

# education forum

**Equity  
through a workplace  
health and safety lens**

**L'équité dans  
l'optique de la santé  
et de la sécurité au travail**



Spring 2023 VOL. 49, ISSUE 2 OSSTF/FEESO



# Experience the value of educator-specific advice



**No matter what your financial needs are, we have advisors who can help.**

With educator-specific advice, comes confidence that you will achieve your goals. In fact, investors who work with advisors for 15 years or more accumulate nearly 4 times more in savings than comparable investors without advice<sup>1</sup>. So whether you're looking for mortgage advice, exploring investment options, want to talk about retirement, or anything else related to your money, you can count on expert advice from an Educators financial advisor.

**Educators**  
FINANCIAL GROUP



Visit [educatorsfinancialgroup.ca/AdviceForum23](https://educatorsfinancialgroup.ca/AdviceForum23)  
to book a complimentary consultation with an advisor.

<sup>1</sup> Claude Montmarquette and Nathalie Viennot-Briot, The Gamma Factor and the Value of Financial Advice, 2016.



# Contents

Spring 2023, vol. 49, issue 2

- 4 From the Editor/Mot de la rédactrice en chef**
- 8 OSSTF/FEESO beyond borders/OSSTF/FEESO au-delà des frontières**  
Solidarity work abroad/Travail de solidarité à l'étranger  
*by/par Gary Fenn*
- 14 Equity through a workplace health and safety lens/L'équité dans l'optique de la santé et de la sécurité au travail**  
Using the source—path—worker model to centre equity/Utiliser le modèle source-parcours-travailleur pour centrer l'équité  
*by/par Chris Clarke*
- 23 Transformational, active changes**  
The role of the Equity, Anti-Racism, and Anti-Oppression Officer in OSSTF/FEESO Bargaining Units and Districts  
*by Troy Cluff*
- 27 Designed for a healthy future/Conçu pour un avenir sain**  
OSSTF/FEESO's new Provincial Office building/Nouvel édifice du Bureau provincial d'OSSTF/FEESO  
*by/par Carol Phillips and Phil Silverstein*
- 39 The 67th session of the commission**  
Empowering women around the world  
*by Allison Cillis, Lisa Mongrain, and Treasure Zahorouski*
- 41 Taking stock of inclusive workplaces**  
Exploring accessibility and inclusivity for Deaf and Blind OSSTF/FEESO Members  
*by Tamara Witcher*
- 45 Blue is the new gold**  
Encouraging youth to consider the skilled trades  
*by Eleanor MacNiven and John Delorey*
- 49 Supporting workers through the law**  
OSSTF/FEESO's Student-at-Law  
*by Anson Cai*
- 50 There are no short cuts to creating the union or world we want/Il n'y a pas de raccourci pour créer le syndicat ou le monde que nous voulons**  
How Ontario students' unions fought for their survival/Comment les syndicats d'étudiantes et d'étudiants ont lutté pour leur survie  
*by/par Nour Alideeb*
- 60 Youth aging out of care**  
Students need supports beyond age eighteen  
*by Veronica Montague*
- 64 Bargaining Unit boost**
- 66 Top picks**
- 69 Last word/Mot de la fin**

education  
**forum**

**Editor** Tracey Germa **Publications Manager/Editorial Assistant** Phillip Tran **Senior Graphic Designer/Advertising Co-ordinator** Audrey Bourque **Business Manager** Chris Goodsir **Member** Canadian Educational Press Association; Education Forum (ISSN 0840-9269) is indexed in the Canadian Education Index and available online in the Canadian business & Current Affairs database from Micromedia Ltd., 20 Victoria Street, Toronto, ON M5C 2N8. Tel. 416-362-5211 **Publisher** Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation/Fédération des enseignantes-enseignants des écoles secondaires de l'Ontario, osstf.on.ca. Published tri-annually. Advertising rates listed on the website at education-forum.ca or available upon request **Editorial Submissions** Education Forum, 49 Mobile Drive, Toronto, ON M4A 1H5. Tel. 416-751-8300, Toll free 1-800-267-7867; managingeditor@education-forum.ca.



Printed in Canada by  
union labour



Canadian Association  
Educational  
Press  
Association  
canadienne  
de la presse  
éducationnelle



CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF  
**LABOUR MEDIA**





From the Editor

# Building relationships, building solidarity, building communities

Constructing for a better tomorrow

As I write this editorial, I am looking out of the windows of the Ontario meeting room in OSSTF/FEESO's temporary Provincial Office at 49 Mobile Drive. I am watching workers both inside and outside our new building at 60 Mobile Drive as they work through the early spring winds and rains, a well-coordinated dance of workers, machines, building materials, and well... mud. This balance of human, machine, and materials has me thinking of the nuances in all relationships, of the need to work with others to achieve

a goal, and of the value of teamwork in rebuilding for better.

A lot of what you will read in this issue explores how we can be better—how we can be better with our workplaces, our relationships, our advocacy, and our support of others. As you read through this spring issue of *Education Forum*, I hope that you can find something that helps you see your next steps and to envision how you can do better.

Our cover story, “Equity through a workplace health and safety lens” by Chris Clarke (D14), invites us to use workplace health and safety parameters to further our commitment to creating more equitable and inclusive environments. He posits using the *Ontario Health and Safety Act* (OSHA) and workplace Joint Health and Safety Committees (JHSCs) to situate equity work in a framework that prioritizes equity as a mandatory element of creating workplace health and safety.

“Transformational, active changes” by Provincial Office staff member Troy Cluff, reminds the reader that “spending time struggling over complex projects with intersecting and sometimes difficult issues is essential to our collective process of learning, of establishing a cycle of critical reflexiveness, and of progressing” when we seek to make institutional change. This article, an adaptation of a presentation given to OSSTF/FEESO local Presidents at our Presidents' Symposium last year, takes a high-level look at how we make progress in creating more inclusive workplaces. The key to

transformation is to be willing to take the risk.

Similarly, the article by Carol Phillips and Phil Silverstein from Moriyama Teshima Architects, the firm behind our new building at 60 Mobile Drive, describes taking on new building practices using old thinking. The building's design is inclusive-thinking while at the same time incorporating some of the most modern building approaches; this includes using timber and other natural materials, reimagined in the building industry for use because of their sustainability. Phillips notes, “This design represents a commitment to a future where we see ourselves as part of nature, not separate from it, and celebrates a sense of community and common values while designing for the diverse needs in contemporary workplaces for a mix of private, quiet, collaborative, social and communal spaces.” The building, scheduled to be completed in early 2024, provides us with a reminder of what is possible when we think differently and open ourselves not only to new ideas but also to reimagining past practices in a newer light.

OSSTF/FEESO Member, Veronica Montague (D12), shares her research on supporting youth who “age out” of provincial care programs. She reviews the ways that supports for youth fail to continue once many turn eighteen years of age. This funding disparity particularly impacts Sovereign, and equity-seeking/demanding communities. Her research concludes with an un-





## Forger des liens, renforcer la solidarité, bâtir des communautés

Construire pour un avenir meilleur

derstanding that “there is much work to do for youth to ensure that this vulnerable group of individuals can overcome the difficulties set out before them and increase their resiliency. Ensuring that youth continue to participate in the services and programs available may be vital in their successful transition to adulthood by equipping youth with the necessary tools and knowledge.” When youth in care are supported through their transitions into adulthood, they have the greatest chance for positive outcomes.

