be successful, in whatever battles we need to fight.

The year started with the implementation of the Telus-TWU, USW National Local 1944 Collective agreement 2016-2021. We know that you expected more and deserved better. We know there is a lot to do in order to improve your work-life balance and the things that matter to you. That is why for the first time, we held a full bargaining debrief with the Bargaining Committee, the National Executive Council, the Local Union Representatives, and the Communication Action Team regional leaders. At this meeting, we discussed what worked well, what didn't work, and our path forward to 2021.

Employees in telecom know that union membership is an important foundation in such a rapidly evolving industry; that is why in January, Freedom Mobile workers in Windsor voted to join our Union. We are very honoured that they have chosen our union. Their very first collective agreement was successfully ratified on September 21<sup>st</sup>.

Our members from Unit 60 in Abbotsford also ratified a new collective agreement with Shaw Cablesystems after six months of bargaining.

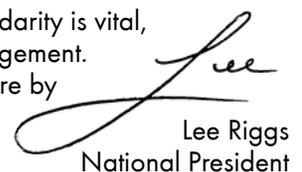
As proud members of the United Steelworkers, our Local attended our first USW International Convention in April. This convention celebrated 75 years of fighting for workers and called for renewed activism and unity among members.

This year, seven more members started the prestigious USW's Leadership Development Scholarship program: Steven Macintosh, Arjay Plain, Brooke Downey, Maxime Deveau, Elana Felty, Christopher Endicott, and Kyle Johnston. We wish them well with their studies.

There have been some changes within our office staff. We bid a fond farewell to Bill Nielsen who has been working with us for nearly 30 years, and to Linda Lund who will be retiring in November, after 17 years. I personally thank both of them for their commitment throughout these years of service and wish them all the best in their retirement. I also extend my best wishes to Kelly Hagen, Etta Hall, Jen Patterson, and Nathan Beausoleil who recently departed the organization to pursue new endeavours. And, I am pleased to welcome Caroline Torralba as our new Communications Specialist and editor of 'The Transmitter'.

Lots of work awaits us in the months ahead. We will have our Bylaw Ratification vote for 2017 on November 21<sup>st</sup>. We will also start the process for collective bargaining with Shaw Surrey and Vancouver. This spring will be busy too with the Local Annual Delegated Meeting taking place on March 20-22, in Burnaby, BC, and the Local union elections in April, when our members will be electing the National President, the National Vice-Presidents, the National Secretary-Treasurer, the Regional Executive Officers and the Trustees.

We are part of one of the strongest progressive unions fighting for fair trade and good jobs in Canada and the United States. However, we must remember that we are only as strong as we are engaged and united. Solidarity is vital, that is why we are committed to building on member engagement. Together, we are powerful and we can create a better future by enhancing security, benefits and wages for every worker.

  
Lee Riggs  
National President

# SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS



## CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

The Scholarship Review Committee at the Columbia Institute completed the selection of recipients for this year's awarding cycle.

Four \$1,000 and three \$750 scholarships will be paid out to pay for tuition and other related expenses of the recipients.

This year's Telecommunications Workers Union Scholarship recipients displayed exceptional community involvement, leadership abilities, and dedication to academic excellence.

The 2017 scholarship winners are:

- **Kathryn Mannie** from Vancouver, BC will be studying Humanities at the University of Toronto (\$1,000);
- **Rahul Singla** from Edmonton, AB will be studying Bachelor of Science at the University of Alberta (\$1,000);
- **Sylvia Mi** from Port Coquitlam, BC will be studying Co-op Management and International Business at the University of Toronto (\$1,000);
- **Skyler Fuhrman** from Calgary, AB will be studying Coordinated Science at the University of British Columbia (\$1,000);
- **Tamara Yoshida** from Richmond, BC will be studying Social Science at the University of Western Ontario (\$750);
- **Kyana Erin Espiritu** from Ajax, ON will be studying Biological Sciences at University of Toronto (\$750); and
- **Cole Brauer** from Coquitlam, BC will be studying Science (pre-med) at University of British Columbia (\$750).



### UNITED STEELWORKERS AWARDS SCHOLARSHIP TO LOCAL 1944 MEMBER

The TWU, USW National Local 1944 would also like to congratulate **Matthew Tonks** from Prince George, BC. Matthew was awarded a United Steelworkers Post-Secondary Education Scholarship in the amount of \$1,000. "Your essay and other achievements are truly impressive," stated Ken Neumann, National Director for Canada in a congratulatory letter.

## UNI ICTS IN SOLIDARITY WITH SHAW AND FREEDOM MOBILE WORKERS

Telecommunications companies, like Canada's Shaw Communications, connect local communities to the world through their networks.

Shaw workers come from the communities that the company services in the lower mainland region in British Columbia. It is the job of technicians to service and maintain the networks, and to provide the final connection to customers.

Employees who work for the Shaw-owned Freedom Mobile brand's call centre in Windsor, Ontario are the public face of the company. These call centre workers add value to the business through guaranteeing good customer experience associated with the Freedom Mobile brand.

UNI Global Union is an international federation of labor unions that represents more than 3 million workers in the Information, Communication, Technology and Services (ICTS) sector. USW is an affiliate union of UNI Global Union.



UNI ICTS calls on Shaw Communications to work toward fair and reasonable collective agreements with the USW-represented technicians and cable installers in Abbotsford, British Columbia and with contact centre workers in Windsor, Ontario with whom they are collectively bargaining.

Doing the right thing by employees is about respecting the communities that Shaw and Freedom service and

recognising the value these employees bring to the business. UNI ICTS stands in solidarity with Shaw Communications and Freedom Mobile workers in their negotiations for fair contracts.

