



CUPE National  
**HUMAN RIGHTS**  
Conference

February 5-8, 2015  
Winnipeg, Manitoba

Equality empowers us all

**CUPE**

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# Greetings from CUPE's National Officers



**Paul Moist**  
National President



**Charles Fleury**  
National Secretary-Treasurer

CUPE members,

It's our great pleasure to welcome you to Winnipeg for the 2015 CUPE National Human Rights Conference. The defence and pursuit of human rights is an essential part of our union work. We do this every day at the bargaining table and in our communities.

In recent years we've seen the federal and provincial governments imposing severe cuts and legislative changes that often affect women, people of colour, Aboriginal people, people with disabilities, or members of the LGBTTI community the most. The rise of precarious work, the attacks on pensions, and the erosion of benefits disproportionately affect equity-seeking groups. These are just some examples of the systemic barriers and discrimination that many workers face every day. In CUPE it is a significant number of our members. As union activists it is our job to work collectively with and on behalf of our members who face discrimination. As social activists, we work with our allies and in our communities to fight discrimination.

At this conference we will explore both new and proven strategies that can reverse the cuts, reduce precarious working conditions, defend our pensions and benefits, and ensure that human rights are advanced in our workplaces and communities. We will hear from a diverse group of activists with real experience—and success—facing these kinds of challenges. And we'll focus on the areas where we, as workers, have power: bargaining, mobilizing and political action.

Together, we can remove systemic barriers and advance equality. In solidarity with our allies, we can defeat discrimination. The knowledge and ideas we share over the next few days will help form the foundation of our activism as we strive to create communities that truly reflect our values of inclusivity and equality.

In solidarity,

*Paul Moist.*

*[Signature]*

# Equality statement

Union solidarity is based on the principle that union members are equal and deserve mutual respect at all levels. Any behaviour that creates conflict prevents us from working together to strengthen our union.

As unionists, mutual respect, cooperation and understanding are our goals. We should neither condone nor tolerate behaviour that undermines the dignity or self-esteem of any individual or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

Discriminatory speech or conduct which is racist, sexist, transphobic or homophobic hurts and thereby divides us. So too, does discrimination on the basis of ability, age, class, religion, language and ethnic origin.

Sometimes discrimination takes the form of harassment. Harassment means using real or perceived power to abuse, devalue or humiliate. Harassment should not be treated as a joke. The uneasiness and resentment that it creates are not feelings that help us grow as a union.

Discrimination and harassment focus on characteristics that make us different; and they reduce our capacity to work together on shared concerns such as decent wages, safe working conditions, and justice in the workplace, society and in our union.

CUPE's policies and practices must reflect our commitment to equality. Members, staff and elected officers must be mindful that all sisters and brothers deserve dignity, equality and respect.

*Paul Martin*



# Combating harassment: CUPE's ombudspersons



CUPE is committed to creating a union that is inclusive, welcoming and free from harassment, discrimination and all types of bullying and intimidation.

Harassment and inappropriate behaviour divide us as workers and can undermine the dignity and respect of our sisters and brothers.

Participants and staff at this national event can call on a team of ombudspersons for assistance in dealing with harassment or other inappropriate behaviour as defined in the CUPE Code of Conduct.

Ombudspersons do not take sides, but work with the parties involved to try and resolve the situation. This is NOT like a grievance procedure. There is no investigation, no witnesses, and no timelines.

When they receive a complaint, the ombudspersons try to resolve the situation. If that is not possible, the ombudspersons will contact the person in charge of the event who has the authority to expel the offender(s) from the event.

The process is confidential, meaning that the ombudsperson will not identify you or the details of your complaint.

## HOW CAN I GET IN TOUCH WITH AN OMBUDSPERSON?

If you feel you have been harassed and need assistance, please call **613-809-7747**. Someone will be there to help.

The phone lines are equipped with voicemail so that you can leave a message if the ombudsperson is temporarily unavailable.

