

LET'S STAY CONNECTED TO CREATE THE NEEDED CHANGE

"2020 has been a challenging year for everyone the world over. It has tested our resolve, but Local 1944 has shown our tenacity in the face of the constant onslaught of upheaval brought on by the pandemic. Members, staff, and the leadership of Local 1944 have as they always do, put every effort into the challenge put in front of them. C19 has changed us forevermore, of that there is no doubt.



Donna Hokiro,
Acting President

For many of us, working from home or working in-office, but physically distanced from our Brothers and Sisters, created new challenges. Notwithstanding, we marshalled on through the strain of isolation and the pressures brought about due to the various lockdowns and restrictions.

There is no question that this period has been markedly arduous, and for some even grim, especially those living alone or those who lack the necessary supports to help them during this time.

Even though it's been a rough go, there are things that each of us can be grateful for. We all have our own lists, but I suspect each list is likely long. From the warmth of our homes, to the food on our tables, to the friends that ring us up, we don't have to look too far.

Even inside our industry, most of us remained working during this time and some even working overtime for extra pay. Others enjoyed the safety net of the quarantine language bargained for you in our collective agreements, while others were afforded leaves to attend to

ACTING PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

responsibilities made necessary by the pandemic. All of this is possible because you have the solid backing of your Union.

We've learned something else also, if quarantines, confinements, and working from home taught us anything, it is that we need each other. Employers have known this for a long time, long before any pandemic took hold of our society. They try to divide and conquer through all kinds of initiatives, and sometimes it works. But no longer, we are wise and we have each other's backs. Through all of this sacrifice we will emerge stronger and more united than ever because we have learned that we are a village.

We have stayed connected even when sometimes the technology has been daunting, erratic and betraying. I can't tell you how many times my call just dropped. One second I'm listening and the next I am looking at a cast of frozen faces of participants on a Zoom or BlueJeans call; or any similar technology. Speaking of staying connected, my deepest appreciation goes out to all members, new (lots of new) and tenured members who have joined in on Zoom held Unit meetings. We have had some Units completely knock it out of the park. That happens because we have outstanding activism growing in so many Units, and it only happens when members are engaged in taking a stand for better.

Speaking of employers, we are still trying to get a deal at the bargaining table for Abbotsford members but Shaw has thrown in the towel. Such cowardice and contempt for their members. 2020 has seen across the globe the need for connectivity, and telecommunications companies are a screaming success. You all see that everyday, you know how busy you are, you working as hard as you do, is them making money hand over fist. More inequity, more for them, less for you, fairness be damned.

I stand on the side of fairness and I stand with these Brothers – we'll fight.

Please share your support on social media with the hashtag **#NoFear**.

Members of our Telus bargaining committee are meeting the last week of January to put our bargaining package together. Members

ACTING PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

are gearing up to take a stand for a fair and respectful round in 2021. We will show the same zealousness as Shaw members at Unit 60 have shown their employer.

My friends, it's been a ride, but we do see a light at the end of the proverbial tunnel. I believe we can expect that by summer or early fall we will be waiting in line to see a favorite performer or band, or sporting event. We will be together again. Hanging together at backyard fire pits, BBQ's, all the holidays and celebrations, and when we are, we'll appreciate these things more than ever. We just have to get through these times in a sensible and responsible way so that we have the many more ahead to look forward too.

On behalf of the National Executive Board, my sincere thanks to all of you who got involved this year. I'm looking forward to seeing many of you with handshakes and hugs, in person soon.

Blessings to you and yours during the holiday season. Rest and recuperate so that in 2021 we will be refreshed and ready for the fights that await in the New Year."

— Acting President Donna Hokiro



NEWS FROM UNIT 60



SHAW DOESN'T WANT TO SHARE A DIME OF ITS PROFITS WITH UNIT 60 ABBOTSFORD MEMBERS

The Collective Agreement between Shaw Abbotsford and USW Local 1944 has been expired since March 31, 2020.

"We are keenly aware that Shaw will always be looking out for what they believe is in their best interest, not yours," warned the bargaining committee in March this year. That proved true as soon as in September, when Shaw refused the sensible package brought forward by the Union, that addressed the company's concerns as well as advancing members' needs such as equity in wages and working conditions, job security and benefits. Shaw simply expects members to give up these rights, and sign a 7-year collective agreement.

The bargaining committee reminds members that "Shaw continues to be an extremely profitable company in spite of the competitive environment, and that is in large part, because of the work you do. [...] You perform skilled, technical labour and you neither want nor need a regressive deal that doesn't respect this fact."

