

From left to right, top to bottom: Acting President Donna Hokiro, Acting Vice President Pierre-Luc Dick, Secretary-Treasurer Michael Phillips, REO AB Richard Blais, REO BC Corey Mandryk, USW Staff Rep Jayson Little, Trustee Michelle Ravary, Trustee Ross Brown, Administrator Omero Landi, Acting REO QC Robert J. Briza, Trustee Jenn Dunsmore-Turner, REO AB Steve Durrell, REO BC Denise Chisholm (via phone), and USW Staff Rep Randy Gatzka

EXECUTIVE BOARD VIDEOCONFERENCE

Members of the Executive Board met on October 14 and 15, by Zoom videoconference. Executive Board members received reports of the Table Officers and of several committees. They approved the amalgamation of Units 1, 5 and 7 into a new Unit 7.

“The Local’s Executive Board meets quarterly. This last quarter was filled with many interactions with members and the Local is working towards building engagement for a stronger and better future for the membership,” said Acting Vice President Pierre-Luc Dick. “Nominations for delegates to the upcoming Local Union Delegated

Meeting and members of the USW Local 1944 – Telus Bargaining Committee took place at Unit meetings held between September and October, and elections will be by electronic ballot on November 20. As we approach bargaining with Telus, please make sure to fill out the bargaining survey, which will be released soon.”

“We discussed the need to continue developing plans for an in-person Local Union Delegated Meeting (LUDM) and a virtual LUDM if in-person is not possible,” said Secretary-Treasurer Michael Phillips, “Either way, we want to make sure that our LUDM will be a great experience of solidarity for all activists. As well, the Board did our regular review of the monthly financials, and discussed the fact that we’re currently running a \$370,000 budget surplus year-to-date with almost a year of operating expenditures in our reserves due to surpluses in the last two fiscal years.”

THANK YOU TO DEPARTING REGIONAL EXECUTIVE OFFICER ONTARIO BROOKE DOWNEY

After two years serving on the Local’s Executive Board, REO Ontario Brooke Downey is resigning to help take better care of her family at this difficult time. Brooke Downey started working at Telus in 2007, in the Loyalty and Retention department in Scarborough, Ontario, out of Unit 501. She became a Shop Steward in 2009, and was Unit Secretary-Treasurer for 4 years. She was elected Regional Executive Officer Ontario in April 2018.



“During these past months as a REO, I could appreciate the respectful approach that our leadership shows towards each other’s work, opinions and differences, always prioritizing what’s best for our membership and focusing on the rank and file members. I also realized that we are all facing the same issues, regardless where we are located in the country.”

“The pandemic forced me to make a choice, that is why I stepped down from my positions as REO Ontario and Chair of the Civil and Human Rights Committee. I chose to take some time off to take care of my daughters and do what I believe is best for my family.”

Sister Downey will resume her position at Telus in 2021, at which time she will take on her Shop Steward responsibilities and other activities for the Local.

\$1,000 DONATION TO THE BROADBENT INSTITUTE

On October 14–15, 2020, members of the Executive Board passed a motion to make a \$1,000 donation to the Broadbent Institute.

Individual citizens have limited means to advance progressive political ideas and hold the powerful to account. The Broadbent Institute gives power back to the people by providing tools for community organizing and advocating worker-friendly policy. The work they are doing is to the benefit of all Canadians, as they champion progressive policy, holds the powerful to account, and gives power back to everyday working Canadians.

This year the Institute calls for major tax reforms, increased public funding, improved and expanded healthcare, and works on preventing austerity from taking hold post-pandemic.

Learn more or make an individual donation at

broadbentinstitute.ca



HEALTH AND SAFETY IN THE WORKPLACE

GOING TO WORK AT TELUS DURING COVID-19

Acting President Donna Hokiro headed over to the Telus offices in Edmonton, Alberta, to experience firsthand the process that members undertake to go to their workplace.

“Since the very beginning of the pandemic, I had been trading phone calls with the Labour Relations departments of our various employers. At the outset, the calls were exceedingly frequent, sometimes occurring many times a day. Eventually they slowed to once or twice weekly. With respect to Telus, my main source of information came from the Acting Director of Labour Relations.

