

# STRENGTH IN SOLIDARITY: TRIBUTE TO

## DONNA HOKIRO

As our President Donna Hokiro approaches retirement, we took the opportunity to discuss her tenure at the helm of the Local and to delve into her perspectives and contributions to the labour movement.

**Could you share some insights into your early life and what propelled you towards a career in union activism?**

I was always fiery and outspoken. I challenged authority when it didn't seem rational or fair and as such I demanded explanations. When adults said, 'because I said,' that never cut the muster with me and so I'd press on with determination until my query was answered appropriately.

My peers at work suggested I'd be a good Shop Steward, and the turning point was seeing a colleague in distress due to a manager's harshness. This cemented my dedication to workplace advocacy and representation.

**When did you initially become involved with the union, and what drove you to join?**

My engagement with union activities began in the early nineties, at the outset of my career, initially serving as a Safety Representative. Encouraged by colleagues and motivated by witnessing unjust treatment of a peer by management, I embraced union involvement wholeheartedly.

**Could you outline your progression within the union, leading up to your current role as president?**

My union leadership path has been extensive, beginning as a Health and Safety Representative and progressing through roles such as Shop Steward, Counsellor, Vice President, and eventually President of Local 212, a journey I repeated at Local 207.

I was a member and Secretary of the Finance Committee. I served as a member of the longest-ever Bargaining Committee for five years and have been on several other bargaining committees, some of which I've led. Nationally, I served as Regional Executive Officer for Alberta, National Vice President, and National President. I've also been deeply involved with 1944's Women of Steel Committee and am a sitting member of the Canadian Women of Steel National Committee. I am also on the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) Women's Advisory Committee. I am a Vice-President of the Alberta Federation of Labour, Chair of the Human Resources and Governance Committee, and a member of the Political Action Committee.



**Who have been the most significant influences or mentors throughout your career?**

I've been fortunate to have a number of mentors and influencers in my career, including Darlene Foley, Bruce Bell, Rod Hiebert, Peter Massy, Joe Benn, Christine McMeckan, Diane Cormier, and Omero Landi.

**What are some of the challenges you've encountered as Union President, and how have you addressed them?**

Enhancing engagement by reaching across all aisles within the union's diverse groups and camps was challenging but necessary if we were ever to win against the employers. By sharing my vision and encouraging member input, we united to strengthen the union, a process marked by extensive dialogue, collaboration, and dedicated effort. I rolled up my sleeves and put in the many, many hours that were required in order to realize this reality.

**How have you engaged with both union members and the broader community to support your goals?**

My engagement efforts have extended beyond the union, involving lobbying efforts at both the provincial and national levels, including collaborations with the Canadian Labour Congress, to champion the interests of our members and the wider community.

**What are your aspirations for the future of the union and its members?**

I hope to see the union not only maintain its relevance but also grow stronger and more influential, embodying the power and resilience of collective action.

**What significant changes or improvements have you witnessed within the union and its membership during your tenure?**

Reflecting on my tenure, it's evident that the union has faced numerous challenges, especially following a tumultuous period post-2005. However, focusing on the positive, there has been a significant increase in member engagement and collective action, which have been central to our revitalization efforts.

**Looking back, what advice would you offer to someone just starting in union activism?**

My advice to newcomers in union activism is straightforward: seize the initiative. Attend meetings, volunteer for roles, and actively contribute to the collective effort. There's a place and a role for everyone committed to the cause.

# LUDM 2024

MONTREAL, QC

March 19 to 21, 2024  
du 19 au 21 mars, 2024



## LOCAL UNION DELEGATED MEETING ASSEMBLÉE DES DÉLÉGUÉ(E)S DE LA SECTION LOCALE

# 2024

Day 1 of the Local Union Delegated Meeting (LUDM) at the Delta Hotel in Montreal kicked off with a bang. President Donna Hokiro gave an inspiring speech, highlighting our collective strength against gender-based violence and corporate injustices, and celebrating our achievements in collective bargaining and union growth. We honored our late colleagues, including Keith Murphy, with a touching video tribute. Nicolas Lapierre motivated us with his talk on making historical change through perseverance. Nominations for TWPP Trustee positions saw Czar Loquia and Rick Fleming as candidates, with elections scheduled for March 20th. Chief Cadmus Delorme made a compelling call to support Indigenous healing and truth. The day concluded with an engaging panel on member mobilization.



# LUDM 2024



Day 2 of the Local Union Delegated Meeting in Montreal saw the Resolutions Committee discuss 17 resolutions from various units and the Executive Board, with National Vice President Pierre-Luc Dick leading the debate. Secretary-Treasurer Michael Phillips reviewed a financial turnaround allowing for expanded services and engagement, emphasizing the importance of solidarity. An unexpected power outage during the session didn't dampen spirits; instead, delegates rallied at the Telus Tower, demanding job retention in Canada and fair practices. In the elections, Brother Czar Loquia was re-elected as a Telecommunications Workers Pension Plan Trustee. The Worker's Compensation and Health and Safety Committee highlighted efforts to protect lone workers through technology. The day concluded with a surprise banquet for retiring president Donna Hokiro, marking a memorable celebration.

