

## **CUPE 2950 General Membership Meeting – Thursday, November 17, 2022**

12:00pm – 2:00pm

**Recorder:** Michael Behrmann

### **Territorial Acknowledgement (Chloe Martin-Cabanne)**

#### **Special Guest – Edward Parsotam, Diversity VP for CUPE BC and Chair of the Racialized Workers Committee**

Good afternoon everyone my name is Edward Parsotam and I work in the K-12 sector in Surrey Schools and sit on the CUPE BC executive as a diversity vice president for Racialized Workers.

I'm honoured to be included in your meeting today and would like to acknowledge that I am on the road today, coming to you from the shared traditional unceded territories of Semiahmoo, Cayuse, Umatilla, Walla Walla, Nooksack and Lumi shared territories. I'd like to thank the owners and caretakers of the land for sharing their space for all people to live, work, learn and play.

I wanted to take any opportunity I could to respectfully take little space to interact information about Racism, on what it is, how it effects people and how to interrupt. But let me start off with the Racialized workers committee and the work we do.

We at the Racialized workers committee have a commitment to work towards the goal of ending Racism. We understand that this is not a process that could be reversed overnight, as years and years of oppression, suppression and unjust behaviour is learned.

The Racialized workers in conjunction with the National Rainbow Committee have developed a strategy with the goal in to start changes in our respective workplace.

The logic is it only takes one person to stand up and provide a voice for a possible system to be implemented and a structure of support to follow. This is what the Racial Equity Strategy is.

Racism defined in the Oxford dictionary is – The inability or refusal to recognize the rights, needs, dignity, or value of people of particular races or geographical origins. More widely, the devaluation of various traits of character or intelligence as 'typical' of particular peoples. The category of race may itself be challenged, as implying an inference from trivial superficial differences of appearance to allegedly significant underlying differences of nature; increasingly evolutionary evidence suggests that the dispersal of one original people into different geographical locations is a relatively recent and genetically insignificant matter.

Racism defined in a dollar store dictionary – Prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism directed against someone of a different race based on the belief that one's own race is superior.

Some may be asking...“So why is this important” some may ask, “I don't see colour” others would say. “Well they are better at it”, “those people should know”, “Their kind does it best”, “your \_\_\_\_, you should be good at it!”

Well this is important cause this is the invisible wall that is created from one group or person to another. This type or conversation is one that creates uneasiness, hostilities, and toxic environments.

Systemic racism is not ok!

Systemic Racism (also called structural or institutional racism) - is racism that exists across a society within, and between institutions/organizations across society.

Internalized racism as a phenomenon is a direct product of a racial classification system, and is found across different racial groups and regions around the world where race exists as a social construct.

Responses to internalized racism have been varied. Many of the approaches focus on dispelling false narratives learned from racial oppression.

An example of opposition to internalized racism is the "Black is beautiful" cultural movement in the US, which sought to "directly attack on ideology" that blackness was ugly.

There are many examples I can list but the point is to understand that this is not correct, and should not be accepted.

We cannot just snap a finger and hope it goes away or hold out our hands and cringe like 'El' from Stranger Things and throw someone through a wall with our mind.

We must interrupt.

Interrupt is defined, the act stop the continuous progress of or break the continuity of a line, surface or situation.

We must try to show people they what they are doing is not right, and or remedy the to progress together.

To Interrupt would be done in many ways as it is very situational. Stopping someone dead in their tracks saying, "hey this comment was offensive", or a colleague noticing someone being victimized and stepping in to ask the victim, "hey is everything ok here, do you need some help?", would be some examples.

Interrupting could also take place in a one-on-one situation where insubordination may be an issue. "I hear what was asked of me and will have the task completed, but I did not appreciate the tone, attitude or remarks used when you asked and for that reason I am very upset."