# Code of Conduct

The mandate of our union, the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), is to organize and defend workers and to promote economic and social justice for our members and for all workers. In carrying out our work, we in CUPE strive to promote our core values which include the principles of solidarity, equality, democracy, integrity, and respect. We are committed to mobilizing our energy and skills to work together to promote these values and to attain these goals in our union, our communities, and globally.

**CUPE is committed to creating a union which is inclusive, welcoming, and free from harassment, discrimination and all types of bullying and intimidation.** CUPE needs to ensure that we provide a safe environment for members, staff and elected officers to carry out our work. CUPE's expectation is that mutual respect, understanding and co-operation will be the basis of all our interaction.

**The Code of Conduct sets out standards of behaviour for participants** at national convention, national conferences, schools, meetings, and all other events organized by CUPE National. It is consistent with the expectations outlined in the Equality Statement and the CUPE National Constitution.

This Code of Conduct is intended to deal with complaints of inappropriate behaviour at events organized by CUPE National. It does not apply to complaints arising in the workplace, as those are dealt with through the grievance procedure and/or the applicable workplace harassment policy.

**Harassment** is objectionable behaviour which may include actions, language, gestures, and/or written material, and which the harasser knows or ought reasonably to know is abusive and unwelcome. **Bullying** is a form of harassment which is serious ongoing behaviour which targets an individual or group and which threatens that person or persons' mental and/or physical well-being.

**As CUPE members, staff, and elected officers, we commit to one another and to the union to be governed by the principles of the Code of Conduct and agree to:**

- Abide by the provisions of the Equality Statement.
- Respect the views of others, even when we disagree.
- Recognize and value individual differences.
- Communicate openly.
- Support and encourage each other.
- Make sure that we do not harass or discriminate against each other.
- Commit to not engaging in offensive comment or conduct.
- Make sure that we do not act in ways that are aggressive, bullying, or intimidating.
- Take responsibility for not engaging in inappropriate behaviour due to abuse of alcohol or other drugs while participating in union activities, including social events.



**A complaint regarding the Code of Conduct will be handled as follows:**

1. If possible, a member may attempt to deal directly with the person alleged to have engaged in behaviour contrary to the Code, by asking him/her to stop such behaviour. If that is not possible, or if it does not resolve the problem, a member may bring forward a complaint.
2. At national convention, national conferences, schools, meetings, and all other events organized by CUPE National, a complaint shall be brought to the attention of an ombudsperson.
3. If the complaint involves a staff member, it shall be referred to the appropriate director for investigation and the complaint shall be dealt with in accordance with the applicable staff collective agreement.
4. Once a complaint is received, the ombudsperson will work to seek a resolution.
5. If this fails to resolve the matter, the ombudsperson shall report the matter to the person in charge, who shall determine whether there is need to remove the member. The person in charge has the authority to expel members from the event for serious or persistent offenses.
6. At CUPE National events where an ombudsperson is not available, a person properly appointed and designated to be in charge shall receive the complaint. Depending on the nature of the problem, the person in charge may attempt to resolve it through conflict resolution. If this fails to resolve the matter, the person in charge shall determine whether there is a need to remove the member. The person in charge has the authority to expel members from the event for serious or persistent offenses.
7. If the person in charge is a party to the complaint, the director or designate shall assume that role.
8. In a case where a member has been expelled from an event, the National President shall receive a report on the matter.

This Code of Conduct is designed to create a safe, respectful and supportive environment within CUPE. It is meant to enhance the rights and obligations outlined in the CUPE National Constitution, the Equality Statement, and applicable human rights legislation, not replace them.

CUPE National encourages all chartered organizations to develop and adopt a Code of Conduct based on this model, to apply to conventions, conferences, schools and meetings which they organize.