On one such call, I was advised that some of the Telus offices were going to begin to open with very limited capacity. Further, they would take great care and to limit the possibility of transmission. Employees, bargaining unit and otherwise, would need to fill out a Daily Health Self-Assessment Form and would need permission from their manager

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Acting President Donna Hokiro getting her temperature taken with an infrared thermometer temperature gun by nurse Marcie.

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to come into the building. Once inside, they would need to have their temperature taken before proceeding to a work station elsewhere in the building. Our members in the field who go into customers' homes would also need to fill out the form and would be provided thermometers to check their temperatures.

I was intrigued, plus I wanted to see for myself what members were expected to go through, as well as was it as safe as they claimed? I asked if I could come see. We made a date and in I went. But first...

In order to fill out the form, our members would login to the Team Portal using their secure Telus ID and password. Once there, they answer some questions (see yellow text block).

HEALTH SELF-ASSESSMENT FORM

- *In the last 48 hours, have you had any of the following symptoms unrelated to allergies or chronic / pre-existing conditions: fever (>37.8°C), cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell, stuffy and/or runny nose? (No) (Yes)*
- *Have you returned to Canada from outside the country (including USA) in the past 14 days? (No) (Yes)*
- *In the last 14 days, have you had close contact* with a person who is confirmed, waiting for testing, or highly likely to be COVID-19 infected? (No) (Yes)*
- *In the last 14 days, have you had close contact* with someone who is sick with acute respiratory symptoms or has returned to Canada from outside of the country (including USA) within 14 days prior to your contact with them? (No) (Yes)*
- *Are there any other reasons why you should not be working in a Telus work environment or working in person with customers? (No) (Yes)*

***Close contact** includes living in the same household or being face-to-face within 2 meters for more than 5 minutes total.

I confirm that the responses provided are accurate and acknowledge that a failure to answer truthfully may result in increased risk and possible harm to others.

HEALTH AND SAFETY IN THE WORKPLACE

When all of those questions are answered as 'no', and after having received their manager's permission, a member can then and only then, proceed into the office.

In my case, I met with the Acting Director of Labour Relations at the security desk at the Edmonton ATB Tower. She was also required to fill out the Health Self-Assessment form and had obtained permission from her leader so that we could go over in person Telus' protocols. Before entering, both of us already donned our masks and then began the screening protocol.

Hard to miss, signs speaking to practicing good health hygiene, and preventing the spread are everywhere. One sign advises everyone that they must report to the 31st floor. Of course, there are the floor stickers indicating proper physical distance between people as well as directional arrows.

As we waited for the elevator, more signage indicated elevator protocol and even more once inside. Signs explained that there should only be two people per car and where to stand to maximize distance. As we exited the elevator on the 31st floor, more protocol placards and signage greeted us and reminded us of the daily health protocols. We followed the instructions and moved toward the entrance of the screening room.

In the reception area, a quasi-medical check-in cart stood at the ready with various supplies. Here folks can collect any additional gloves and masks they may need for the day, and of course they already have one on or they wouldn't have made it this far. Following along, there are purple feet stickers on the floor that call people to 'step here'.

When the nurse called to me that it was an all clear, I didn't even know anything had happened.

My temperature had just been taken from six feet away with a thermal imaging camera. It had

all happened so fast. The camera is calibrated every hour to ensure accuracy, as well a back up camera is kept in reserve to ensure that there is a replacement available should the need arise.

Edi and Marcie, the nurses, sit behind the counter in full protective gear,

"I wanted to see for myself what members were expected to go through, as well as was it as safe as they claimed?"

HEALTH AND SAFETY IN THE WORKPLACE

including facemask with shield, gown and gloves. They are onsite from 7:00 am until 11:00 am.