Putting the person(s) on the spot will make them second guess what they just said. If a verbal attack was interrupted then there is now a witness and discussion points to correct the injustice and move forward (if there is a reasonable person to work it out with). If productive conversation is not available this would constitute a clear case of Abuse/Harassment and you would follow through with your workplace by documentations filled out and submitted to employer and or union if in that environment.

In long term situations that are uncomfortable and people feel that they can't complain about seemingly insignificant issues, one could document their interactions in a journal.

These entries can and would be used later when the member has finally accumulated enough evidence and pursue union assistance or HR conversations.

These are just little scenarios that I have addressed and can talk for hours on how situations can be handled, but it's my task as committee chair to share information and this was a form of sharing examples of Interrupting hoping to be able to useful to many.

Channeling the energy into progress what we must do...

Talk, share stories, share negative and positive outcomes. This leads to understanding which leads to change. Now it's easy to say but hard to do because some events are traumatic, and some issues will come up and people will be affected in different ways. Topics will come up with no connection to you but effect your as if someone was talking to you.

We must have the hard conversations to create awareness and then create change.

This is what the Racial Equity strategy is trying to accomplish in our union workplaces.

I'll close out with these words

Be kind, listen, assist and interrupt; stand up, acknowledge, smile, and pour water on a fire!

With truth, love and respect,

Edward Parsotam

**Roll Call of Officers:** President Chloe Martin-Cabanne, 1<sup>st</sup> VP Grievance Jaimie Miller, Recording Secretary Michael Behrmann, Communication Chair Lisa Hoang, Job Evaluation Chair Caitlin Mayne, Sergeant-at-Arms Louise Harrison  
**Regrets:** 2<sup>nd</sup> VP Contract Adam, Lead Steward Karen Clare, Education Chair Lily Liew, Treasurer Danielle Hull

**1. Equality Statement**

**2. Adoption of Agenda – M/S/C (Caitlin Mayne/Lisa Hoang)**

**3. Adoption of Minutes of October 27, 2022 – M/S/C (Louise Harrison/Lisa Hoang)**

**4. Business Arising from the Minutes**

**a. Open Nominations for CUPE Local Executive (2022-2023):**

- i. Diversity Chair – Lisa Hoang nominated
  1. No further nominations after 3 calls.
  2. Lisa Hoang is acclaimed to the position.
- ii. Health & Safety Chair – no nominations after 3 calls.
- iii. Sergeant-at-Arms (1 position) – no nominations after 3 calls.

**5. Unfinished Business – N/A**

**6. Executive Report (Chloe Martin-Cabanne)**

- a. We've started bargaining with the employer and exchanged proposals on Monday. We have a number of meetings scheduled with the Employer in December and January. The cost of living is up due to inflation. [The living wage for families is now \\$24.08, up 17% from last year](#). We've seen this ourselves with food/housing/rent. These are things we can't cut corners on. I have stopped driving because I can't afford it. [UBC has done well through COVID](#) and has posted a surplus. In their budget, UBC writes that it's challenging to hire folks because of highly competitive employment market, exacerbated by pandemic. It is taking longer to recruit staff and some positions have remained vacant for extended periods. The employer is willing to come to the table with certain monetary priorities in order to improve recruitment and retention. PSEC would support these within our negotiating mandate.
- b. We recently had a labour board hearing re: organizing exam invigilators at the Centre for Accessibility. UBC had a problem with the proposed assignment to CUPE 2950, they view us as permanent career-based union. The vice-chair sent us to mediation. We reached out to CUPE 2278 to see if they would take these workers on, and they agreed, as the priority all along was to unionize these workers. I think CUPE 2278 will do a great job representing them and am happy for these workers.
- c. I recently attended the CUPE BC fall weeklong school in Nanaimo. I took a grievance & arbitration course which was fantastic. I learned about the types of grievances, timelines, and the evidence we need to accumulate to win should a grievance go to arbitration, and also the steps in between filing a grievance and going to arbitration. I can't wait to send our stewards and executive members to these types of education as this is the best way to build strength in our union. If you're interested, please send an email to [office@cupe2950.ca](mailto:office@cupe2950.ca) and we can figure out what types of education will be best for you.
- d. I attended some CUPE committee meetings including the Universities committee where we talked about common issues and bargaining goals. We're looking to coordinate within the sector for consistency in bargaining asks. Next round, we'll be even stronger than this round. I'm also on the Environment committee, where we are bringing a resolution about funding for subsidized transit to CUPE BC Convention.
- e. Member servicing goes on. There are a number of Workday issues including overpayments. I encourage you all to check your paycheque and make sure they're consistent. Take a look at your benefit and dues payments. Pension and disability payments are sometimes affected by overpayment issues. We're also still working through dues overpayments affecting 900+ members totaling around \$33,000. Dues are calculated at 1.73% of your gross income. Some harassment issues have also come up recently. I'd like to remind everyone that you have right to a workplace free of harassment & discrimination: the [UBC](#)