Brad Shaw writes it himself in the company's [latest quarterly report](#): "As demand for connectivity surged, we [Editor's Note: you, the workers] provided the critical lifeline for Canadians to continue to work, access education, and connect with family and friends during a difficult time for all. Not only was our network performance exceptional, but we introduced even faster Internet services and completed our largest product launch ever, with the introduction of Shaw Mobile, all while still primarily working from home — a remarkable feat." In other words: "Great job everyone, but you won't get a dime for your excellent work."

NEWS FROM UNIT 60

Earlier this month, the bargaining committee announced that Shaw's negotiating team was not willing to sign a fair deal and so instead Shaw has run away from the table and now we are headed to conciliation and mediation again, just like the last few rounds of bargaining with Shaw.

Your bargaining team is fighting for your future, in spite of your employer. It is composed of Keller Reeves, Rob Wall, James Large, Local Union Representative Steve McWhirter, Staff Representative Jayson Little, Staff Representative Scott Lunny, and Acting President Donna Hokiro. Shaw Abbotsford bargaining updates are available [here](#).

2 WEIGHTS, 2 MEASURES – BROUGHT TO YOU BY SHAW

A STRONG 2020 PERFORMANCE...

In its latest fiscal report, **Shaw announced a net income of \$688 million for 2020**: "Our fiscal 2020 performance was strong [...] and I am confident in our **continued ability to deliver growth in the future**. Our expanding range of products and services have never been more relevant for consumers and businesses." – Brad Shaw.

\$750 MILLION PAID TO SHAREHOLDERS...

"We still **returned approximately \$750 million to our shareholders** through dividends and buybacks in fiscal 2020. With a **substantial and growing free cash flow** profile expected in fiscal 2021, combined with significant balance sheet strength, we expect to enhance our already **strong capital return profile** through our current dividend commitments and an additional share buyback program of up to 5% of currently outstanding Class B Shares." – Brad Shaw.

... BUT "NECESSARY" ADJUSTMENTS TO OPERATING EXPENDITURES

"Management continues to actively monitor the impacts to the business and make the appropriate adjustments to operating and capital expenditures to reflect the evolving environment."

Source: [Shaw Quarterly Reports Fiscal 2020 - Fourth Quarter](#)

WOMEN IN THE PANDEMIC

WOMEN HAVE BEEN PAYING A HEAVY PRICE SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE PANDEMIC-INDUCED RECESSION

A MAJORITY OF PARENTING DUTIES FALL TO WOMEN

For many parents, the closure of schools and daycares intensified parental tasks and added new responsibilities, such as homeschooling or helping children with homework. According to [Statistics Canada](#), prior to the pandemic, women in Canada already performed more parental tasks than men. In 2020, the pre-existing gender-based division of parental tasks deepened. This put mothers at higher risk of increased stress and physical and mental health consequences (Statistics Canada 2020).

FEWER WOMEN IN THE LABOUR FORCE

The unequal division of unpaid family work is recognized as a driver of gender inequality with direct impacts on women's labour force participation, time spent at work, wages and job quality ([Statistics Canada](#)). The delay in women's return to work can have far-reaching implications for narrowing the gender wage gap and for facilitating the ability of women to acquire the needed skills in a transitioning economy.

According to a RBC [report](#), "COVID-19 rolled back the clock on three decades of advances in women's labour-force participation, setting Canada's economy up for a slower recovery than might otherwise be the case. [...] That's set up a divergent, and troubling, trajectory that's seen Canadian women continue to retreat from the workforce even as Canadian men more than make up for ground lost early in the pandemic."

A PANDEMIC OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

According to [UN Women](#), "the economic downturn generated by COVID-19 with increased unemployment and loss of income, are particularly dangerous for women in abusive relationships, as

WOMEN IN THE PANDEMIC

economic control is a key tool for abusers. Financial insecurity may force victims to remain with their abusers. It is therefore crucial that governments prioritize intimate partner violence in all parts of their public policy response to the pandemic.”

Why is domestic violence a Union issue? Domestic abuse can affect the safety of employees and impact negatively on the working environment. “Co-workers experience the negative effects of domestic violence through increased workloads, stress, calls or visits from their co-worker’s abuser, and other potential safety risks. [...] Solidarity and equality are the main pillars of trade union’s work. Violence against women is a radical expression of discrimination.” (Source: [IndustriAll](#)).

If you need help, please get in touch with your [Women of Steel Committee](#).

