



**SUCCESS
THROUGH
SOLIDARITY**

**CUPE ALBERTA
2017 CONVENTION**

Red Deer, Alberta • March 15-17

DAY 2
March 16, 2017



ROBERTS: WE'RE DELIVERING YOUR AGENDA

CUPE Alberta President Marle Roberts used her opening address to the 2017 convention to highlight the progress made by CUPE for working people in the last year.

Listing the commitments and resolutions passed at the 2016 convention, Roberts outlined progress made on behalf of Alberta's working people.

"Looking back at last year's convention – you passed a policy paper that was remarkably farsighted about how Alberta needed to weather the low price of oil," said Roberts. "You told us to lobby the Alberta government to invest in public infrastructure. We did, and the NDP listened.

You told us to fight poverty by advocating for a higher minimum wage, and school lunch programs. We took those concerns to the NDP and they are acting on them."

Roberts praised delegates for calling at last year's convention for greener jobs, diversification of the economy, better pension protection for workers, continued fights against privatization, and stronger action to fight poverty.

"You told us to act, and we acted."

Roberts was pleased efforts by CUPE Alberta and Friends of Medicare to stop the sale of plasma for commercial use. The Alberta government this week introduced legislation banning that practice."

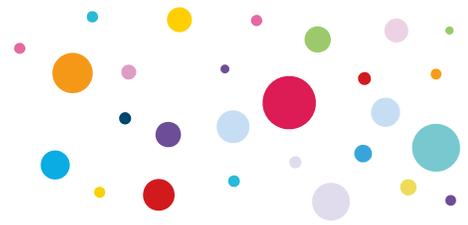
"We are making a difference." (continued on page 2)

COMING UP TODAY

9:10 AM
Susan Cake

10:00 AM
Christina Gray

6:00 PM
Convention Banquet



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CONTINUED: Roberts said 2017 would be a year of challenges for CUPE, starting with local elections in the fall.

“We know what it’s like working with friendly governments, and we know what it’s like working with hostile ones. I’ve done both, and let me tell you – I prefer the friendly ones every single time,” said Roberts.

“Friendly governments don’t just happen. We need to put our money, our brain power, our training, our energy and our votes behind the candidates that share our values.”

CUPE RISING TO MEET CHALLENGES OF THE FUTURE: HANCOCK

CUPE National President Mark Hancock used his address to delegates to outline the need for a new approach to collective bargaining, as well as changes to organizing strategies and plans to make the National Executive Board more reflective of CUPE’s membership.



According to Hancock, CUPE adopted a refreshed collective bargaining policy in December to fight against concessions and two tier bargaining.

“This plan is a blueprint for solidarity, to ensure CUPE locals and members have the support they need to stand together during bargaining. So we can always bargain forward, not backwards,” said Hancock.

“We’re going to give locals the tools they need to fight back against concessions and two-tier proposals,” said Hancock. “Because if a collective agreement isn’t good enough for us, if we wouldn’t accept it today, why would we pass it on to the next generation?”

Delegates to CUPE’s National Convention in the fall will debate a national organizing strategy and a proposal for four new diversity seats on the National Executive Board.

“I want to make my position clear, I believe that our governing body should be a fair representation of our membership.”

Hancock told delegates that under the NDP, Alberta’s political climate is the envy of labour activists across the country.

“When I look at what’s happening across the country, it’s so refreshing to see a government that’s making things better for working people,” said Hancock. “Things like raising the minimum wage to \$15 an hour, freezing post-secondary tuition, and most recently cutting school fees for parents – saving the average family around 14 hundred dollars a year. That’s good for kids, good for parents, and good for teachers.”

CUPE can win the fights we need to win: Fleury

National Secretary Treasurer Charles Fleury told delegates to the CUPE Alberta convention that CUPE needs to fight hard against the rise of precarious work – fortunately, the country’s largest union has the resources to do so.

“Everywhere I go, members tell me, ‘they are cutting our services, privatizing our work, and turning good jobs into part time and casual positions,’” said Fleury.

“Here is my message for you today, CUPE has the resources to fight back against all these attacks.”

Saying CUPE members in almost every region face service cuts and concessions, Fleury said it was up to the union to lead the resistance.

In addition to new strategies and policies around bargaining, Fleury said CUPE is ramping up the resources it’s putting into the field, including renewing 11 new temporary staff representatives, a new equality representative, and significant improvements to the strike and defence funds.

“Strike pay will start sooner, the defense fund has more resources, we will put the resources forward we need to protect workers,” said Fleury.