In the coming months, I will continue to use the new OSSTF/FEESO Provincial Office building’s progress as a source of my own inspiration to consider the positive changes I can make. I hope you all find something in this issue that inspires you a bit, that gives you pause for thought about what you might like to do to take your next steps in your own change.

In solidarity,

**Tracey Germa**, Editor  
tracey.germa@osstf.ca

Alors que j’écris cette note de la rédaction, je jette un regard à l’extérieur de la salle de réunion Ontario dans les locaux temporaires d’OSSTF/FEESO, au 49 Mobile Drive. J’observe les travailleuses et travailleurs tant à l’extérieur qu’à l’intérieur de notre nouvel édifice au 60 Mobile Drive alors qu’ils travaillent malgré les vents et les pluies d’un début de printemps, une danse bien chorégraphiée de travailleuses et de travailleurs, d’équipement, de matériaux de construction et, bien entendu, de boue. Cet équilibre entre des êtres humains, d’équipement et de matériaux me fait penser aux nuances présentes dans toute relation, au besoin de travailler avec les autres vers l’atteinte d’un but et de la valeur du travail d’équipe dans le but de rebâtir pour le mieux.

Une bonne partie de ce que vous lirez dans le présent numéro explore comment nous pouvons mieux faire—comment nous pouvons améliorer nos lieux de travail, nos relations, notre défense des intérêts et notre soutien à l’égard des autres. À mesure que vous lirez ce numéro du printemps d’*Education Forum*, j’espère que vous y trouverez quelque chose qui vous aidera à déterminer vos prochaines étapes et à envisager comment vous pouvez faire mieux.

Notre article-vedette, « *L’équité dans l’optique de la santé et de la sécurité au travail* » par Chris Clarke (D14) nous invite à utiliser les paramètres de santé et de sécurité de notre lieu de travail

dans le but de renforcer notre engagement à créer des milieux plus équitables et plus inclusifs. En se servant de la *Loi sur la santé et la sécurité au travail* (LSST) et des Comités mixtes de santé et de sécurité (CMSS) en milieu de travail pour situer le travail en matière d’équité dans un cadre qui accorde la priorité à l’équité à titre d’élément obligatoire pour assurer la santé et la sécurité au travail.

« Transformational, active changes » par Troy Cluff, membre du personnel au Bureau provincial, rappelle au lecteur qu’il est essentiel « d’investir le temps pour s’évertuer à achever des projets complexes sur des enjeux interconnectés et parfois difficiles à notre processus collectif d’apprentissage, d’établir un cycle de réflexion critique et de progresser » comme méthode pour apporter des changements institutionnels. Cet article, une adaptation d’une présentation donnée aux présidences locales d’OSSTF/FEESO lors de notre Symposium des présidences l’an dernier, jette un regard de haut niveau sur comment nous faisons des progrès en créant des lieux de travail plus inclusifs. La clé de la transformation, c’est de vouloir prendre le risque.

De façon semblable, l’article par Carol Phillips et Phil Silverstein de chez Moriyama Teshima Architects, la firme responsable de notre nouvel édifice au 60 Mobile Drive, décrit l’adoption de nouvelles pratiques de construction en ayant recours à d’anciennes façons de penser.

/suite à la page 6





Le concept de l'édifice est issu d'une pensée inclusive, tandis qu'elle incorpore également certaines des approches de construction les plus modernes, y compris l'usage de bois et d'autres matériaux naturels, repensant ainsi l'industrie de la construction pour leur usage en raison de leur durabilité. Ce concept représente un engagement envers un avenir où nous nous voyons comme faisant partie de la nature et non en marge de celle-ci et célébrons un sentiment de communauté et de valeurs

communes tout en répondant aux besoins divers des lieux de travail contemporains, pour une combinaison d'espaces privés, silencieux, collaboratifs, sociaux et communs. Carol note que « Ce concept représente un engagement envers un avenir où nous nous voyons comme faisant partie de la nature et non en marge de celle-ci et célébrons un sentiment de communauté et de valeurs communes tout en répondant aux besoins divers des lieux de travail contemporains, pour une combinaison d'espaces privés, silencieux, collaboratifs, sociaux et communs. » L'édifice, dont l'achèvement est prévu pour le début de 2024, nous rappelle ce qui est possible lorsque nous pensons différemment et que non seulement nous nous ouvrons à de nouvelles idées, mais aussi que nous repensons les pratiques du passé sous une nouvelle lumière.

Veronica Montague, Membre d'OSSTF/FEESO (D12), partage ses recherches sur le soutien des jeunes dont l'âge outre-passe les programmes de soins provinciaux. Elle passe en revue les façons auxquelles les soutiens à l'égard des jeunes manquent de se poursuivre une fois que bon nombre d'entre eux atteignent les 18 ans. Cet écart dans le financement touche particulièrement les communautés souveraines et à la recherche/en demande d'équité. Sa recherche conclue par une compréhension « qu'il reste beaucoup de travail à faire pour les jeunes afin de faire en sorte que ce groupe

vulnérable puisse surmonter les difficultés qui se trouvent sur leur parcours et rehausser leur résilience. Faire en sorte que les jeunes continuent de participer aux services et programmes offerts peut être vital à une transition réussie à la vie adulte en offrant aux jeunes les outils et les connaissances nécessaires. » Lorsque les jeunes pris en charge sont soutenus dans leur transition à la vie adulte, ils ont de meilleures chances d'obtenir des résultats positifs.

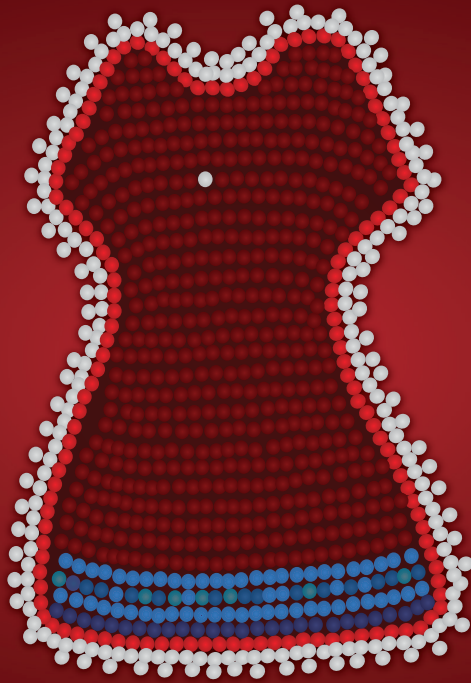
Dans les prochains mois, je continuerai à me servir des progrès relativement au nouvel édifice comme de ma propre inspiration afin de prendre en considération les changements positifs que je peux apporter. J'espère que vous trouverez toutes et tous quelque chose dans ce numéro qui vous inspirera un peu, qui vous fait réfléchir sur ce que vous pourriez faire afin d'entreprendre les prochaines étapes dans votre propre changement.

En toute solidarité,  
**Tracey Germa**, rédactrice en chef  
[tracey.germa@osstf.ca](mailto:tracey.germa@osstf.ca)



“Through the REDress Project, the spirits of the missing or murdered women and girls stand with us here today, giving us courage, strength and clarity — leading us forward on the path to REclaim our sovereignty as indigenous women.”