Alke Boessiger  
Head of UNI ICTS

— Release from Uni Global Union



# BARGAINING UPDATE FREEDOM MOBILE WINDSOR



Freedom Mobile Windsor Bargaining Committee

## FREEDOM CAN AFFORD A BETTER DEAL FOR THEIR WORKERS

Over 180 employees who work at Freedom Mobile’s call centre in Windsor, Ontario, voted to join our union earlier this year.

Freedom Mobile is a successfully rebranded and growing cell phone brand. It is owned by Shaw Communications, a company that generated \$1.3-billion in revenue in its most recent quarter.

On August 3<sup>rd</sup>, at approximately 5:00 am in the morning, Freedom Mobile management dropped a proposal on the table that was just not acceptable and said that it was their final proposal.

We were very disappointed.

In mid-August, supported by a unanimous recommendation from their elected bargaining committee, the employees voted to reject a standard contract offer from the company.

Despite the company’s attempts to convince employees to accept the offer, it was strongly rejected because it wasn’t good enough in respect of wages, vacation rights and respect for worker’s length of service and seniority.

“Freedom and Shaw had the means to do better for their employees, who make a huge contribution to their success. It is unfortunate they did not seize the opportunity to do better,” said Lee Riggs, National President of the TWU, USW National Local 1944.



This vote led to renewed talks toward a fair collective agreement. A mediation session was held on September 14<sup>th</sup> in Toronto with the federal labour board mediator, with a view to solving differences and arriving at a settlement.

On September 21<sup>st</sup>, 110 members attended the ratification meeting and, although the committee’s recommendation was one of rejection, the new collective agreement tabled by Freedom Mobile was ratified by a very narrow margin—a clear indication that the employees expect better from their company.

The TWU, USW National Local 1944 will work closely with the Windsor workers to make continuous improvements to their working conditions, and to provide union education and orientation.

Bargaining with Freedom Mobile engaged thousands of USW members across Canada, and the TWU, USW National Local 1944 as well as the bargaining committee members Jasen Gannon, Tanya Travis-Dunn and Christian Poisson, thank them for their commitment and solidarity.



# SUPPORTING OUR MEMBERS AT FREEDOM MOBILE IN WINDSOR



## LEAFLETING FREEDOM MOBILE STORES

On Monday, September 11<sup>th</sup>, USW South Central Area Council activists were at three Freedom Mobile stores in Cambridge and Kitchener.

These Steelworkers handed out leaflets to Freedom customers and store employees to let them know our members who work for Freedom Mobile in Windsor, Ontario were

bargaining for a first contract.

We received great support from the public during our leafleting.

A big thank-you to the area council for taking this on!



## MEMBERS NEEDED YOUR SOLIDARITY AND YOU MADE THE CALL!

In September, while the TWU, USW National Local 1944 was bargaining a fair contract for our hard-working 180 employees at Freedom Mobile's call centre in Windsor, we asked for help: a simple phone call to Shaw's head office to tell the company that people stood in support of a first collective agreement for the workers. Action was also possible through Facebook and Twitter.

We received many messages of support, which contributed to the ratification of

a collective agreement for the Windsor employees.

Our Local, along with the 180 employees, extend our sincerest thanks to all who took action throughout the bargaining process with Freedom Mobile.

"Solidarity has proven once more that together, we are stronger," said Lee Riggs, National President of the TWU, USW National Local 1944.





# BARGAINING UPDATE SHAW ABBOTSFORD

## NEW COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT FOR SHAW ABBOTSFORD UNIT 60

The bargaining process between the TWU, USW National Local 1944 representing Abbotsford Unit 60 and Shaw began on March 7<sup>th</sup> for the renewal of the collective agreement that expired on March 31<sup>st</sup> this year.

Contrary to the company's attempts to compromise our members' interests, the bargaining committee tabled proposals to improve pay, retirement, health and welfare benefits, scheduling, banking of time, vacation and temporary position provisions, in an effort to reach a respectful agreement for our members at Shaw Abbotsford.

In July, our Union requested assistance from the Federal Minister of Labour to start the conciliation process, a key part of federal labour law and a means to help the parties in moving toward settlement. The meeting with the Conciliation Officer occurred between September 13<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup>.

At the beginning of October, with the assistance of conciliation, our Local reached a tentative agreement that the Bargaining Committee could recommend to our members.

The 3-year agreement, ratified on October 12<sup>th</sup>, received 81% support from our Shaw Abbotsford members; it includes a \$1,000 signing bonus, 2.5% lump sum payments and a 1.75% wage increase.

"A vast majority of our Unit 60 members participated in the vote and, thanks to their high level of engagement, we are confident in our capacity to further negotiate the working conditions with Shaw in the near future," said Lee Riggs, National President of the TWU, USW National Local 1944.



## TAKE ME OUT TO THE BALLGAME

Unit 60 held their fourth annual Day at the Ballpark on August 26<sup>th</sup>.

It was a beautiful evening to watch the Vancouver Canadians defeat the Boise Hawks 3-2 followed by a spectacular fireworks show including large firebombs.

For the price of admission members and guests had a seat in the grandstands,

access to the all you can eat barbeque, and their name entered in a draw for one of the many door prizes.

Unit 60's Corey Mandryk has organized this event for the last four years, with every year exceeding the last.

No peanuts or crackerjacks, but we'll definitely be back!



## TWO MEMBERS RESCUE FAMILY FROM A FIRE

September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017 was a regular work day for Telus employees and Local 1944 members Rob Wright and Matt Mosby, working as installers in a building in Lethbridge, Alberta, until they heard screams for help because of a fire in an apartment block. The devastating fire was caused by a cigarette.