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*The above Code of Conduct arises from the National Women's Task Force (NWTF) report, and Resolution 209 adopted at the 2007 National Convention.*

# Agenda

## THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 5

<p>6:30 – 8:30 p.m. <i>Hall A, Level 3</i></p>	<p><b>PLENARY</b> <i>Conference Co-hosts</i> <b>Yolanda McClean</b>, CUPE Diversity Vice-President <b>Brian Barron</b>, CUPE Diversity Vice-President</p> <p><b>Greetings</b> <b>Barbara and Clarence Nepinak</b>, Pine Creek Ojibway First Nation <b>Kelly Moist</b>, CUPE Manitoba President</p> <p><b>A critical moment: Labour and the pursuit of human rights</b> Our union plays an essential role in the defence and pursuit of human rights. At the bargaining table, in our communities and around the world, our actions help create fairness and raise standards. Join us as we lay the groundwork for the days ahead.</p> <p><b>Paul Moist</b>, CUPE National President</p> <p><i>Guest speaker</i> <b>Romeo Saganash</b>, Member of Parliament, NDP</p>
<p>8:30 – 10:00 p.m. <i>Hall B, Level 3</i></p>	<p><b>RECEPTION</b></p>

## FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 6

<p>8:30 a.m. <i>Room 2E, Level 2</i></p>	<p><b>SMUDGE</b></p>
<p>9:00 – 10:30 a.m. <i>Hall A</i></p>	<p><b>PLENARY</b> <b>Who are we? CUPE's membership survey, in context</b></p> <p>For the first time in our union's history, CUPE has conducted a comprehensive survey of our membership, asking questions about job security, union awareness and who we are. We'll have a look at some of the results, then our panel will help put them in the context of what is happening in Canada.</p> <p><i>Speaker</i> <b>Shelly Gordon</b>, Director, CUPE Research, Job Evaluation, and Health &amp; Safety Branch</p> <p><i>Panel</i> Moderator: <b>Shaneen Robinson</b>, Journalist, APTN <b>Alexa Conradi</b>, President, Quebec Federation of Women <b>Grace-Edward Galabuzi</b>, Associate Professor, Ryerson University</p>



<b>FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 6</b>	
10:30 – 10:45 a.m.	<b>BREAK</b>
10:45 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. <i>Breakout rooms as assigned</i>	<p><b>WORKSHOPS</b> <b>Equality and the socio-economic context</b></p> <p>These workshops will provide participants with an opportunity to analyze information from CUPE’s membership survey in the current socio-economic context. The topics will help us explore how the current context relates to our locals and communities, and strategies we can use at the local level to make equality gains.</p>
12:15 – 1:45 p.m.	<b>LUNCH</b>
1:45 – 3:15 p.m. <i>Hall A</i>	<p><b>PLENARY</b> <b>Human rights in Canada: Our history, our future</b></p> <p>The history of human rights in Canada is still being written, and serious struggles continue to this day. Our panel unpacks the issues, and representatives from the Canadian Museum for Human Rights share the vision for the new facility.</p> <p><i>Panel</i> Moderator: <b>Annick Desjardins</b>, CUPE Equality Representative, Quebec Region <b>Niigaanwewidam James Sinclair</b>, Associate Professor, University of Manitoba <b>Yvonne Peters</b>, Chairperson, Manitoba Human Rights Board of Commissioners</p> <p><i>Presentation from the Canadian Museum for Human Rights</i></p>
3:15 – 3:45 p.m.	<b>BREAK</b>
3:45 – 6:00 p.m.	<p><b>VISIT TO CANADIAN MUSEUM FOR HUMAN RIGHTS</b></p> <p>3:45 p.m.            Buses leave for museum 4:00 – 6:00 p.m.   Museum visit 6:00 p.m.            Buses back to hotel</p>