*-Métis artist Jaime Black*



Red Dress Day • May 5 mai • Journée de la robe rouge



*celebrate pride!  
célébrer la fierté!*







## OSSTF/FEESO beyond borders

### Solidarity work abroad

by Gary Fenn

OSSTF/FEESO has a strong history of international solidarity and coalition building in various parts of the world. These coalitions have developed through a variety of means. Some were developed because of our work with the Common Threads project, an international solidarity program that offers Members the opportunity to travel abroad and conduct research resulting in the creation of new progressive curriculum on critical issues. Other relationships have developed in consultation with other education unions, including the British Columbia Teachers' Federation (BCTF), or with global solidarity organizations in Canada such as Common Frontiers, of which OSSTF/FEESO is a member. Our recent reaffiliation with the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) has brought us access to Education International (EI) and its international solidarity partners.

Our international relationships take on many different forms. They include formal membership in organized coalitions, supporting specific programs and projects, financial support to coalition partners, and less formal relationships where we continue to dialogue with partner organizations.

What follows is a small sampling of some of the international coalitions and work in which OSSTF/FEESO is engaged.

#### ORGANIZED COALITIONS—INTERNATIONAL

##### **Trinational Coalition for the Defense of Public Education**

Established after the creation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in the 1990s, education unions from Canada, the United States, and Mexico formed the coalition in response to the potential threats that NAFTA posed to public education. OSSTF/FEESO is part of the organizing committee of the Trinational Coalition and helps to plan a conference biennially. Education unions and student organizations from other countries are invited to participate in Trinational activities, including groups from Puerto Rico, Colombia, Bolivia, Guatemala, Peru, and the United Kingdom to name a few. The most recent Trinational conference was held in Oaxaca, Mexico in October 2022, and OSSTF/FEESO was proud to be able to deliver a presentation

*/continued on page 10*



## OSSTF/FEESO au-delà des frontières

### Travail de solidarité à l'étranger

par Gary Fenn

OSSTF/FEESO a de forts antécédents de solidarité internationale et de la création de coalitions partout dans le monde. Ces coalitions ont été créées par divers moyens. Certaines de celles-ci ont été élaborées en raison de notre travail au sein du projet *Common Threads*, un programme de solidarité internationale qui offre aux membres l'occasion de voyager à l'étranger et de faire des recherches dans le but de créer un nouveau curriculum progressif sur des enjeux critiques. D'autres relations ont pris naissance en consultation avec d'autres syndicats en éducation, y compris la *British Columbia Teachers' Federation* (BCTF) ou en collaboration avec des organismes de solidarité mondiale au Canada, comme *Common Frontiers* dont OSSTF/FEESO est un membre. Notre récente ré-affiliation avec la Fédération canadienne des enseignantes et des enseignants (FCE) nous a donné l'accès à l'Internationale de l'éducation (IE) et ses partenaires de solidarité internationale.

Nos relations internationales prennent différentes formes. Celles-ci comprennent une adhésion formelle à des coalitions organisées, l'appui de programmes et de projets particuliers, un soutien

financier aux partenaires de coalition et des relations moins formelles dans lesquelles nous poursuivons le dialogue avec les organismes partenaires.

Voici un petit échantillon de certaines des coalitions internationales et du travail dans lesquels OSSTF/FEESO est engagé.

#### COALITIONS ORGANISÉES—AU NIVEAU INTERNATIONAL

##### Coalition trinationale pour la défense de l'éducation publique

Établis après la création de l'Accord de libre-échange nord-américain (ALÉNA) dans les années 90, les syndicats en éducation au Canada, aux États-Unis et au Mexique ont formé cette coalition en réponse aux menaces potentielles que l'ALÉNA posait à l'éducation publique. OSSTF/FEESO fait partie du comité organisateur de la Coalition trinationale et aide à planifier une conférence biennale. Les syndicats en éducation et les organisations d'étudiants d'autres pays sont invités à participer aux activités trinationales, y compris des groupes de Porto Rico, de la Colom-

/suite à la page 11



on community organizing and building connections between communities and public education.

### **The Initiative for Democratic Education in the Americas (IDEA) Network**

The IDEA Network was created in 1998 and carries out research, establishes communication networks, publishes documents, and organizes conferences and seminars related to the defense of public education. It encompasses two other regional networks: an Education Researchers' Network (RIE) and an Indigenous Educators' Network (REI) created in 2006. OSSTF/FEESO is part of the international coordinating committee and has participated in many IDEA Network meetings and events. The IDEA Network produces a publication in English and Spanish called *Intercambio*, to which OSSTF/FEESO contributes articles on a regular basis. The IDEA Network is a frequent participant in the Trinational Coalition.

### **CoDevelopment Canada**

CoDevelopment Canada (CoDev) is a British Columbia-based non-governmental organization (NGO) that works for social change and global education in the Americas. Founded in 1985, the organization's aim is to go beyond just offering financial aid to Latin American countries, and instead build partnerships between like-minded organizations in Canada and Latin America to support learning, social change, and community empowerment. The Board of Directors of CoDev includes many BC union representatives, including BCTF, CUPE, and BC General Employees' Union. CoDev works with other various unions



OSSTF/FEESO representatives at the Trinational Coalition in 2022

and organizations beyond BC to connect them with Latin American partners to support learning projects. OSSTF/FEESO has developed a strong connection with unions in Central and South America through CoDev, including an ongoing partnership with the *Federación Colombiana de Educadores* (FECODE)—a major education union in Colombia.

### **International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association**

The International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, and Intersex Association (ILGA) is a worldwide federation of more than 1,700 organizations from over 160 countries and territories that campaigns for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and intersex human rights. OSSTF/FEESO joined the organization in 2021 and sent a delegation to the ILGA World Conference in May 2022.

### **Education International**

Education International (EI) is a global federation of unions that brings together organiza-

tions of teachers and other education employees from around the world. There are 383 member organizations, representing over 32 million educators in 178 countries. OSSTF/FEESO's connection to EI is through our membership in the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF). EI is a global voice for teachers and education workers calling for free, quality, publicly funded education for every student in every country.

### **FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR SPECIFIC INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS**

#### **Foundation for Development and Education—Bolivia**

In 2006, OSSTF/FEESO and the BCTF began co-sponsoring the establishment of The School of Political and Trade Union Training—the Foundation for Development and Education/*Fundación para el desarrollo y la educación* (FUNDE/FDE). Working with various teacher federations, the union training school expanded to provide professional learning for teachers in

bie, de la Bolivie, du Guatemala, du Pérou et du Royaume-Uni, pour n'en nommer que quelques-uns. La plus récente conférence trinationale a eu lieu à Oaxaca, au Mexique, en octobre 2022 et OSSTF/FEESO était fier de pouvoir donner une présentation sur l'organisation communautaire et l'établissement de liens entre les communautés et l'éducation publique.