Rob remembers every detail about that day.

"We ran to the front to see what was going on. We spotted a family up on the third-floor balcony screaming and crying for help."

The Masini family moved a year and a half ago as refugees from Syria. Smoke filled the stairwells of the building, trapping a mother, a 14-week-old baby and two girls aged 5 and 7 in their top floor apartment.

"I thought they were going to have to jump and maybe we would have to catch them or something like that," Matt said.

Since the fire department had not arrived yet, Rob and Matt grabbed their service truck, with a 23-foot ladder, and extended it as far as they could against the balcony.

"We were able to help them down safely. The kids were able to crawl down and the wife came down and obviously, the baby needed a little assistance, so we went up there and got the baby down," says Rob. "Then once it was all over and we got the ladder down and out of the way... The adrenaline kind of dumped off and [it got] little bit emotional and everything."

The two unlikely heroes affirm that all they did was react on instinct.

"We were in the right place at the right time. We reacted instantly simply because we have reactive personalities in our everyday lives," explained Rob. "We do not call ourselves heroes for the simple reason that we believe anybody would have acted the same way in that situation."

According to them, there were numerous other people helping out that day.

"There were people handing out water to people running out of the building, one girl was running people's pets to the vet, there were probably four other people at the bottom of the ladder holding it once it was up," said Matt.

Heroes or not, the Masini family are thankful for their safety and their saviors.

"I say to them, 'Thank you,'" the 7-year-old girl said.

In October 2017, Rob and Matt were the recipients of the Lethbridge 2017 Community Hero Awards during a special ceremony at the city hall. A Community Hero is "any Good Samaritan who selflessly comes to the aid of a person in crisis."

Fire Chief Richard Hildebrand said:

"You are the 20 per cent who step up to the plate and rise to the action. We are very proud of you and the community should be aware of the special folks you are."

Rob and Matt's accomplishment shows their dedication to the community and represents what it is to be a Steelworker.

Watch the Global News report online: <http://1944.fyi/fHy4AB>





# LABOUR DAY



## CELEBRATING LABOUR DAY

Monday September 4<sup>th</sup> marked Canada's 124<sup>th</sup> official Labour Day, a time to appreciate and to celebrate the Labour Movement's work in creating a more just and prosperous Canada.

Labour Day is a day to remember the role Unions have played in the creation of workplace health and safety legislation, the 40-hour work week, the minimum wage, universal health care and other innovations that were once radical and are now foundational to our society.

But, it's also a time to recognize the work that Unions are doing right now, fighting for living wages, for LGBTQ rights in and out of the workplace, for holding employers accountable for any actions leading to the injury or death of workers on the job, for improved services to Canada's most in need.

Although the Labour Movement has many achievements to be proud of, it takes

constant effort and vigilance to preserve what has already been gained, let alone to progress further toward a truly fair society for all.

For members of the TWU, USW National Local 1944, the Labour Movement is in your very workplaces in the form of Shop Stewards, volunteers that try to protect and inform you. They make sure that the rights you have under your Collective Agreement are actually given to you.

The Labour Movement is also your Local Union Representatives at the Union office, staff who have the full-time job of making sure your hard work is rewarded with fair treatment by your employers.

Workers look out for each other and do what they can to get each other a better deal from their employers.

TWU, USW National Local 1944 members joined fellow labour activists to celebrate Labour Day across the country.



# POLITICAL ACTION



## JOHN HORGAN SWORN IN AS PREMIER OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

On July 18<sup>th</sup>, John Horgan was sworn in as the 36<sup>th</sup> Premier of British Columbia. This marked the shifting of the balance of power for the first time in 16 years.

President Lee Riggs was invited to attend the swearing in ceremony by Lieutenant-Governor Judith Guichon. The ceremony was held at the Government House in Victoria.

Surrey-Newton MLA Harry Bains was appointed as the Minister of Labour.

Surrey-Panorama MLA Jinny Sims was appointed as the Minister of Citizens' Services. The Minister will ensure government IT and software development procurement will work better for

companies that hire locally and have a local supply chain. In addition, the Minister will look at IT contracts to save money, increase innovation, improve competition and help the technology sector grow. This mandate may have a direct impact on our members employed by Telus and Shaw.

Premier Horgan has taken quick action on several key issues including: assisting those displaced by wildfires, raising welfare and disability rates, eliminating tolls, and putting more teachers in classrooms.

We look forward to working with the new government to ensure our members' voices are being heard in the Legislature.



Honourable John Horgan, the 36<sup>th</sup> Premier of British Columbia



Hon. Harry Bains, Minister of Labour with President Lee Riggs



## MEETING WITH HONOURABLE AMARJEET SOHI

On August 17<sup>th</sup>, Local Union Representative Joe Benn represented the United Steelworkers at a Labour Issues Meeting between the House of Labour, organized through the AFL/CLC, and the Federal Cabinet Minister, Amarjeet Sohi.

During the meeting, 11 points were brought forward for discussion.

Brother Benn expressed Steelworker concerns with NAFTA renegotiations and reminded Minister Sohi of the USW submission on NAFTA to Global Affairs,

Canada's NAFTA Consultations, in July of this year. Telecommunications, softwood, steel and infrastructure were all listed as top USW priorities.

Brother Benn also reminded Minister Sohi of the Telus labour dispute in 2005 that was under the watch of the Paul Martin Liberal Minority Government. He also reminded the Minister that a lack of acceptable federal anti-scab legislation harmed us and the Union would like to see legislation, with teeth, enacted.