# LUDM 2024 - RALLY AT TELUS' HEADQUARTERS

Day 2 of the LUDM, delegates united for a march to 630 Boulevard René-Lévesque at the Telus Tower in downtown Montreal. At this location, we organized a lively and emphatic rally outside the building, calling on Telus to retain telecom jobs in Canada and halt their unfair practices.



# MORE 2024 LUDM ACTION



## YOUR WOMEN OF STEEL COMMITTEE IS HERE TO HELP!

All women who are members of the Union are considered Women of Steel. Please reach out to your [Local 1944 Women of Steel Committee](#).

At any time if you need help, please reach out to the Union by email at [contact@1944.ca](mailto:contact@1944.ca) or by phone at 604-437-8601.

# TELUS PAYROLL ISSUE LEAFLETING



During the holidays, we kept handing out flyers to draw attention to the fact that Telus, a company worth billions, hadn't been able to pay its workers correctly all over the country. It was truly a disgrace for the company but a tough situation for those workers. Through the campaign named #darrenpayyouemployees, we promised to keep going until everything is sorted out, insisting that we wouldn't stop, not even over Christmas.

## UNITED IN PINK: A STAND AGAINST BULLYING

In the spirit of Pink Shirt Day, members of USW Local 1944 stood together in a vibrant display of unity and compassion, each adorning pink shirts on February 28th. This collective action served as a resounding declaration against bullying, embodying the principle that kindness and respect know no limits. Our gathering underscored a commitment to forging a community where safety, support, and value are accorded to all. Let's continue to nurture an environment where everyone can thrive, free from fear and full of hope.



For more information and resources on promoting kindness and inclusivity, visit:

<https://www.pinkshirtday.ca/resources>

# ALBERTA FEDERATION OF LABOUR WINTER SCHOOL

## Brad Sinclair Reflects on Labour History:

“The instructors offered a deep dive into the origins of our rights and laws, shedding light on how certain laws actually undermine us, and what future challenges we might face. They emphasized the ongoing struggle for positive labor rights, reminding us of the sacrifices made by our predecessors and the continuous effort needed to forge a favourable labour history.”



## Isabelle Chayer on Digital Organizing:

“This was an amazing experience and I feel I am better able to serve our members after attending.”

## Helen Young’s takeaway from Labour History:

“We learned what the impact that every struggle, defeat and victory from the early labour movement was and is paving the way for the union activists of today.

It is vitally important to make sure the younger activists know and understand the history of the labour movement. If they know where we’ve come from, they better understand where we going.

## Donna Hokiro’s personal insight on A Path to Reconciliation: Standing in Solidarity with Indigenous People:

“The profound impact of a single course has never been greater or more felt. I am not the only one who would say that, of this I am sure. The Community Bundle and Blanket Ceremony are very emotional and necessary experiences, providing a deep understanding of and connection to the journey towards reconciliation with Indigenous peoples.”

## BC WINTER SCHOOL



“It has sparked in me a desire to stand up for safer work practices and join my safety committee so I can help make meaningful changes. I found the winter school to be incredibly inspiring”.

~Raven Reed  
Attended OH&S – Level 1



“We all deserve to go to work and come home safely - no matter how much it costs a company to ensure we get to be safe. How does production still take precedence over safety? I am really glad I took that course.”

~Jodi Kawinski took Health and Safety Level 1

# EMPOWERING CHANGE: D3 LEADERS ADDRESS KEY ISSUES AT BC LEGISLATURE



Last week, executive members and District 3 leaders convened for a pivotal Local Leadership meeting to address ongoing district and local concerns. Despite a power outage, CFLPA's Brian Ramsay energized discussions with a focus on a collaborative initiative with USW and the White Ribbon Campaign to end gender-based violence. The initiative, Elevating Action, encourages member-led efforts against such violence.



Subsequently, we advocated at the BC Provincial Legislature, focusing on forestry, mining, and sectoral bargaining improvements. We emphasized the necessity of linking Telus and Rogers contracts to job security to prevent offshoring and ensure stable jobs. We appreciate the BC NDP government MLAs for their attentive response

**RAISING THE BAR**  
ON WOMEN'S HEALTH & SAFETY  
**WOMEN OF THE CRAFT**  
SPEAK OUT



Visit our online store!



Show your Union Pride with Local 1944 clothing and accessories. Wear it loudly and proudly!

T-Shirt sizes S to 4XL

<https://shopusw1944.ca>

<https://usw1944.ca>

To update your contact information with USW Local 1944, please [click here](#)

**USW Local 1944**  
5261 Lane Street  
Burnaby, BC V5H 4A6  
(604) 437-8601