### **Le Réseau social pour l'éducation publique dans les Amériques (IDEA)**

Le réseau social pour l'éducation publique dans les Amériques (IDEA) a été créé en 1998 et effectue des recherches, établit des réseaux de communications, publie des documents et organise des conférences et des séminaires liés à la défense de l'éducation publique. Il regroupe deux autres réseaux régionaux : un Réseau de chercheurs en éducation et un Réseau d'éducatrices et d'éducateurs Autochtones, créé en 2006. OSSTF/FEESO fait partie du comité international de coordination et a participé à de nombreuses réunions et à de nombreux événements du réseau IDEA. Le réseau IDEA produit une publication en anglais et en espagnol intitulée *Intercambio*, auquel OSSTF/FEESO contribue des articles sur une base régulière. Le réseau IDEA est un fréquent participant à la Coalition trinationale.

### **CoDevelopment Canada**

*CoDevelopment Canada* (CoDev) est un organisme non gouvernemental (ONG) basé en Colombie-Britannique qui œuvre pour les changements sociaux et l'éducation mondiale dans les Amériques. Fondé en 1985, le but de cet organisme est de faire plus que simplement offrir

une aide financière aux pays de l'Amérique latine et de plutôt créer des partenariats entre des organismes à buts communs au Canada et en Amérique latine pour appuyer l'apprentissage, le changement social et l'habilitation communautaire. Le Conseil d'administration de CoDev comprend de nombreux représentants syndicaux de la C.-B., y compris la BCTF, le SCFP et le *BC General Employees' Union*. CoDev travaille avec d'autres syndicats et organismes variés au-delà de la C.-B. pour les brancher à des partenaires de l'Amérique latine dans le but d'appuyer des projets d'apprentissage. OSSTF/FEESO a développé une connexion solide avec les syndicats de l'Amérique latine par le biais de CoDev, y compris un partenariat continu avec la *Federación Colombiana de Educadores* (FECODE)—un important syndicat en éducation en Colombie.

### **Association internationale des personnes lesbiennes, gays, bisexuelles, trans et intersexes**

L'Association internationale des personnes lesbiennes, gays, bisexuelles, trans et intersexes (ILGA), une fédération mondiale de plus de 1 700 organismes dans plus de 160 pays et territoires, fait campagne en faveur des droits des personnes lesbiennes, gays, bisexuelles, trans et intersexes. OSSTF/FEESO s'est joint à l'organisme en 2021 et a envoyé une délégation à la Conférence mondiale de l'ILGA en mai 2022.

### **Internationale de l'éducation**

L'Internationale de l'éducation (IE) est une fédération mondiale de syndicats qui rassemble des organisations de personnel enseignant et autres travailleuses et travailleurs en

éducation de partout dans le monde. Il y a 383 organismes membres représentant plus de 32 millions de membres du personnel en éducation dans 178 pays. La connexion d'OSSTF/FEESO à l'IE est par le biais de notre adhésion à la Fédération canadienne des enseignantes et des enseignants (FCE). L'IE est une voix globale pour le personnel enseignant et les travailleuses et travailleurs en éducation qui prône une éducation gratuite, de qualité et financé à même les deniers publics pour chaque élève dans chaque pays.

### **SOUTIEN FINANCIER À L'INTENTION DE PROGRAMMES INTERNATIONAUX PARTICULIERS**

#### **Foundation for Development and Education — Bolivie**

En 2006, OSSTF/FEESO et la Fédération des enseignantes et enseignants de la Colombie-Britannique ont commencé à coparrainer l'établissement de la *School of Political and Trade Union Training – the Foundation for Development and Education/ Fundación para el desarrollo y la educación (FUNDE/FDE)*. En travaillant en collaboration avec diverses fédérations de personnel enseignant, cette école de formation syndicale s'est élargie pour offrir un apprentissage professionnel au personnel enseignant en Bolivie dans le but d'appuyer leur capacité d'augmenter leurs salaires et de répondre aux exigences gouvernementales. Le programme a reçu un soutien politique du président Evo Morales (2006-2019), organisateur syndical et activiste, ainsi que premier président indigène de la Bolivie. Les programmes ont été élargis pour inclure un programme de maî-

/suite à la page 13



Bolivia to support their ability to increase their salaries and meet government requirements. The program received political support from President Evo Morales (2006-2019), trade union organizer and activist, and Bolivia's first Indigenous president. The programs expanded to include a master's degree in higher education and many other training opportunities for educators across the country.

### Schools as Territories of Peace—Colombia

In 2017, OSSTF/FEESO provided financial support through CoDevelopment Canada to a project in Colombia called Schools as Territories of Peace. As Colombia emerged out of a period of significant civil conflict and unrest, The Colombian Teachers' Federation (FECODE) wanted to develop pedagogical alternatives for schools in a post-conflict environment, and to democratize public schools through education for peace, social justice, and respect for human rights. The program is active at a national level in both urban and rural settings. Education unions in Quebec and British Columbia are also funding this project.

### Bangladesh Center for Workers' Solidarity—Bangladesh

The Bangladesh Center for Workers' Solidarity (BCWS) was founded in 2001 by three former garment workers. They are a labour rights advocacy organization that emphasizes the rights of women workers, gender equality, participation of women workers in bargaining, and protecting the human rights of women and children. Shortly after the Rana



OSSTF/FEESO and other labour allies visiting the BCWS offices in June 2019

Plaza factory collapse in in 2013 in Dhaka, Canadian unions came together to offer financial support to the BCWS to help in its efforts to change labour laws in Bangladesh. OSSTF/FEESO has been a co-sponsor of BCWS for six years and was able to participate in a Canadian union coalition trip to work with the organization in spring 2019.

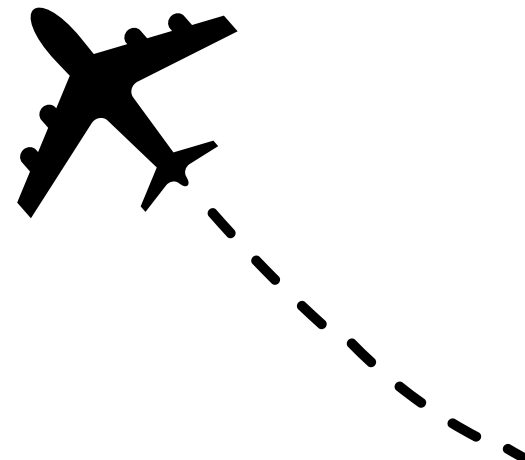
### International Assistance Program

OSSTF/FEESO receives applications for funding from various programs and organizations annually through the International Assistance Program (IAP). The applications are reviewed by the provincial Human Rights Committee with recommendations for funding approved by the Provincial Executive. Some of the IAP applications come from organizations with whom we have established relationships, or through some of our existing international coalitions. This program has a mandate to support projects that support education, women's rights, and labour solidarity.

It is through our various and ever-evolving partnerships that OSSTF/FEESO can continue to

play an active role in enhancing and promoting human rights, public education, and the rights of workers. These partnerships often yield reciprocal benefits, including solidarity, lobbying, and resource sharing with our Federation, truly making these relationships valuable assets to the Members of OSSTF/FEESO.

**Gary Fenn** is the Director of Communications/Political Action at OSSTF/FEESO Provincial Office.





Des représentants d'OSSTF/FEESO à la Coalition trinationale en 2022

trise en Éducation supérieure et de nombreuses autres occasions de formation à l'intention du personnel en éducation de partout dans le pays.