[respectful workplace policy](#) is clear about that. Your manager can question your productivity and suggest reasonable changes. Unpleasantness, rudeness, and insensitivity are a gray area, but bullying or harassment is not acceptable. If you're facing bullying or harassment, please reach out to us.

## 7. Business Agent's Report

### 8. Treasurer's Report (Danielle Hull) – Leslie in lieu

- a. Our books are really good. Not paying for a Business Agent has helped. Normally we would send 10 delegates to the BC Fed convention, this time we're paying for 4 instead which is also saving money.

## 9. Committee Chair Reports

### a. Grievance Committee (Jaimie Miller) –

- i. The grievance committee will have our next meeting tomorrow.
- ii. There is a grievance re: access to a tuition waiver for paid staff (concerning our President). Past Presidents have been able to access this benefit. There has been friction with the employer on this and there is a difference of opinion. This has come to the bargaining table, so might be resolved in bargaining. Or it might be resolved in arbitration, to be determined.
- iii. There is a live grievance on dues reports and other reports from the employer. We're getting closer on this one. We've been working on it for 2 years or so (since Workday). There are issues with dues reports, master list, headcount, and other bits of data that they're obligated to give us to help us understand our membership and dues income and per-capita obligations to affiliates. Last we knew there is still a deficiency in these lists, and the numbers don't add up. They acknowledge that there's a problem.
- iv. I might have already reported this previously, a heads up that our other tuition waiver grievance (re: fees associated with members taking courses at UBC). The parties have not agreed on this through our grievance process, so we've advised we'd like to take this to arbitration. This can take a while, and we don't have a date yet.

### b. Chief Shop Steward (Karen Clare) – Chloe in lieu

- i. We're having a Steward meeting on Friday December 9, from 12pm-1pm over Zoom. If you'd like the link please [send us an email](#). We're also looking to organizing some listening sessions on campus in the new year, Karen will get started on organizing dates for those. If you want us to come to your department, please send us an email.

### c. Communication Committee (Lisa Hoang)

- i. Our Fall Social is on December 14 at the Rogue Kitchen near Broadway-City Hall. We will send out information and RSVPS soon.

### d. Contract Committee (Adam Huizinga) – Chloe in lieu

- i. I gave a synopsis on bargaining in my Executive report. Let me know if you have any questions.

### e. Diversity Committee – N/A

### f. Education Committee (Lily Liew) - regrets

### g. Health & Safety – N/A

### h. Job Evaluation Committee (Caitlin Mayne)

- i. Newly elected chair, arranging a JE committee meeting in the new future
- ii. **Chloe:** some of you have expressed interest in joining this committee. We're also looking for stewards, we'll educate you and support you through that process.

**10. New Business**

- a. **Holiday Open House:** The Executive has set a date for our holiday open house: December 7 from 11am-3pm. You can drop in any time (lunch break, coffee break, or the whole time if you can).

M/S/C (Lisa Hoang/Caitlin Mayne) to adjourn at 12:57pm