If that test had indicated that I was above 37.8 degrees Celsius, then I would have needed to receive a secondary test after spending five minutes in a quiet room just off the main testing area. This second test is administered using an infrared thermometer. I did get the all clear after the first test but I wanted to experience the whole kit and caboodle, and so Marcie administered the second test as well. She and Edi showed us the quiet room and explained that sometimes nervousness or other factors can register an elevated temperature on the first test but after the brief five minute period of rest another test



Nurses Edi and Marcie sit behind the counter in full protective gear, including facemask with shield, gown and gloves. They are equipped with a thermal imaging camera to monitor the temperature of all individuals entering Telus House.

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is taken and may result in a normal result.

Once an all clear is given, more directional floor indicators are followed as members and others make their way to their respective workplaces and floors to begin their day. In the unfortunate event of a high temperature, directions are given to go straight home, to not use public transportation, and instead call for a ride. Once home, they are asked to call their manager to advise and to also call the health authority in their particular region.

This process is in place for all of the Telus' main administrative offices that are open.

While the process can seem to some, cumbersome and perhaps even unnecessary, I believe that the practice is putting the physical health of our members first. Additionally, I didn't find the process to take long at all. Had it not been for asking the many clarifying questions I had, I would have been in and out in a matter of less than a minute. The elevator ride was the longest part in this experience. I feel heartened that the



Prevent the spread.

Washing your hands with soap is the best way to protect yourself and others from COVID-19.

Follow these steps:

- Wet your hands
- Use soap
- Lather and scrub for 20 seconds
- Rinse for 10 seconds
- Dry your hands

Download Babylon by TELUS Health today and see a doctor on your phone at no cost to you.



A wide variety of signage is on display everywhere.

HEALTH AND SAFETY IN THE WORKPLACE

precautions are in place but want to remind all of our members, we must layer our vigilance by doing more than one thing, or one thing over another.

I decided to do this piece now rather than in the height of summer because a second wave is looking inevitable and people are getting fatigued.

I understand that, we are all longing for more interactions without the fear of sickness

and worse. But, for as much as we may be done with C19, it is not done with us. My friends, please be extra careful as winter sets in. Now is not the time to relent. Hopefully, in a few months a vaccine may be available to provide us some relief. In the meantime, stay safe and remember our Safety Creed in everything you do on the job. **'The demands of the service or the importance of the job are never so great that you cannot do the job safely'.**

"We are all longing for more interactions without the fear of sickness and worse. But, for as much as we may be done with C19, it is not done with us."

— Submitted by Donna Hokiro, Acting President



HOW ARE THINGS GOING IN YOUR WORKPLACE?

Because a right denied to one is a right denied to all, Local 1944 members need to hear from you!

Contact your Local Union Representative

Share your story by email at communications@usw1944.ca



MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT



For 12 months, Regional Executive Officer for BC Denise Chisholm was on a leave from her job at Telus on a temporary full-time basis to work on membership engagement for Local 1944. She returned to her position at Telus in early October. She remains Chair of our Women of Steel Committee and works with the Officers of the Health and Safety Committee on additional supports for members.

Sister Chisholm started her job at BCTel as a Temporary Operator for Expo 86 and is currently working in the Loyalty and Retention department. She quickly became a Shop

Steward, a Unit Councillor and a Health and Safety Representative.

“Operator Services members in the then Unit 42 faced a cruel lack of ergonomics, a big issue that led to many strain injuries. It took invoking the Right to Refuse and involving Labour Canada to improve our working conditions and get proper equipment. Many employees are currently working from home, which brings the ergonomics issue back on the table.”

“Members throughout the country deal with burnout and mental health issues, directly linked with the unrealistic expectations from their employers.”

The main goal of the position is to be the voice of the members to the leadership by creating a 2-way communication. It involves daily phone calls to members, working on many projects, such as

“I want to personally thank Sister Chisholm for everything she has done for the membership during her time at the office. She has worked tirelessly on many projects and her engagement, passion and devotion will be missed.”

— Acting Vice President
Pierre-Luc Dick

MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT

communications, surveys, the build up of the PUMA infrastructure within our Units, and the creation of a national platform to enable easy communication between members throughout the country.