The Westray issue was also discussed with Minister Sohi. Brother Benn asked Minister Sohi when we can expect to see some movement on this issue and the commitment we have heard. Minister Sohi agreed that every worker deserves the right to return home at the end of the work day to their families and loved ones. He further committed to getting back to the Union on where Liberal government was at with Westray.



# CELEBRATING PRIDE



Red Deer Pride

Steelworkers from all across Canada joined with LGBTQ+ communities to celebrate Pride this summer.

While Pride events are a celebration for the LGBTQ+ communities, activists and allies, it must be remembered that the fight for equality must take place throughout the year.

We are proud to represent lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender workers, and Steelworkers are actively working

for equality in the workplace, at the bargaining table and in our communities.

Together, let's take steps to help create a positive space for LGBTQ+ workers.



Edmonton Pride



Vancouver Pride



Prince George Pride

## WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY

Unit 51 of the TWU, USW National Local 1944 hosted its first campaign to support World Mental Health Day on October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2017. The theme for the 2017 Mental Health was "The Workplace". According to the World Health Organization there are over 400 million people suffering from depression and over 260 million living with anxiety worldwide.

Leading up to the day, purple shirts could be ordered. In total 145 shirts were sold to members in other units across Canada, managers, local politicians, and USW District 3. Designer cookies were made with different hashtags #brave #strong #love #light along with assorted other swag focusing on ending the stigma and placing more emphasis on mental wellness rather than mental illness. A 50/50 draw was conducted and Carol Todd came to the worksite to

draw the winning ticket of \$337.50, won by John Hahn from FFH Telus. Proceeds went to the Amanda Todd Legacy Society totaling \$1,200. Carol mentioned that it had been five years since her daughter sadly took her life and was no doubt suffering depression silently.

Carol now fights to raise awareness about mental health and has started the #lightuppurple campaign on World Mental Health Day each year, [lightuppurple.com](http://lightuppurple.com). She is a teacher in the Coquitlam School District # 43 and a member of the British Columbia Teachers Federation. We want to thank all those that volunteered for this worthwhile cause, and all those who participated in making this such a successful campaign.

— Submitted by Nancy McCurrach (Unit 51)



# CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF WOMEN OF STEEL



The Women of Steel program was launched in 1987 in District 6, as a way to support women's involvement and leadership within our union. In 2017, we are proud to celebrate 30 years of accomplishments and of connecting hundreds of individual WOS with leadership roles inside the union and beyond. Women of Steel continue to break down workplace barriers and encourage women to empower themselves. Now, women are local presidents, unit chairs, stewards, and health and safety activists. They chair committees, sit at bargaining tables, lobby for gender justice, and help elect labour-friendly politicians. Women make our union strong.



## WOMEN of STEEL



## DISTRICT 3 SUMMER SCHOOL

From June 11<sup>th</sup> to June 15<sup>th</sup>, six Women of Steel from TWU, USW National Local 1944 had the chance to attend the District 3 Summer School that takes place every year in Kimberley, BC. Natasha Aoden, Julie Charbonneau, Stephanie Kestle, Elana Felty, Katelyn Armstrong and Kim Piea, all from different Units, seized the opportunity to meet sisters from different places and learn from various sectors that the Steelworkers represent.

The course is designed to provide women with an understanding of the structure, history and programs of the union, and aims at developing their leadership skills and strategic plans to build local WOS committees and improve the lives of women in their communities.

"The Summer School is a great opportunity

for members to exchange personal experiences and learn how to build alliances with women and men, either in their workplace or in their communities," said Betty Carrasco, National Vice-President of TWU, USW National local 1944. "It's about bonding and extending your hands to pull other sisters up. At the end of the course, the women feel empowered. Their new knowledge allows them to move forward with confidence: confidence in themselves and in what they can do within their union."

Betty was a facilitator throughout the Summer School for the second time now, alongside with Leslie McNaab, staff representative. Attendance at the Women of Steel Summer School was made possible through the merger agreement.



## DISTRICT 6 WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

On July 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, in Toronto, the USW District 6 celebrated the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Women of Steel with the very first WOS conference ever held in this district. The WOS program originated there in 1987, with a leadership development course designed by women and for women participants only. The goal was that women would leave this course with a better understanding of the union and the situations women face.

The 'Time for HERstory' conference attracted a large number of people from all over the country and welcomed new and experienced activists. It reflected on the past by highlighting how the Women

of Steel program overcame challenges over the years, while planning, building and strengthening our union for the future.

It included panels, workshops, interactive theatre, guest speakers, and numerous exchanges on what the women committees did in the different locals, among which uplifting stories about women overcoming difficult situations and empowering themselves. The conference allowed a very special moment, when the 'Legends'—the program's founders—met the USW Next Generation women and many new WOS who have joined the program recently; the Women of Steel's legacy lives on.





# PACIFIC BLUE CROSS LOCKS OUT WORKERS



## THE TWU, USW NATIONAL LOCAL 1944 RALLIES OUTSIDE PACIFIC BLUE CROSS

On July 7<sup>th</sup>, the TWU, USW National Local 1944 stood in solidarity with the CUPE 1816 members by attending a rally, after their employer Pacific Blue Cross locked them out. National President Lee Riggs, Secretary-Treasurer Michael Phillips and our Local Union Representatives Jennifer Bucholtz, Tamara Marshall, Chris Stephens, and other Local 1944 members walked the picket line to show support to the employees.

PBC, a company whose business is providing benefits to unionized workers, threatened its retiree benefits. To fight back, on May 2<sup>nd</sup> CUPE 1816 started job action by rotating departments on the picket line to not disrupt service. On June 30<sup>th</sup>, PBC advised that further job action would result in a lock-out: building access was then taken away for 600 workers on July 7<sup>th</sup>.

