

Chair's Report

Submitted by Kristen Ficke, UVic Chapter Chair

2024 Chapter AGM

November 6, 2024

Territory Acknowledgement

We acknowledge and respect the ləkʷəŋən peoples on whose unceded territory the University of Victoria is situated and take to heart our role in working toward reconciliation. We appreciate the generosity of the Songhees, Esquimalt and W̱SÁNEĆ peoples and acknowledge their historical and continued relationships with the land.

Reconciliation

Our work on reconciliation this year involved consultation with UVic, our Benefits Provider, and our Indigenous members on ways to decolonize the benefits package, in preparation for our next round of bargaining. In the last round of bargaining, we started decolonizing the Collective Agreement and we plan to continue this work in the next round of bargaining. And as we move through the rest of the joint job evaluation plan update, we want to ensure that the skills and experience of our indigenous members, who are the foundation of this reconciliation work, are appropriately captured and remunerated in the new plan.

Budget Cuts and Response

As we moved out of the last AGM we headed straight into a second round of budget cuts and voluntary and involuntary layoffs, which was very hard on our membership. Thankfully right now it looks like there won't be a third round as we move into bargaining next year. As a response to these budgets cuts, we worked closely with other campus unions and post-secondary unions across BC to help communicate to the government the larger issues with post-secondary funding in BC. Last Spring we met with the Minister of Advanced Education and Future Skills to provide a picture of how things feel for our members at UVic after two rounds of budget cuts, and to advocate for changes to the post-secondary funding model as well as changes to the University Act to allow more broad representation on the UVic Board of Governors.

In addition, we joined the Federation of Post-Secondary Educators of BC (FPSE) to be a part of a unified messaging to the government around post-secondary issues. And earlier in the Fall, as we headed toward the provincial election, we worked with the UVic Faculty Association to organize an All Candidates meeting for the Oak Bay - Gordon Head riding, where UVic is located, to help provide as much information as possible to members before the election.

Internal Chapter Work

In addition to our responses to external events, we did a lot of work internally for improvements. We continued work with HR on updating the Joint Job Evaluation Plan, which is still underway and will likely roll into the next round of bargaining. We also tackled some updates to the Chapter Governance structures, to hopefully provide more coverage for our Chapter Chair position and

provide additional pathways into leadership roles within the union. We'll see these proposed changes here later in the Current Business part of the agenda.

And we also held many Coffee Talks and Socials – thanks to Cliff Haman for organizing - and worked to increase local rep coverage – thanks to Ash Senini for taking this on. And this last month we have already started preliminary planning for the next round of bargaining, which will kick into gear after the AGM.

And finally I'd like to say thank you to Melissa Doyle, who is stepping down as vice-chair after many years of service on both the Chapter and PEA Executive, and to welcome Sandra Guerreiro into the role.