"It takes the whole Union to say 'Stop' to our employers when they cross the line. Many members don't know that THEY ARE THE UNION. This is even more true with the isolation that is felt since the beginning of COVID. The Local cannot address issues we are not aware are happening. Each member needs to be part of the solution by coming forward, sharing ideas and reporting things that don't feel right."

"I enjoyed working with our members and Unit Officials. I am grateful to have had the privilege to be a Membership Engagement Officer."

"Sister Chisholm worked tirelessly to implement changes that would move the Local in a new and better direction. She is a passionate visionary. She cares about our members and our Local."

— Acting President Donna Hokiro

"The Local welcomes Brother Ross Brown into Lane Street as he begins his new role and takes up membership outreach activities," said Acting President Donna Hokiro.

Ross Brown, Trustee, works for Telus. In our **July issue**, he told the story of downsizing attempts that hit his department in Unit 31, in the Lower Mainland, BC.



BURNOUT: COME TAKE OUR SURVEY!

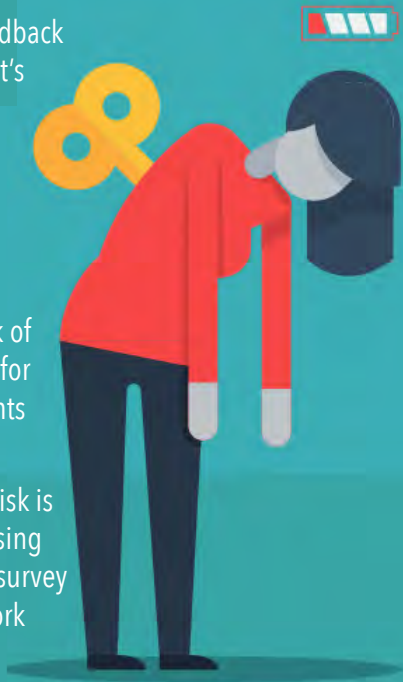
1944.fyi/burnout-survey2020

Local 1944 needs your feedback on burnout, to evaluate if it's an issue or not for our membership.

Did you answer the Burnout Survey yet?

Your answers could help determine if you are at risk of burnout, which is the case for over 50% of the respondents to the survey so far.

Determining if you are at risk is a first step towards addressing burnout. Please share the survey link with those that you work with and urge your fellow workers to take the survey.



WOMEN
of STEEL  FEMMES
d'ACIER

UNITED STEELWORKERS
 TELECOMMUNICATIONS WORKERS UNION
NATIONAL LOCAL 1944

NEWS FROM UNIT 60

The Local 1944 – Shaw Abbotsford bargaining committee is working to achieve a fair and respectful agreement for our Brothers and Sisters from Unit 60, in British Columbia, and is trying to advance the issues that are important to members, such as equity in wages and working conditions, job security and benefits.

All the while, Shaw is counting on the notion that Unit 60 Abbotsford members will give up on these and accept its proposed **rollbacks**. Because of bargaining delays caused by the pandemic, Unit 60 Abbotsford members have been without a contract since the end of March, but talks are underway.



Check the regular bargaining updates [here](#).

Show your solidarity on social media using the hashtag **#NoFear**

CUPCAKE DAY

On October 14, 2020, the members of the Shaw Abbotsford bargaining unit had a “No Fear Cupcake Day” to show their solidarity and support of the bargaining committee. They were handed out to Unit 60

NEWS FROM UNIT 60



Download the “We support our bargaining team” poster [here](#)

Abbotsford members at their compound, by a member of the bargaining committee. This initiative came out of the committee and was coordinated by James Large; it gave a direct opportunity for face-to-face conversation and the importance of sticking together. This group knows how much their solidarity helps at the table.

“Personally, I’m very grateful that we have Local individuals who have stepped up to the plate to fight for our rights and privileges,” said Mark Rudolph from Unit 60. “I’m hopeful that an agreement can be made that does not see a reduction in any of our current rights and privileges.”