# Agenda

<b>SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 7</b>	
8:30 a.m. <i>Room 2E</i>	<b>SMUDGE</b>
9:00 – 10:30 a.m. <i>Hall A</i>	<p><b>PLENARY</b> <b>Bargaining equality: CUPE’s opportunity at the table</b></p> <p>Human rights are never simply handed over—they’re fought for and won by committed activists. CUPE members face these challenges every day at the bargaining table. The rise of two-tier proposals and the erosion of pensions and benefits affect equality-seeking groups the most. Learn how other members have faced these challenges and won, raising the floor for all workers in the process.</p> <p><i>Panel featuring CUPE members and staff</i> Moderator: <b>François Bellemare</b>, Assistant Regional Director, CUPE Quebec</p>
10:30 – 10:45 a.m.	<b>BREAK</b>
10:45 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. <i>Breakout rooms as assigned</i>	<p><b>WORKSHOPS</b> <b>Bargaining strategies for equality</b></p> <p>These workshops will take a critical and constructive look at the relationship between collective bargaining and equality. Participants will develop practical strategies to achieve equality gains in one of four topic areas.</p>
12:15 – 1:45 p.m.	<b>LUNCH</b>
1:45 – 3:15 p.m. <i>Hall A</i>	<p><b>PLENARY</b> <b>Winning equality through political action</b></p> <p>The federal government and many provincial governments are imposing funding and service cuts that affect equality-seeking groups the most. But CUPE members have an opportunity to change that. Our panel explores how you and your local can play a decisive role in the next election.</p> <p><i>Panel</i> Moderator: <b>Archana Rampure</b>, CUPE Senior Officer, Political action <b>Ausma Malik</b>, School Board Trustee, Toronto <b>Jinny Sims</b>, Member of Parliament, NDP <b>Spencer Chandra Herbert</b>, MLA, BC (NDP) <b>Kevin Chief</b>, Minister of Jobs and the Economy, Manitoba (NDP)</p>
3:15 – 3:30 p.m.	<b>BREAK</b>



## SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 7

<p>3:30 – 5:00 p.m. <i>Breakout rooms as assigned</i></p>	<p><b>WORKSHOPS</b> <b>Equality and politics: Action and influence</b></p> <p>These workshops will enable participants to exchange ideas and strategies to engage our members in political action in one of four topic areas. Political action can influence elections, public policy, and legislation that support equality and human rights.</p>
<p>7:30 p.m. <i>Hall B, Level 3</i></p>	<p><b>THE GREAT MANITOBA SOCIAL</b></p> <p>Music, dancing, and...cheese cubes? The social is a true Manitoba tradition. Come in from the cold and experience an event that's unique to the keystone province. Pass the koubassa.</p> <p><i>Special performances</i> <b>Levy Abad</b> <b>DJ J. Jackson</b></p>

## SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 8

<p>8:30 a.m. <i>Room 2E</i></p>	<p><b>SMUDGE</b></p>
<p>9:00 – 11:30 a.m. <i>Hall A</i></p>	<p><b>PLENARY</b> <b>Conference report</b> Hosts: <b>Yolanda McClean</b> and <b>Brian Barron</b></p> <p><b>Engaging members and the community</b></p> <p>Our panel explores successful union and community campaigns led by marginalized workers to build collective power. With strong union-community solidarity, we can bargain equality gains, elect progressive candidates and achieve progressive policy changes.</p> <p><i>Panel</i> Moderator: <b>Sylvia Sioufi</b>, CUPE Senior Officer, Union Development <b>Kent Wong</b>, Director, UCLA Labor Centre <b>Erica Violet Lee</b>, Activist, Idle No More organizer <b>Beth Dollaga</b>, Member, CUPE 15 <b>Ronald Boisrond</b>, CUPE National Representative, Quebec Region</p> <p><b>Closing remarks</b> <b>Charles Fleury</b>, CUPE National Secretary-Treasurer</p>

# Our speakers



## **KEVIN CHIEF**

Kevin Chief is a proud life-long resident of Winnipeg's North End and was elected Member of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly for Point Douglas on October 4, 2011. He was appointed Minister of Children and Youth Opportunities in 2012, and Minister responsible for the City of Winnipeg on October 18, 2013. On November 3, 2014, he was appointed the Minister of Jobs and the Economy while remaining the Minister responsible for the City of Winnipeg.