### **Schools as Territories of Peace —Colombie**

En 2017, OSSTF/FEESO a offert un soutien financier par le biais de CoDevelopment Canada dans le cadre d'un projet en Colombie appelé Schools as Territories of Peace. Alors que la Colombie est sortie d'une période d'importants conflits et troubles civils, la *Colombian Teachers' Federation* (FECODE) voulait élaborer d'autres choix pédagogiques pour les écoles dans un environnement post-conflit et démocratiser les écoles publiques par le biais de l'éducation pour la paix, la justice sociale et le respect pour les droits de la personne. Le programme est actif au niveau national, tant dans les milieux urbains que ruraux. Des syndicats en éducation au Québec et en Colombie-

Britannique financent également ce projet.

### **Bangladesh Center for Workers' Solidarity—Bangladesh**

Le *Bangladesh Center for Workers' Solidarity* (BCWS) a été fondé en 2001 par trois anciens travailleurs de l'industrie vestimentaire. Il s'agit d'un organisme de défense des droits des travailleuses et des travailleurs qui investit ses efforts à défendre les droits des travailleuses, l'égalité des genres, la participation des travailleuses aux négociations et la protection des droits de la personne, particulièrement des femmes et des enfants. Peu de temps après l'effondrement de l'usine du Rana Plaza en 2013, à Dha-ka, les syndicats canadiens se sont unis pour offrir un soutien financier au BCWS pour l'aider dans ses efforts pour changer les lois sur le travail au Bangladesh. OSSTF/FEESO est co-par- rain du BCWS depuis six ans et a été en mesure de participer au voyage d'une coalition syndicale

canadienne dans le but de travailler avec l'organisme au printemps 2019.

### **Programme d'aide internationale**

OSSTF/FEESO reçoit des demandes de financement de la part de divers programmes et organismes sur une base annuelle, par le biais du Programme d'aide internationale (PAI). Les demandes sont passées en revue par le Comité provincial des droits de la personne et les recommandations pour le financement sont approuvées par l'Exécutif provincial. Certaines demandes au PAI proviennent d'organismes avec lesquels nous avons des relations établies ou par le biais de nos coalitions internationales existantes. Ce programme a le mandat d'appuyer des projets qui appuient l'éducation, les droits des femmes et la solidarité syndicale.

C'est par le biais de nos partenariats divers et toujours en évolution qu'OSSTF/FEESO peut continuer de jouer un rôle actif dans l'amélioration et la promotion des droits de la personne, de l'éducation publique et des droits des travailleuses et des travailleurs. Ces partenariats entraînent souvent des bienfaits réciproques, y compris la solidarité, le lobbying et le partage de ressources avec notre Fédération, faisant véritablement en sorte que ces relations constituent des atouts précieux pour les Membres d'OSSTF/FEESO.

---

**Gary Fenn** est directeur des communications/action politique au Bureau provincial d'OSSTF/FEESO.



The COVID-19 Pandemic and the subsequent response by our respective employers highlighted the systemic inequities in not only the funding of our work, but also the inequitable exposure of workers to risk depending on the individual circumstances of one's job. What is less often talked about is the idea that one's individual characteristics such as (but not exclusive to) race, gender, sexual orientation, or ability significantly impacts one's exposure to risk and access to health and safety processes. The pandemic revealed how Black, Indigenous, and racialized workers faced higher rates of exposure to COVID-19 and lower rates of protection (VAW Learning Network, n.d.).

The effects of racism on the health and well-being of Black, Indigenous, and racialized people have been well-documented (Nestel, 2012; PHAC, 2020). In recent times, calls have been made to have racism declared a public health issue (Nembhard & White, 2020). Racism and other forms of oppression that exist within the education sector are a hazard and should be identified as such as they negatively impact the well-being of our workers. However, these same oppressions are often difficult to identify and even harder to mitigate due to the extent to which they are embedded into our everyday practices. Our employers have been quick to jump on board anti-racism and anti-oppression curricular practices, but they see these issues as siloed off from traditional health and safety committees and spaces. Racism and oppression are a health and safety hazard for the Members of OSSTF/FEESO, and as such, they need to be talked about in those spaces using the mechanisms of the *Ontario Health and Safety Act* (OHSA) to better protect worker health.

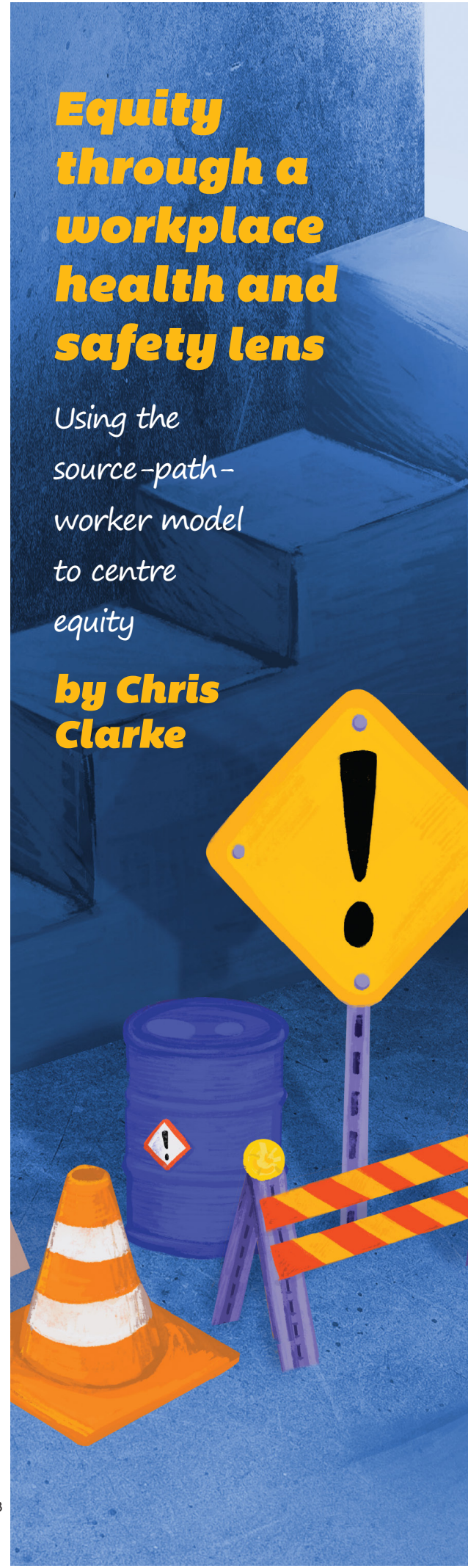
The pandemic did have one, small, silver lining—that workers now have a capacity for health and safety language they did not previously have. OSSTF/FEESO Members are now better equipped to talk about hazards in the workplace and their mitigation strategies—be those actions taken at the source of the hazard, along the path of the hazard, or at the worker themselves. What if the hazards are the oppressive practices within the education sector? Examination of a hazard using this modeling can also be used to analyze and discuss the harms done to those in our union because of systemic racism and oppression. We should be able to transfer our health and safety learning from the pandemic and apply it to necessary strategies to help end systemic harms being done to OSSTF/FEESO Members due to their impact as psychosocial hazards. Since they are a hazard, it is wholly appropriate to make recommendations about them at our Joint Health and Safety Committees (JHSC).