SHAW CRIES ‘AUTOMATION’ AGAIN, WHILE THREATENING UNIT 60 MEMBERS

Shaw sticks to a specific narrative: Automation. The Union attempted to reach a deal with Shaw to prevent the company from getting away with another 54 delay-tactic scenario, but the company sticks to a fined-tuned message of robbery. They want us to walk away from many fights that we are undertaking for members: use of automation language instead of using lay-off language, contracting out, demotions, FTTP, and Hot Plant, all for pennies and with very few members being returned with no assurances.

Local 1944 continues to fight for Unit 60 members, and does not buy the company’s regressive demands. Unit 60 members, neither should you.

LAY OFF OF 11,000 HEALTHCARE EMPLOYEES IN ALBERTA

Since its election, the United Conservative Party government in Alberta cut funding to education, health care, municipalities and more, instead of helping Albertans. On October 13, the conservative government announced the unthinkable during a pandemic: the cut of 11,000 healthcare jobs.

According to the [Alberta Federation of Labour](#), “these cuts are ideological, meant to privatize our healthcare and this move showcases the UCP’s disdain for Alberta’s quality public services. These draconian cuts will destroy public health care during a pandemic and tank our economy during a recession. The depth of the UCP’s ideological incompetence is almost too much to comprehend.”

SPREAD THE WORD AND FIGHT BACK!

Resist the UCP’s cuts by joining the AFL [campaign](#) and [keep track of cuts](#) that happen daily in Alberta. Take a few minutes to [email your MLA](#) to demand they stop the cuts.

KENNEY'S CUTS TRACKER

October 13, 2020 • Jobs, Health Care

UCP TO CUT 11,000 AHS HEALTH CARE JOBS

The bulk of the 11,000 job UCP government cuts — about 9,700 positions — will come from cutting 2,000 laboratory jobs, 4,000 housekeeping jobs, 3,000 food service jobs, and 400 laundry jobs. The UCP will cut 800 clinical staff jobs through attrition. Patients will also have to pay higher costs for things like casts and crutches.

“Whatever they have in mind, this once again throws health care in Alberta into chaos, right in the middle of the largest health care emergency in a century.”

— *David Harrigan, [United Nurses of Alberta Labour Relations Director](#)*

“An economy that only works for the rich is an economy that isn’t really working.” — *Alberta Federation of Labour*



MEMBERS GET INVOLVED



From left to right: Robin Nedila, IBEW 213 Assistant Business Manager; Dustin Brecht, IBEW 213 Business Representative; Ross Brown, Trustee; Brad West, Mayor City of Port Coquitlam and USW District 3 Communications Director; Nancy McCurrach, retired member from Unit 51 and Councillor City of Port Coquitlam

SOLIDARITY WITH IBEW 213 MEMBERS

On Wednesday, September 30, 2020, members from Local 1944 showed solidarity with IBEW 213 members who are on strike against Ledcor LTS, by joining their picket line in Port Coquitlam, BC.

September 30 marked the one-year anniversary of the strike and the refusal by the company to sign a fair contract that would offer dignity to its workers.

Join the social media campaign: Print the [sign](#), and post a photo on your social media using the hashtags #Solidarity #UnionStrong #IBEW213 #IBEW #FairContractNow #ShameOnLEDCOR

Picket Lines: IBEW 213 members are on the picket lines Monday-Saturday 8:00 am-4:00 pm at 1435 Broadway Street, Port Coquitlam, and Monday-Friday 8:00 am-4:00 pm at 1055 West Hastings, Vancouver. Please drive by and honk your support whenever you have the opportunity to do so!

MEMBERS GET INVOLVED



Ryan Hancher (left) and Unit Chair Gord Dalueg (right) out of Unit 214, Northeast Alberta on the Edson Alberta Telus Shop Floor proudly wearing their USW Local 1944 face mask

LOCAL 1944 FACE MASKS

Every member should have received their Local 1944 face mask by now. They were produced by Union Proud, a company that employs a fully unionized workforce.

Wear yours with pride!

Send us your pictures at photos@usw1944.ca

Thank you for keeping yourself and others safe by wearing a face mask and respecting physical distance.

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>