"It is shameful that this employer is not only trying to roll back retiree benefits for these

workers but is punishing them for trying to get a fair deal," said CUPE BC President Paul Faoro.

A new collective agreement was ratified on September 11<sup>th</sup>, putting an end to the lockout outside PBC's Burnaby office and allowing the return of 600 employees to work. The six-year contract includes annual wage increases, retiree benefits and a health and welfare trust.

"It has been a long and difficult struggle for this contract, but we are very happy with the result," said CUPE 1816 President Beth Miller. "We feel that the new agreement addresses the main concerns we had raised, so we had no hesitation in bringing it back to the membership. We want to thank everyone who supported us during this labour dispute."



We want to share photos of our members at work, volunteering or attending events in their community.

Send your photos to:

[photos@usw1944.ca](mailto:photos@usw1944.ca)



# 2017 JEFFERSON AWARDS



## NANCY McCURRACH WINS TOP JEFFERSON AWARD

Nancy McCurrach of Port Coquitlam, BC, has won a major North American community service award for her outstanding work in helping refugees.

McCurrach, a member of Telecommunications Workers Union, USW National Local 1944, was recognized Thursday, June 22<sup>nd</sup>, in Washington DC, with a top honour for public service from the Jefferson Awards Foundation. The foundation, created in 1972, honours grassroots heroes who make meaningful contributions to their communities through their volunteer and charitable efforts.

McCurrach founded Tri-Cities Refugee Welcome Wagon, a group of friends and co-workers who felt compelled to help Syrian and Turkish refugees who are making Port Coquitlam their new home. The group raised \$4,500 to pay for refugees' urgent medical needs and to buy strollers, transit passes, food, and more. The group befriends and supports their new neighbours by eating meals with them, driving them to school and teaching them English.

"Nancy and her project represent what our union is all about: welcoming all with open arms and working for better lives for all people, regardless of where they come from," said Leo W. Gerard, USW International President.

"We are humbled that a USW member has taken the Jefferson Award's top award for the second-straight year, but the recognition isn't why we're so active in our communities. It's because it's the right thing to do," said Ken Neumann, USW National Director for Canada.

McCurrach is a four-time cornea transplant recipient due to a rare disease called Keratoconus. Despite her own adversity, she volunteers

tirelessly for many community organizations, including a group that uplifts women and girls who struggle with poverty and addiction. She also prepares meals to feed more than 60 women and children and plays games, mingles and shares compassion with those who are suffering in her community.

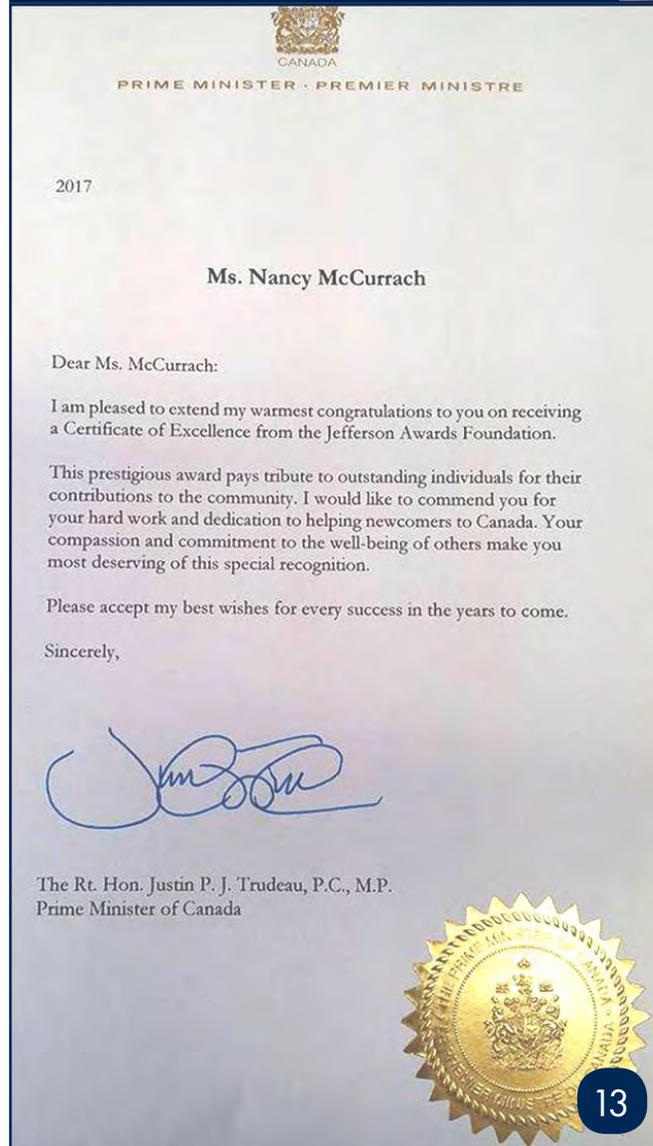
"I'm so grateful that my union supports members like me who want to make a difference through community service," McCurrach said.

"I'm so honored to be a national Jefferson Award winner, but even more honored to be a member of an organization that shares my values and works tirelessly to make the world a better place – at work and in the places where we live and work."

The USW is a Champion with the Jefferson Awards Foundation, which is dedicated to building a culture of service through a variety of programs and awards. As a Champion, the union was able to create a formal structure to allow members and retirees to be nominated for Jefferson Awards and put a spotlight on USW Cares efforts in communities across North America. The program includes training to help build leadership and other skills through effective community service.