*/continued on page 16*

## Equity through a workplace health and safety lens

Using the source-path-worker model to centre equity

by Chris Clarke





# L'équité dans l'optique de la santé et de la sécurité au travail

Utiliser le modèle source-parcours-travailleur pour centrer l'équité

par **Chris Clarke**

La pandémie de la COVID-19 et les réponses subséquentes par nos employeurs respectifs ont souligné les iniquités systémiques non seulement dans le financement de notre travail, mais également dans l'exposition inéquitable des travailleuses et des travailleurs au risque, en fonction des circonstances individuelles des tâches de leur poste. Ce qu'on mentionne moins souvent c'est l'idée que les caractéristiques individuelles d'une personne comme (sans y être exclusif) la race, le genre, l'orientation sexuelle ou la capacité a un impact important sur l'exposition au risque et l'accès aux processus de santé et de sécurité. La pandémie a dévoilé dans quelle mesure les travailleuses et travailleurs Noirs, Autochtones et racialisés faisaient face à des taux d'exposition plus élevés à la COVID-19 et à des niveaux de protection plus faibles (VAW Learning Network, n.d.).

Les effets du racisme sur la santé et le bien-être des peuples Noirs, Autochtones et racialisés ont été très bien documentés (Nestel, 2012; ACSP, 2020). Récemment, on a demandé que le racisme soit déclaré comme étant un problème de santé publique (Nembhard et White, 2020). Le racisme et les autres formes d'oppression qui existent dans le secteur de l'éducation constituent un danger et devraient être cernés puisqu'ils ont un impact négatif sur le bien-être de nos Membres. Toutefois, ces mêmes oppressions sont souvent difficiles à déterminer et encore plus à atténuer en raison de la mesure à laquelle elles ont imprégnées dans nos pratiques de tous les jours. Nos employeurs se sont empressés d'adopter des pratiques curriculaires de lutte contre le racisme et de lutte contre l'oppression, mais ils perçoivent ces problèmes comme étant distincts des comités et des espaces traditionnels de la santé et sécurité. Le racisme et l'oppression constituent en fait un danger pour la santé et la sécurité des Membres d'OSSTF/FEESO et, de ce fait, doivent figurer aux discussions dans ces espaces au moyen des mécanismes de la *Loi sur la santé et la sécurité au travail (LSST)* afin de mieux protéger la santé des travailleuses et des travailleurs.

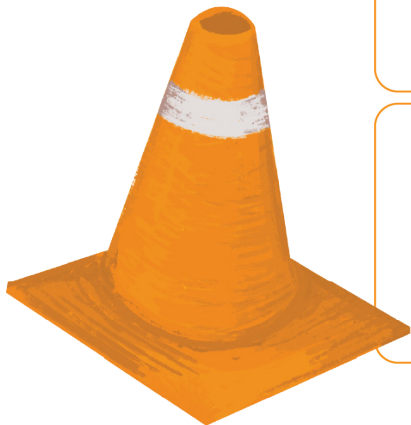
La pandémie a tout de même eu un petit côté positif—à savoir que les travailleuses et les travailleurs jouissent maintenant d'une capacité de libellé en matière de santé et sécurité qu'ils n'avaient pas auparavant. Les Membres d'OSSTF/FEESO sont maintenant mieux outillés pour parler des dangers en milieu de travail et de leurs stratégies d'atténuation—que ces mesures soient prises à la source du danger, lors du danger ou auprès de la travailleuse ou du travailleur même. Et si les dangers sont en réali-

/suite à la page 17



In any hazardous situation for workers, intervention should be straight forward. If a pandemic is raging, we would recommend things like improving ventilation and wearing a mask. If there is asbestos in a building, we would abate it. But what if the hazard is the language we use, the materials we utilize in our classrooms, or the practices employed day to day by management? With most types of hazards, the pathway forward is far clearer, and we never rely solely on those people experiencing the hazard to teach us how to fix it. We as a union would advocate for action and change so that everyone can experience a safer workplace. We would take the position that workers have a right to go home as whole as they arrived. So why is this not the same when it comes to racism and oppression? With the right advocacy, the provisions and rights we have under OSHA pair well with this work and gives us great influence to effect change using an anti-racist and anti-oppression lens. We need to build this capacity within our health and safety spaces and advocate for conversations around equity, anti-racism, and anti-oppression.

When analyzing a



hazard on the health and safety of a worker, one must weigh the best way to mitigate its harms. One of the ways to do this is to look at types of control.

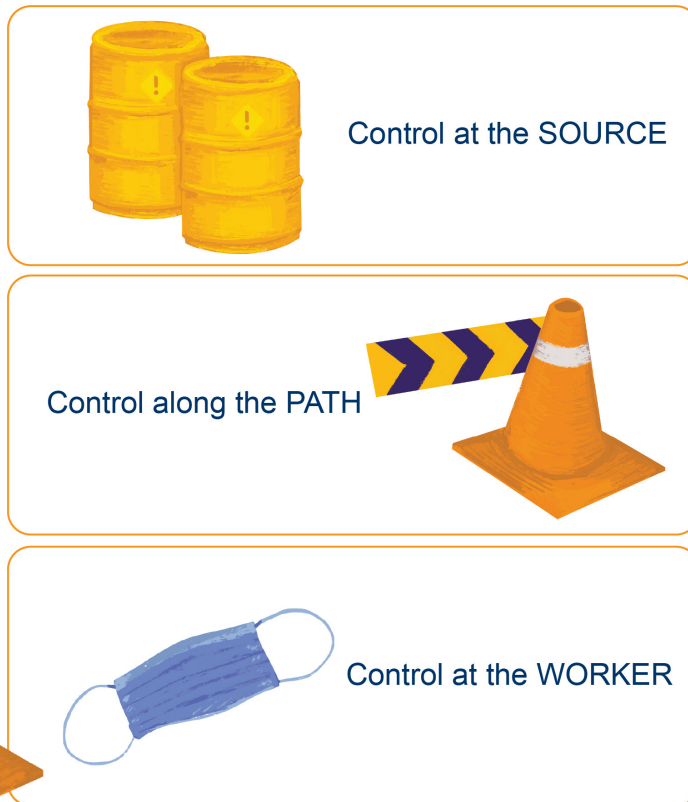
If one is to try to mitigate the hazard at the source, an employer could encapsulate a poisonous material differently during its use. If that's not feasible, along the path one could change the ventilation of the area to try to control the poisonous gas' access to the worker while they perform a task. In situations like a pandemic, the mitigation strategy is likely to end up at the worker—be it through a hazmat suit, mask respirator, or gloves. The closer the hazard gets to the worker, the less effective the mitigation. So, while it makes sense to put on a mask to try to keep oneself safe from COVID-19, a far more effective strategy is to get better ventilation, HEPA units, paid sick days,

etc—all examples of strategies along the path. But, how does one mitigate systemic racism and oppression using a health and safety lens, then?