TAKE THE CLC’S NATIONAL SURVEY ON WORKPLACE VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT

The Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) has launched a national survey to gauge the severity and measure the response to violence and harassment in Canada’s workplaces. The survey is being conducted by researchers from Western University and the University of Toronto. The [Steelworkers](#) union is encouraging all members to take part in the online survey!

Harassment and violence are a serious health and safety issue that have no place in the workplace.

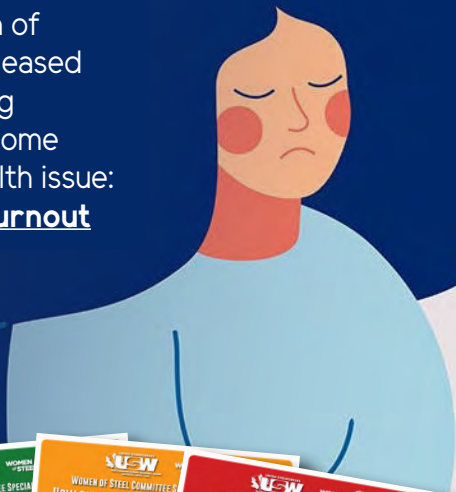
All workers, of any gender, are encouraged to fill it out, whether or not they have personally experienced or witnessed violence and harassment at work, to help us learn what works when it comes to stopping harassment and violence in the workplace. All respondents will remain anonymous.

[Take the survey!](#)

#RespectAtWork

WOMEN OF STEEL COMMITTEE SPECIAL PUBLICATIONS

Local 1944's Women of Steel Committee released 4 publications raising awareness around some common mental health issue: <https://1944.fyi/burnout>



2020, A YEAR IN PICTURES



On January 8th and 9th, Unit 63's Stratcom bargaining committee met. From left to right: Benny Chou, Acting President Donna Hokiroy, Local Union Representative Perry Pasqualetto and Al Pasternak



The Alberta Federation of Labour held its annual Winter School from January 12th to January 17th, in Jasper, Alberta. From left to right: Regional Executive Officer AB Richard Blais, Kim Piea (201), USW Staff Representative Scott Lunny, Acting President Donna Hokiroy, Ken McPherson (208), David Skrober (203), Karen Hannah-Masse (207), Trustee Jenn Dunsmore-Turner

2020, A YEAR IN PICTURES



Swearing-in ceremony of Local 1944 Officers at the Executive Board meeting on January 22nd and 23rd, in Burnaby, BC. From left to right: Acting President Donna Hokiro, Trustee Jennifer Dunsmore-Turner, Acting Regional Executive Officer QC Robert J. Briza, Trustee Ross Brown, Regional Executive Officer BC Corey Mandryk



On February 8th to 14th, members attended the Canadian Labour Congress Winter School. From left to right: Trustee Ross Brown, USW Staff Rep Jayson Little, Secretary-Treasurer Michael Phillips, Brian Miller (35), Elana Felty (51), Regional Executive Officer BC Corey Mandryk

2020, A YEAR IN PICTURES



On February 23rd, members from Local 1944 attended the Black History Month Legacy Dinner in Burnaby, BC. From left to right: Candace Knoll (51), CUPW Legacy Honouree Jan Simpson, Acting President Donna Hokiro



On March 3rd, members of the Shaw Abbotsford bargaining committee met at the headquarters in Burnaby, BC. From left to right: Keller Reeves (60), Local Union Representative Steve McWhirter, Acting President Donna Hokiro, James Large (60), Rob Wall (60), USW Staff Representative Jayson Little

2020, A YEAR IN PICTURES



On August 6th, Acting President Donna Hokiro joined other activists on a picket line in Edmonton, AB, to show solidarity with members from the Boilermakers Local 146 locked-out by Cessco. From left to right: Acting President Donna Hokiro, Tammy Sale from the Health Sciences Association of Alberta and Emma Pyke from the Alberta Federation of Labour.



Mark Piccolo is a Unit 60 Shaw Installer in Burnaby, BC. This year, his son Ryan was the recipient of both the Local 1944 Scholarship and the David Ellis Scholarship.

2020, A YEAR IN PICTURES



On September 17th, members from Unit 60 Abbotsford showed solidarity with their Bargaining Committee by proudly wearing #NoFear stickers.