McCurrach was selected as the USW's overall Jefferson Awards Foundation Champion volunteer for 2017. The union had over 150 nominations from each of its districts in the United States and Canada and from among its Steelworker Organization of Active Retirees (SOAR).

— Release from [www.usw.ca](http://www.usw.ca)





# HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 2017 LOCAL ANNUAL DELEGATED MEETING

## DELEGATES HEAD TO EDMONTON FOR THE 2017 LADM

Our Local Annual Delegate Meeting (LADM) took place from May 29<sup>th</sup> to June 2<sup>nd</sup> in Edmonton, Alberta with 156 delegates, guests and staff in attendance. An overall "Power of Unity" theme developed through the guests' speeches.

"Through unity, we learned to stand together, fight together, at a time when so many would like to see us fall apart," stated International Vice-President Carol Landry.

National President Lee Riggs of the TWU, USW National Local 1944 also called for unity:

"This week, each one of us will need to make decisions that will shape the future of our Local as we continue to integrate with the United Steelworkers. We all need to show our leadership, and that starts by addressing our finances, approving resolutions that will move our Local forward in a positive way, and leaving this room at the end of the week united."

National Director for Canada Ken Neumann stated that the merger made our union stronger:

"I truly believe that over the past two and a half years since our merger, we have built a union that demonstrates the power of unity. The union is you."

Throughout the week, several issues were addressed, including the upcoming USW Telecom Council, the Hang Up on Abuse campaign, the USW affiliation with UNI, the steel crisis in Canada, and organizing the unorganized. The attendees also reflected on much needed actions such as drug testing in the workplace, various educational opportunities, building solidarity within the union, and working with provincial governments. There were reports from the National Executive Council, the Bylaws and Finance committees, and the Health & Safety Committee highlighting the 'Hang Up On Abuse' campaign.

It was also announced that delegate Nancy McCurrach, a member from District 3 (see page 13), and Ron Palmer, Local Health and Safety Officer, were awarded the prestigious Jefferson Award, which honours individuals for their meaningful contributions to their communities through volunteering and charity.

The elections held on May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2017, re-elected Betty Carrasco as Vice-President for one year; Michael Phillips as Secretary-Treasurer for one year. Results of committee elections can be found at:

Nominations and acclamations:

<http://1944.fyi/uK3Fyf>

Election Results:

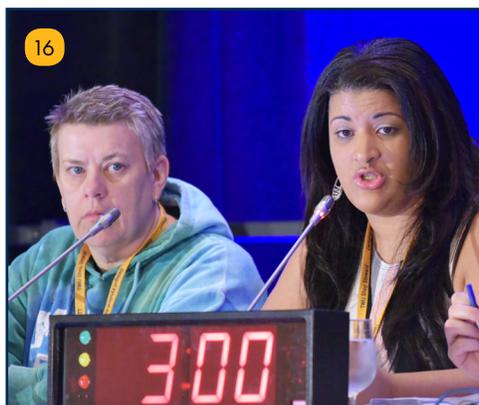
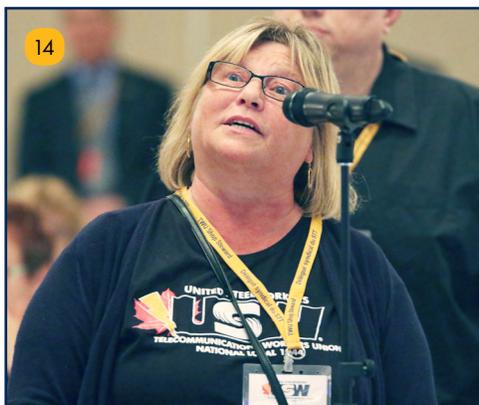
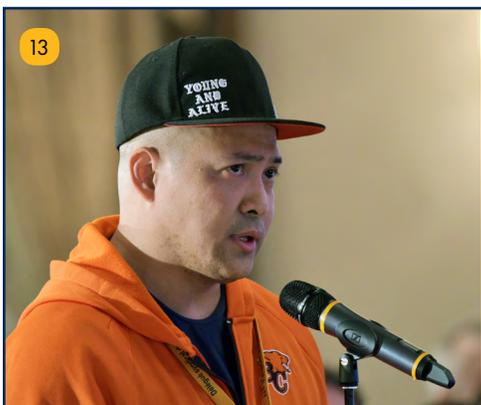
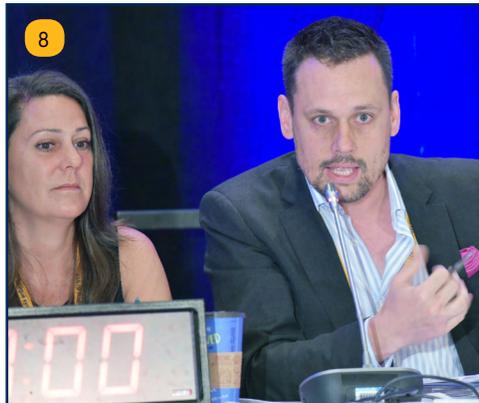
<http://1944.fyi/Ssmexo>