If we apply the Source—Path—Worker model to this hazard, we simply cannot insulate those experiencing harm using PPE or other “at the worker” strategies—in doing so, we are only acknowledging the hazard is not going to be removed. In all health and safety scenarios, this is the least successful strategy. Instead, we need to focus on strategies “along the path” or “at the source” and this involves advocacy in our health and safety spaces. The most effective mitigation strategies are always at the source of the hazard—which involves transforming the system itself. While this work takes time, sitting idly is not an option because if we do nothing the harms will continue in the interim.

Inaction simply compounds the existing hazard. We must do something, even if it is met with significant resistance. Examples of actions a Bargaining Unit can take include bargaining for protected committee space with our employers with a focus on workplace violence and the intersectional experiences of worker groups. These discussions could also focus on reporting culture and management reprisals, with an eye to identifying best practices and recommendations to school boards and their policy makers. This could work well in

## Types of Control



té les pratiques oppressives au sein du secteur de l'éducation? L'étude d'un danger au moyen de ce modèle peut également être utilisée dans le but d'analyser et de discuter des préjudices faits à certains membres de notre syndicat en raison du racisme et de l'oppression systémiques. Nous devrions être en mesure de transférer l'apprentissage que nous avons acquis lors de la pandémie en matière de santé et de sécurité et de l'appliquer aux stratégies nécessaires pour aider à mettre fin aux préjudices infligés aux Membres d'OSSTF/FEESO en raison de leur impact comme dangers psychosociaux. Puisqu'ils représentent un danger, il va de soi de faire des recommandations à leur sujet lors des réunions de nos Comités mixtes de santé et de sécurité (CMSS).

Pour toute situation dangereuse à laquelle sont exposés les travailleuses et nos travailleurs, l'intervention devrait être simple. Dans une situation de pandémie, nous recommanderions des mesures comme l'amélioration de la ventilation et le port du masque. S'il y a de l'amiante dans un édifice, nous prenons les mesures qui se doivent pour l'éliminer. Cependant, qu'en est-il si le danger est notre langage, le matériel que nous utilisons en salle de classe ou les pratiques adoptées au quotidien par l'administration? Pour la plupart des dangers, le parcours à suivre est beau-

coup plus clair et nous ne nous fions jamais strictement aux personnes qui vivent le danger pour nous montrer comment y remédier. À titre de syndicat, nous lutterions pour des mesures et un changement afin que tous puissent jouir d'un lieu de travail plus sécuritaire. Nous adopterions la position voulant que les travailleuses et les travailleurs ont le droit de rentrer à la maison tout aussi entiers qu'à leur arrivée. Alors pourquoi est-ce différent lorsqu'il s'agit du racisme et de l'oppression? Moyennant la bonne défense des intérêts, les dispositions et les droits que nous avons en vertu de la LSST s'alignent bien à ces efforts et nous donnent une forte influence pour apporter un changement au moyen d'une optique de lutte contre le racisme et de lutte contre l'oppression. Nous devons renforcer cette capacité au sein de nos espaces de santé et

de sécurité et favoriser les conversations entourant l'équité, la lutte contre le racisme et la lutte contre l'oppression.

Lorsqu'on analyse un danger pour la santé et la sécurité d'une travailleuse ou d'un travailleur, il faut mesurer la meilleure façon d'atténuer ses effets néfastes. Une des façons d'y arriver est de passer en revue les types de contrôle :

Si on tente d'atténuer le danger à la source, un employeur pourrait emballer une substance toxique différemment lors de son usage. Si cela n'est pas faisable, le long du parcours, on pourrait changer la ventilation de l'endroit afin d'essayer de contrôler l'accès du gaz toxique à la travailleuse ou au travailleurs alors qu'ils exécutent une tâche. Dans des situations comme une pandémie, la stratégie d'atténuation sera vraisemblablement au niveau de la travailleuse ou du travailleur—soit sous forme d'une tenue de protection contre les matières dangereuses, d'un masque respiratoire ou de gants. Plus le danger est à proximité de la travailleuse ou du travailleur, moins l'atténuation est efficace. Par conséquent, bien qu'il soit sensé de porter un masque pour essayer de se protéger contre la COVID-19, une stratégie beaucoup plus efficace est d'améliorer la ventilation, des unités HEPA, des congés de maladie rémunérés, etc. Ce sont tous là des exemples de

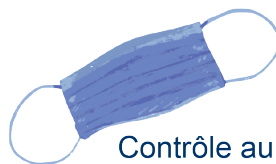
## Types de contrôle



Contrôle à la SOURCE



Contrôle le long du PARCOURS



Contrôle au niveau du TRAVAILLEUR



conjunction with our union position that school boards are not using their Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion committees to discuss employee experiences, instead



*With the right advocacy, the provisions and rights we have under OHSA pair well with this work and gives us great influence to effect change using an anti-racist and anti-oppression lens.*



choosing to focus on changes to student-related practices. Members of OSSTF/FEESO experience violent acts and harms by their interactions with the public and their students, yet many of these instances are not explored in their full context, instead they are separated from traditional health and safety discussions—so let's bargain for the space to challenge these realities head on with our employers. These types of changes are hard, but paramount to our work as educators, and most importantly to what we do as advocates for the greater good for all those in public education.

In the health and safety continuum, the next most effective intervention would be “along the

path,” which involves changes in both employer policy and the actions of the rank-and-file workers of the organization. As OSSTF/FEESO we need to walk the path, so to speak, towards a more equitable education system. We have mechanisms to effect that change, or at the very least to get a response from the employer in writing as to why they allow harms to perpetuate. We have the means to use provisions of what are called 21-day recommendations under OSHA, Sec 9.21. We can make these recommendations in good faith to examine aspects of racism and oppression, including but not limited to workplace violence trends, enforcement of anti-harassment policies, and any other hazard that we can identify in our workplaces. We can ask our employers tough questions about their duty to protect their workers from harm under Sec. 32.0.1 of OHSA, and if they disagree with our recommendations, they are required to put their rationale in writing as to why they are not going to change their policies and procedures. It is a requirement under Sec 9.21 that employers must respond in writing within twenty-one days of our submission. If our employers push back against these tough questions, or refuse to act upon clear data and trends that show these harms are being done, we can grieve or involve the Ministry of Labour inspectors where appropriate. What is most important is that we collectively push our respective employers to put in writing their action (or inaction) on these data-supported recommendations and we share our results across the entire union. We can, and should, be using these mechanisms to consistently hold our employers to task about these data-supported haz-

ards in our workplaces that are not being currently mitigated.

Part of this “along the path” work is a need to rethink what is a hazard in health and safety discussions. Certified representatives have been taught to report hazards that fit far more cleanly into the existing tracking systems, which our employers are happy to keep as the status quo, as they are easier to manage. Jones and Okun discuss a list of characteristics of white supremacy culture which appear in our organizations and which speak to this trend towards maintenance of the old way of doing things. For instance, the authors describe the tendency for organizations to operate with a “sense of urgency” towards problem solving (Jones and Okun, 1999). From a health and safety perspective, this results in the development of checklists for health and safety inspections that do not discuss more complex issues such as psycho-social hazards or the impacts of oppression on workers. Jones and Okun also highlight a tendency towards quantity over quality where “all resources of the organization are directed towards producing measurable goals” (Jones and Okun, 1999). When translating this to health and safety work, it is reflected when talking about the number of inspections of vents, filters changed, or slips and trips. While these are valuable things to discuss and note, there is a hyper-focus on these types of hazards which results in committee meetings where agendas speak more about the wellness of a physical building than the health of our workers who work inside. Psycho-social hazards are intricate and require more time and resources to be addressed. We need to chal-


stratégies le long du parcours. Cependant, comment arrive-t-on alors à atténuer le racisme et l'oppression systémiques au moyen d'une optique de santé et de sécurité?