On September 25th, the Unit 60 Abbotsford Bargaining Committee showed support to the IBEW 213 members from Ledcor LTS. From left to right, back to front: Rob Wall (60), Local Union Representative Steve McWhirter, James Large (60), USW Staff Representative Jayson Little, Keller Reeves (60), USW Staff Representative Scott Lunny

2020, A YEAR IN PICTURES



On September 30th, members showed solidarity with IBEW 213 members by joining their picket line in Port Coquitlam, BC. From left to right: IBEW 213 Assistant Business Manager Robin Nedila, IBEW 213 Business Representative Dustin Brecht, Trustee Ross Brown, Mayor City of Port Coquitlam and USW District 3 Communications Director Brad West, retired member from Unit 51 and Councillor City of Port Coquitlam Nancy McCurrach



On October 14th, members of Shaw Abbotsford enjoyed a cupcake day and displayed #NoFear signs on their cars.

59th CONVENTION OF THE BC FEDERATION OF LABOUR

The BC Federation of Labour held its 59th Constitutional Convention virtually on November 24–26, 2020.

Members from Local 1944 were able to participate in the online event: Acting President Donna Hokiro, Acting Vice President Pierre-Luc Dick, Secretary-Treasurer Michael Phillips, Regional Executive Officer BC Corey Mandryk, Regional Executive Officer AB Richard Blais, Trustees Ross Brown and Michelle Ravary, Neil Marshall (Unit 32), Matt Rizzo (Unit 7), Sherry Fraser (Unit 1), Katelyn Armstrong (Unit 4), Mike Goodmurphy (Unit 35), Michael Throssell (Unit 51), and Craig Lee (Unit 8).

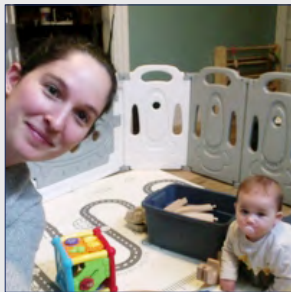


“As a first-time attendee to the conference it was amazing to see all of the other union members speaking up for values that they wanted to champion and this ‘union of unions’ showing a strong direction they wanted to take to help the labour movement in many different ways.

Having Premier Horgan and NDP leader Singh speak was very inspiring and it was very nice to network and share ideas with the other young workers attending when we had our caucus.”

– Matt Rizzo, Unit 7

EDUCATION



“On November 25th and 26th, I attended the first ever virtual BCFED convention from the comfort of my living room. I am honoured to have been able to participate in this democratic process.

I learned about all of the hard work the BCFED has been doing on behalf of its affiliates and all working people this past year. Some of the work that stood out to me includes: Advocating for paid sick leave and supporting the incomes of laid-off workers during the pandemic, pushing for WCB reforms including stronger coverage for workers, and taking the lead from Indigenous peoples to work towards reconciliation and justice. I am looking forward to seeing all of the things the BCFED will accomplish this coming year.

This was my first time attending a convention and I found it enjoyable. I thought the BCFED did a great job organizing all of the virtual aspects. The chime interface was easy to use and had some neat features like the gallery and business cards. It was nice having Slack for us all to communicate throughout the days, however, not the same as if we had been there together in person. It's unfortunate that we weren't able to meet, get to know each other, and have some deeper conversations about the topics at hand. All things considered, it was a positive experience and I was happy to be able to participate.”

– Katie Armstrong, Unit 4

EDUCATION



“From November 24th to 26th, the BC Federation of Labour held its biennial convention. USW Local 1944 sent a strong team, which I was proud to be a part of, to both participate and observe the complicated undertaking of hosting a large conference online in preparation for our own Local Union Delegated

Meeting next year.

Minor technological glitches were remedied rapidly and efficiently, leading to an overall smooth presentation. Resolutions to support issues such as a return to COVID premiums for frontline workers, post-secondary school funding, and lowering the voting age to 16 were brought forward, with the latter offering the most robust debate and eventually passing with the closest voting margin of the entire conference.

I would have liked to see more time working together as a congress to deal with as many of the resolutions as possible, but this was my only complaint of the three days spent representing Local 1944 and Unit 60 on the provincial stage, in what was otherwise an enlightening experience.

Thank you to Acting President Donna Hokiroy and the rest of the Table Officers for their invitation for me to attend. I found the experience informative, educational, and vitally important to the greater labour movement we all find ourselves a part of.”

— Corey Mandryk, Regional Executive Officer BC, Unit 60

EDUCATION

"Having the chance to see the awesome and focused activism at work, seeing how everything works and being a part of history, voting on new resolutions that focus the incredible energies of so many was a true joyful experience.

I always wondered how it all came together and worked. I am very blessed to have been able to go. Thanks, team!"



– Michael Throssell, Unit 51

"This year I was privileged to attend (virtually) the BC Federation of Labour convention. It was inspiring to hear from so many with a common perspective and purpose.