*"When you work together, you are stronger together."*

Steve Hunt,  
District 3 Director



# PHOTOS FROM THE 2017 LOCAL ANNUAL DELEGATED MEETING



1. National President Lee Riggs opened the LADM
2. International Vice President Carol Landry addressed delegates
3. Ken Neumann, National Director for Canada spoke to delegates
4. Steve Hunt, District 3 Director spoke on day 2
5. Gil McGowan, President of the Alberta Federation of Labour spoke
6. MLA Shaye Anderson highlighted his work as Minister and MLA
7. Brother Minh Chau (Unit 604)
8. Sister Michelle Dey (Unit 51) and Corey Mandryk (Unit 60)
9. Sister Erika Crowe (Unit 501)
10. Sister Kim Woodroffe (Unit 213)
11. Brother Max Deveau (Unit 604)
12. Sisters Candace Knoll and Nancy McCurrach (Unit 51)
13. Brother Czar Loquia (Unit 10)
14. Rita Holopainen (Unit 501)
15. Brother John Alma (Unit 210)
16. Donna Hokiro (Unit 207) and National Vice President Isabelle Miller

For more photo highlights, visit:  
[www.flickr.com/usw1944](http://www.flickr.com/usw1944)



**DEATH THREATS.  
RACIST INSULTS.  
SEXUAL HARASSMENT.**

**WHAT NAMES HAVE YOU BEEN CALLED TODAY?**

TELL YOUR INTERNET OR PHONE PROVIDERS  
**IT'S TIME TO HANG UP ON CALL CENTRE ABUSE.**

**SIGN THE PETITION AT  
[www.HangUpOnAbuse.ca](http://www.HangUpOnAbuse.ca)**

**#HangUpOnAbuse**



WE ARE CALLING ON ALL CANADIAN CALL CENTRE EMPLOYERS  
TO ADOPT THE HANG UP ON ABUSE POLICY, EMPOWERING  
THEIR WORKERS TO END OR PASS ON ABUSIVE CALLS  
**WITHOUT FEAR OF LOSING THEIR JOBS.**

[www.HangUpOnAbuse.ca/petition](http://www.HangUpOnAbuse.ca/petition)

## **OUR MISSION: MAKE LIFE BETTER FOR CALL CENTRE WORKERS**

We know first hand what it is like to be on the other side of the phone, how dehumanizing it can be, the lack of support from management and the stress this abuse causes. You are not alone. We are fellow call centre workers and together we are holding employers accountable for ensuring that you have the power to stop taking abuse at work.

We are calling on all Canadian call centre employers to adopt the Hang Up on Abuse Policy, empowering their workers to end or pass on abusive calls – without fear of losing their jobs.

### HANG UP ON ABUSE POLICY

#### **GIVE CALL CENTRE WORKERS THE ABILITY TO HANG UP ON ABUSIVE CALLS.**

- Train managers on how to support call centre workers who had a bad client.
- Issue a warning and flag callers who have a history of harassing staff.
- Deny repeat abusers use of your service.
- Create a zero tolerance policy that reports all violent and/or sexual threats to the police.
- Ensure that there will be no retribution against or disciplining of call centre workers who report abuse.



# THANK YOU

## DELEGATES HELP RAISE FUNDS FOR ALBERTA SHELTER

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

I am writing to you to personally thank you on behalf of both USW Local 1-207 and our Women of Steel Committee.

We have been working very hard to bring attention to domestic violence and the need to end it, and maybe bring a little hope and help to those caught in it. Your generosity has helped do both. Thank you to all of your members that contributed the proceeds of your 50/50 draw at your National Policy Convention in May. I would also like to extend a special thank you to Sister Carrasco and your Local Women of Steel Committee for bringing our cause to the forefront and raising \$2,700. As well to President Riggs for his extremely generous personal donation of \$500.

I have spoken with Jessica Martel's mother, Lynne Rosychuk, and she too is extremely touched by the generosity of the labour movement. She lost her daughter to domestic violence 8 years ago, and has since been working to empower individuals and families to live a life free of violence. The generosity of the labour movement has

allowed a giant leap towards this.

Through the generous help of our brothers and sisters, we were able to raise \$33,000. That is amazing. I never imagined we could achieve so much so quickly, but we did. I really want to thank you for your role in this achievement. This money, which was presented at the annual JMMF run on Father's Day will be used by the Jessica Martel Memorial Foundation to build a shelter in Morinville, Alberta.

The Town of Morinville has donated land for a shelter to be built by the JMMF, and they were aiming to break ground in 2018. I am happy to share with you that because of the funds we raised, they are breaking ground this year!

Thank you again for your help in making this "house that labour built" happen.

Ivana Niblett, Business Agent  
USW Local 1-207 Chair  
Women of Steel Committee



## EXTRAORDINARY EFFORTS DURING THE FLOODS AND FIRES

The year has been difficult for many of our members that were affected by unprecedented spring flooding and a devastating summer of wildfires, from coast to coast.

On behalf of TWU, USW National Local 1944, I acknowledge that countless homes, belongings and days of work were lost to the waters or fires, mostly among our members in Montreal, QC, Windsor, ON, in the North and Interior of BC.

In June, National Vice-President Isabelle Miller and brothers Joseph and Whissell were honoured to present cheques to Local 1944 members impacted by the floods.

I want to recognize and give praise to the bravery and determination of our members who were fighting on the front lines. To those who stepped up to help above and beyond, putting in extra hours of work to keep service running

or help restore telephone lines while the waters were rising or fires were burning. I also recognize the countless hours of personal time provided to help the victims, and all efforts that were unheard during these times. This is what true solidarity is all about.

As a Union, we can only feel inspired by these local heroes who are living examples of what it means to stand up for each other in times of difficulty.

The Civil and Human Rights Committee sought the assistance of Local 1944 delegates in assisting these members with a financial donation.

To all those who stepped up during these difficult times, I say thank you.

Lee Riggs  
National President  
TWU, USW National Local 1944





# Letters of Appreciation

Thank you to the TWU-USW Local 1944 and the TWU Benevolent Society for the retirement gift of \$1,000. So very appreciated!