## **ALEXA CONRADI**

Alexa Conradi is the President of the Quebec Federation of Women. Since being elected in 2009, Alexa has pushed for public debates on feminist issues. She holds an MA in Communications in which she focused on reconciliation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples. She believes in inclusive, outspoken and united feminism.



## **BETH DOLLAGA**

Beth Dollaga is a founding member of the Canada-Philippines Solidarity for Human Rights and MIGRANTE BC. She works for the Vancouver School Board as a Special Education Assistant. Beth is a member of CUPE 15. She is also a member of the CUPE BC International Solidarity Committee and represents CUPE 15 at the Vancouver District Labour Council.



## **GRACE-EDWARD GALABUZI**

Grace-Edward Galabuzi is an Associate Professor in the Department of Politics and Public Administration at Ryerson University. He is also a research associate at the Centre for Social Justice in Toronto. He has been involved in many community campaigns around social justice issues such as anti-racism, anti-poverty, community development, human rights, education reform, and police reform. He is a frequent contributor to public debates on social justice issues in Toronto.



## **SPENCER CHANDRA HERBERT**

Spencer Chandra Herbert is the MLA for Vancouver-West End and Coal Harbour in BC. He was previously elected and as a Park Board Commissioner, and has a professional background in arts and culture. A strong community activist, Spencer was voted by Vancouver newspapers as Vancouver's Unsung Hero and four times as Vancouver's best MLA.



## **ERICA VIOLET LEE**

Erica Violet Lee is a Plains Cree student at the University of Saskatchewan. Since speaking at the first Idle No More teach-in in 2012, Erica has been recognized as an international youth leader with the movement, drawing attention to the need for social and environmental justice for Indigenous people in Canada and around the world.



## **AUSMA MALIK**

Ausma Malik brings expertise and experience in education policy and community organizing. From serving on the Board of the Toronto Environmental Alliance, to volunteering with young people in Toronto's high needs communities, to labour organizing and leading equity initiatives on Ontario campuses, Ausma is a committed life-long human rights and social justice activist. She was recently elected as Trustee to the Toronto District School Board for Ward 10, Trinity-Spadina.



## **BARBARA AND CLARENCE NEPINAK**

Barbara and Clarence Nepinak are Cultural Awareness facilitators and members of the Pine Creek Ojibway First Nation. After a combined 60 years working in the public service with the federal government Barbara and Clarence are both retired, but continue to serve on various boards and committees. Together, they were recipients of the Knowledge Keepers Award and the Queens Golden Jubilee Award for being Cultural Ambassadors.

# Our speakers



## **YVONNE PETERS**

Yvonne Peters is an equality rights/human rights lawyer in Winnipeg. She runs a unique and successful law practice which provides clients with legal advice and assistance, as well as research, analysis and recommendations on a variety of legal and policy issues. She currently serves as the Chair of the Manitoba Human Rights Commission Board of Commissioners, the Vice-Chair of the Manitoba Accessibility Advisory Council, and the Vice-President of the Legal Help Centre.



## **SHANEEN ROBINSON**

Shaneen Robinson is a multi-award winning writer/playwright/journalist, currently with the APTN National News Team in Winnipeg. She is a proud member of the Cree and Gitksan Nations. Shaneen takes pride in being an active member of society, and has emceed hundreds of Pow-Wow's, youth conferences, workshops and fundraisers across Canada.



## **ROMEO SAGANASH**

Romeo Saganash is an NDP Member of Parliament representing the Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou riding. He originates from Waswanipi. He has been very active politically and in advocacy groups for almost 30 years. In 1985, he founded the Cree Nation Youth Council. His interest in regional economic development got him involved in many Aboriginal businesses such as Creco Inc. and the Eeyou Society of James Bay.



## **JINNY SIMS**

Jinny Jogindera Sims is an NDP Member of Parliament representing the Newton—North Delta riding. Born in India, Sims grew up in England where she earned a Bachelor of Education at the University of Victoria in Manchester before moving to Canada to teach English in 1975. She has spent all of her professional life dedicated to the betterment of education for young people, and as a principled champion of social justice issues. Sims is past-president of the Nanaimo District Teachers' Association and at the British Columbia Teachers Federation she served as a director, vice-president and president.