We heard from BC Premier John Horgan and federal NDP leader Jagmeet Singh. We heard some very emotional testimonial from some of the aboriginal union members about how they were influenced by the residential school system that many of them and their family members were impacted by.

I walked away from this convention inspired by what can be accomplished when a group of people are all pulling in the same direction. It gives me hope that we as a Local can get there and have success at bargaining."

– Neil Marshall, Unit 32

JOIN P.U.M.A. TODAY!



PUMA

CAMPAIGN #1 – REALITYCHECK

Telus asks for our opinions on its PulseCheck surveys, yet the Union consistently hears of members being told there will be negative consequences for their department if PulseCheck scores are low, or that members are suspicious that the results are not anonymous.

Our solution: “RealityCheck”, a survey that asks many of the same questions as PulseCheck, but guarantees you the freedom to tell the whole truth about your employer.



To take the survey,
scan the QR code or go to
<https://1944.fyi/realitycheck>

**TO GET INVOLVED WITH THIS AND FUTURE CAMPAIGNS,
EMAIL PUMA@USW1944.CA NOW!**



PENSIONS

NEW BILL TO PROTECT RETIREES AND WORKERS IN CASE OF BUSINESS BANKRUPTCY IN QUEBEC

The Métallos/United Steelworkers welcome the new bill that aims at protecting pensions in the event of a business bankruptcy in Quebec, proposed by the Bloc party member Marilène Gill. For nearly 5 years now, Métallos have been leading a crusade to amend the Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act (CCAA) and the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act (BIA), to better protect workers and retirees.

"We've been waiting for too long," said USW District 5 Director Dominic Lemieux. "It is unacceptable that politicians keep delaying protection of workers and retirees, leaving them last in line for the recovery of their due in the event of a business bankruptcy, well after banks, municipalities and even school boards."

Director Lemieux added: "Pensions are deferred wages, which have been negotiated through an agreement and a contract. The rule of law must protect pensions and laws should reflect our society's priorities: real people must come first!"

POLITICS DEFINE OUR WORKING RIGHTS

Do you want to lobby for laws that have a positive impact on our workplaces and communities?

**Get involved with
your Political Action
Committee!**

**More information at
<https://1944.fyi/PAC>
or by [email](#)**

STEELWORKERS HUMANITY FUND

THE STEELWORKERS HUMANITY FUND GIVES BACK TO OUR COMMUNITIES

Are you looking for a way to give back to your community? Did you know that the Steelworkers Humanity Fund (SHF) has been contributing \$226,750 to 117 food banks in provinces across Canada this year?

2020 has seen a rise of business closures, local unemployment, and food prices, leading more and more families to rely on food banks. The food inflation rate in Canada this year has been 10 times that amount of the general inflation rate.

“Many Steelworkers, their families and entire communities have been affected by the pandemic. In that context, our members who are still at work know about the importance of giving back,” said Ken Neumann, President of the SHF and USW National Director. “This is why this year’s Steelworkers Humanity Fund donation to food banks and other organizations across Canada is all the more important. The increasing wealth inequality brought about by this pandemic has exposed yet again how the current system is broken. The United Steelworkers will continue to show all the solidarity we can in the coming months.”

[View the list of food banks](#) receiving contributions in 2020 from the SHF.

Learn more about the Humanity Fund at <http://1944.fyi/SHF>

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: Loblaws, Sobeys and Metro control half the country’s total grocery retail industry, and the prices in agriculture. Since March, these 3 companies have raised their margins tremendously and have been reporting record revenues during the pandemic.

[CLICK HERE TO DONATE](#)

[Fill out](#) the Steelworkers Humanity Fund 2-minute survey before January 4, 2021 to be eligible for a draw to win a T-shirt

ABORIGINAL COMMITTEE

2021 USW NATIONAL ABORIGINAL COMMITTEE CONNECTING CIRCLES

The USW National Aboriginal Committee will host a series on online Connecting Circles in 2021, all with simultaneous English-French interpretation:

Staying Healthy in Mind, Body, and Spirit,
Wednesday, January 27

Political Action for Indigenous Rights,
Wednesday, February 24

Staying Healthy in Mind, Body, and Spirit,
Wednesday, March 24

Post-secondary Education for Indigenous Peoples,
Wednesday, May 5

**The USW National Aboriginal Committee
encourages Indigenous members to participate,
and the circle is open to all.**

[REGISTER HERE](#)



**YOUR EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS
WISH YOU A HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON
AND ALL THE BEST FOR 2021**