Laurie Weir

I retired on May 31<sup>st</sup> after working over 36 years for BCTel/TELUS. I would like to thank the union for my honorary lifetime membership, retiree pin and my generous \$1,000 retirement gift.

Sincerely,

Dan Iversen

I would like to thank you so much for my retirement gift of \$1,000 from the Union. I have now been retired 3 months (as you can see this is sent on "retirement time".) I have enjoyed every second so far!

Sincerely,

Trish Patrick  
Formerly Client Care Representative  
Telus Mobility, Burnaby

Writing to you today to thank you very much for the \$1,000 cheque I recently received after retiring from TELUS after 37 and a half years. It is with grateful appreciation that I acknowledge the hard work of the union throughout my career at BCTel/TELUS in ensuring ALL workers are treated fairly and respectfully. It is my fervent hope that all of us forever remain UNION STRONG!

Warmly,

Alicja Klassen

Brothers and Sisters,

On behalf of Unit 210 in Fort McMurray, we would like to say thank you to our Brothers and Sisters of the TWU Local 1944 for your generosity in sharing with us your moral support, and the donation that we received.

We deeply appreciate from the bottom of our hearts for having us in your thoughts during the Fort McMurray wildfire in May 2016. We want to say thank you to each and everyone who supported us. We also want to acknowledge those brothers and sisters who donated the proceeds from the 50/50 draws to our Unit 210 during the national convention in May 2016.

We feel proud to be part of this great Local that lives up to the brotherhood sisterhood belief. We feel that we were not alone during such a tragedy.

Your generosity has gone beyond the material aspect of life, it has touched our minds and souls and in turn it has helped us to endure what some of us are still going through.

Your actions were larger than life and for the betterment of humankind!

Thank You.

In solidarity,

John Alma  
Jose Acevedo  
Unit 210, TWU Local 1944



In January 2017, National President Lee Riggs went to Fort McMurray to present funds raised by our local to Unit 210 members.

Check out our video, at <http://1944.fyi/FortMcMurray>



# LETTERS OF APPRECIATION (CONT.)

## BRITISH COLUMBIA

Burnaby Head Office  
5261 Lane Street  
Burnaby, BC V5H 4A6  
PHONE: 604-437-8601  
FAX: 604-435-7760

Kelowna  
#403 – 1630 Pandosy St.  
Kelowna, BC V1Y 1P7  
PHONE: 250-860-5025  
FAX: 250-860-6737

Prince George  
#100 – 1777 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave  
Prince George, BC V2L 3G7  
PHONE: 250-960-2220  
FAX: 250-563-0274

## ALBERTA

Calgary  
#402 – 5940 Macleod Trail SW  
Calgary, AB T2H 2G4  
PHONE: 403-237-6990  
FAX: 403-802-2381

Edmonton  
#202 – 4264, 91A St.  
Edmonton, AB T6E 5V2  
PHONE: 780-444-6945  
FAX: 780-488-6911

## ONTARIO

Scarborough  
Unit 412  
#901 – 10 Milner Business Court  
Scarborough, ON M1B 3C6  
PHONE: 416-506-9723  
FAX: 416-506-9722

## QUEBEC

Westmount  
#540 – 4060 Ste. Catherine St. W.  
Westmount, QC H3Z 2Z3  
PHONE: 514-788-8811  
FAX: 514-788-8813

## TELECOMMUNICATION WORKERS PENSION AND BENEFIT PLANS

#303 – 4603 Kingsway  
Burnaby, BC V5H 4M4  
PENSION: 604-430-1317  
BENEFITS: 604-430-3300  
FAX: 604-430-5395  
WEBSITE: [www.twplans.com](http://www.twplans.com)

Dear Friends of Bissell Centre,  
Thank you very much for your recent donation of \$735, received on June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2017. Your donation is truly appreciated, and will help restore hope to the thousands of people in Edmonton who are living in poverty.

Through supporters like you, individuals and families in our community have access to childcare, employment programs, housing services, Drop-In supports, and more programs that are designed to give people living in poverty the resources they need to succeed.

Your donations are vital as we work towards our vision of ending poverty in our community. Thank you for your support!

If you would like to know more about the work you make possible or if you have any other questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or go to our website:

[www.bissellcentre.org](http://www.bissellcentre.org)

Sincerely,

Gary St. Amand  
Chief Executive Officer  
Bissell Centre

Lee Riggs & Friends,

Thank you for everything you have ever done for us. Have a wonderful Labour Day. You've earned it!

Al & Polly Hawkins

I retired from BCTel/Telus, and I just received my retirement gift of \$1,000. Thank you very much! It's greatly appreciated! I plan to use the dollars towards a trip! :) Thanks also for the lifetime membership certificate.

I am very grateful that our union has made it possible to receive an early retirement pension. Thank you to everyone for all their hard work over the years on behalf of BCTel/Telus employees!

In solidarity,

Kathy Richards

Dear Lee,

Thank you for your congratulatory letter of January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2017, regarding my appointment as Minister of Municipal Affairs. I am honoured to serve Albertans in this capacity and I look forward to working with municipalities to deliver the best services for Albertans.

Thank you again for extending your congratulations.

Sincerely,

Hon. Shaye Anderson  
Minister of Municipal Affairs  
MLA, Leduc-Beaumont

**WANT TO SHARE YOUR  
APPRECIATION?**

Email: [editor@usw1944.ca](mailto:editor@usw1944.ca)

**STAY INFORMED!  
IT'S YOUR UNION, YOUR NEWS.**

Visit our website to sign up for frequent hotlines at:  
[www.usw1944.ca](http://www.usw1944.ca)