## NIIGANWEWIDAM JAMES SINCLAIR

Niigaanwewidam James Sinclair is Anishinaabe (St. Peter's/Little Peguis) and an Associate Professor at the University of Manitoba. He is a regular commentator on Indigenous issues on CTV, CBC, and APTN. Niigaan is the co-editor of the award-winning *Manitowapow: Aboriginal Writings from the Land of Water* and *Centering Anishinaabeg Studies: Understanding the World Through Stories*.



## KENT WONG

Kent Wong is the director of the Center for Labor Research and Education at the University of California, Los Angeles where he teaches labor studies and ethnic studies. He previously worked as staff attorney for the Service Employees International Union in Los Angeles, and was the first staff attorney for the Asian Pacific American Legal Center of Southern California.

## Special performers



## LEVY ABAD

Levy Abad is a Filipino-Canadian singer/songwriter, poet and freelance writer based in Winnipeg. Before migrating to Canada, Levy was a public sector union organizer in the Philippines. A human rights and migrant rights activist at heart, he is also a member of the Toronto-based Philippine Advancement Through Arts and Culture, an organization that aims to highlight Philippine culture to be a part of the multicultural landscape of Canada. He is currently a coordinator of the same organization for Manitoba.



## DJ J. JACKSON

DJ J. Jackson is notorious for maintaining a packed dance floor with his careful selection of disco house, dance anthems, indie pop and retro classics. He is one half of Winnipeg party production duo House of Gold Diamonds, which he runs with the sensational Mama Cutsworth. He has performed in various venues across Winnipeg, and recently took his show on the road, performing in Toronto and Reykjavik, Iceland.

# Conference information

## **CUPE gallery**

### **Location:**

Lobby, 3rd level

### **Hours:**

Friday, February 6: 8:00 – 9:00 a.m. and 12:15 – 1:45 p.m.

Saturday, February 7: 8:00 – 9:00 a.m. and 12:15 – 1:45 p.m.

Find the resources you need from different CUPE departments. Fact sheets, brochures, and other helpful items can help keep you informed and provide you with tools to make a difference in your local.

## **CUPE equality history project**

CUPE is tracing our role in key human rights struggles over the years, in Canada and internationally. Please help us gather those stories. Come to the Equality History table located on Level 2, near registration, to see our timeline, talk with the researcher and add to the project.

## **Feedback wall**

Each day we'll post questions to help shape the ongoing discussion throughout the conference. Participants are invited to share their thoughts and comments by leaving notes on the wall, located outside the plenary room, Hall A.

## **Bilingual event**

The National Human Rights Conference is a bilingual event. Simultaneous interpretation will be provided in the plenary sessions and workshops as required. Unilingual participants are encouraged to use interpretation devices throughout the conference to ensure seamless communications. Devices can be obtained from the booth on Level 2. Government-issued identification is required when borrowing interpretation devices.



## **Meals**

Meals are not provided as part of the conference. There is a food court located in Cityplace mall, accessible through the skywalk on the second floor concourse. There are also many other dining options near the convention centre in downtown Winnipeg.

## **Scents**

In order to make the conference accessible to people with chemical sensitivities we ask that all conference participants refrain from using scented products.

## **Wi-Fi and Internet access**

Wireless internet will be available for conference participants.

To access, select the EVENTS network option

**Username:** EVENTS

**Password:** cupehrights

## **Be a green conference participant**

Here are some suggestions for reducing your carbon footprint while attending the conference:

- Reduce waste and recycle as much material as possible.
- Eat local food, cut back your food waste and avoid using disposable containers and cutlery.
- Drink tap water, not bottled water.
- Carry and use a travel mug for drinking coffee, tea, etc.
- Recycle your lanyard at the end of the conference in the receptacles provided.