Si nous appliquons le modèle Source à Parcours à Travailleuse/Travailleur à ce danger, nous ne pouvons pas simplement isoler les personnes qui sont touchées par le danger au moyen d'un ÉPI ou d'autres stratégies « au niveau de la travailleuse ou du travailleur »—car en agissant ainsi, nous reconnaissons seulement que le danger, sans y remédier. Dans toutes les situations de santé et de sécurité, il s'agit de la stratégie la moins efficace. Nous devons plutôt nous concentrer sur les stratégies « le long du parcours » ou « à la source » et cela nécessite une défense des intérêts dans nos espaces sur la santé et la sécurité. Les stratégies d'atténuation les plus efficaces sont toujours à la source du danger—ce qui nécessite une transformation du système même. Bien que ce travail nécessite du temps, ne rien faire n'est pas une option parce que si nous ne faisons rien, les préjudices se poursuivront dans l'intérim et l'inaction ne fait qu'accentuer le danger existant. Nous devons agir, même face à une importante résistance. Des exemples d'action qu'une unité de négociation peut prendre comprennent la négociation pour des espaces de comité protégés auprès de nos employeurs, en se concentrant sur la violence en milieu de travail et les expériences intersectionnelles des groupes de travailleuses et de travailleurs. Ces discussions pourraient également se concentrer sur la culture du signalement et les représailles de l'administration, tout en veillant à cerner les meilleures pratiques et les


recommandations aux conseils scolaires et aux responsables de la création de politiques. Cela pourrait bien fonctionner relativement à la position de notre syndicat indiquant que les conseils scolaires n'utilisent pas leurs Comités en matière d'équité, de diversité et d'inclusion pour discuter des expériences des employé(e)s, choisissant plutôt de se concentrer sur les changements aux pratiques liés aux élèves. Les Membres d'OSSTF/FEESO vivent des actes de violence et de préjudice en raison de leurs interactions avec le public et leurs élèves, mais bon nombre de ces situations ne sont pas explorées dans leur contexte intégral. Elles sont plutôt séparées des discussions traditionnelles en matière de santé et de sécurité—alors négocions pour l'espace requis afin de lutter de plein fouet contre ces réalités auprès de nos employeurs. Ces types de changements sont difficiles, mais essentiels à notre travail comme personnel en éducation et surtout, à nos efforts de défense des intérêts pour le bien commun de toutes et tous au sein de l'éducation publique.

Dans le continuum de la santé et de la sécurité, la prochaine intervention la plus efficace serait « le long du parcours », ce qui nécessite des changements tant dans les politiques de l'employeur que dans les actions des simples travailleuses et travailleurs de l'organisme. À titre d'OSSTF/FEESO, nous devons faire le parcours, pour ainsi dire, vers un système d'éducation plus équitable et nous avons les mécanismes nécessaires pour apporter des changements ou tout au moins obtenir une réponse par écrit de la part de l'employeur à savoir pourquoi ils laissent les

préjudices se perpétuer. Nous avons les moyens d'utiliser les dispositions de ce qu'on appelle les recommandations dans un délai de 21 jours en vertu de la



*Une défense des intérêts appropriée, les modalités et les droits que nous avons en vertu de la LSST se marient bien à ce travail et nous donnent une forte influence pour apporter des changements au moyen d'une lentille de lutte contre le racisme et de lutte contre l'oppression.*



LSST, article 9.21. Nous pouvons faire ces recommandations de bonne foi afin de passer en revue les aspects du racisme et de l'oppression, y compris, sans s'y limiter, aux tendances de violence en milieu de travail, l'application de politiques sur la lutte contre le harcèlement et tout autre danger que nous pouvons cerner dans nos lieux de travail. Nous pouvons poser à nos employeurs les questions difficiles au sujet de leur responsabilité de protéger leurs

/suite à la page 21



lenge notion that just because a hazard is complex it shouldn't be prioritized. This is how to situate anti-oppression work as a health and safety issue.

OSSTF/FEESO also has much anti-racist and anti-oppressive work to do within our own Federation. We have our own barriers to participation that have resulted in the absence or silencing of voices from equity-seeking groups. The TUC Report titled *Health, Safety and Racism in the Workplace: A Study of Black Workers' Experiences* reports that within the context of the UK, "Black workers make up a disproportionate minority of union health and safety representatives" (p.3). The report also highlights that part of the reason for the lack of racialized representatives was fear of victimisation, reprisal, and associated psycho-social hazards from having to interact too much with management (TUC, 2022).

I do believe that, in terms of OSSTF/FEESO's own practices, that an examination of the demographic composition of our health and safety reps would be paramount when examining the influence systemic oppression is continuing to have in our own spaces. Having reps that reflect the diversity of the communities we live and work in would be extremely beneficial in identifying insidious racist and oppressive practices in our workspaces.

Increasing representation is important but equally essential is providing safe spaces, free from consequences for those speaking out, that are conducive for these conversations to take place. While it is important to create spaces and opportunities, we must also remember that barriers to participation continue to exist in our work and unions spaces and it is the responsibility of everyone to address. I would hope that perhaps our recently-established District-level Anti-Oppression, Anti-Racism and Equity Officers could help us address this aspect of our practice.

In the conclusion section of the TUC Report, it notes that there is "[a] complex but intrinsic relationship between race and health and safety and the inequality of risk" (TUC, 2022). While this research was primarily designed to look at the experiences of Black workers during the pandemic, it determined in general that "...concentration on physical risk can overlook the impact of racism as central to the health and safety of workers" (TUC, 2022). It seems more than past due for OSSTF/FEESO to start encouraging our locals to not allow employers to silo off equity work separate from racism and oppression's clear impact on worker health and safety. At the same time, as a Federation we should be deter-

mined to break down the barriers that exist that discourage or prevent equity-seeking Members from participating more in health and safety spaces. Empowerment, mentoring, and opportunity belong firmly within our union. We need more representatives that reflect the communities and the make-up of our workplaces. Equity work is hard — but it is a necessary mitigation strategy to promote the health and safety of our membership. We need more action "along the path" today to do that properly. When health and safety is siloed off from equity and anti-oppression, it is stifling some of the most challenging and important decolonizing aspects of our workplaces, and union spaces, that need to occur.

---

**Chris Clarke** is the Teacher Bargaining Unit Vice-President in District 14, Kawartha Pine Ridge.





travailleuses et leurs travailleurs de préjudices en vertu de l'article 32.0.1 de la *LSSST* et, s'ils ne sont pas d'accord avec nos recommandations, ils sont tenus d'exprimer par écrit leur justification à savoir pourquoi ils ne changeront pas leurs politiques et procédures. Il s'agit d'une exigence en vertu de l'article 9.21 que les employeurs doivent répondre par écrit dans les 21 jours de notre soumission. Si nos employeurs s'opposent à ces questions difficiles ou refusent d'agir même en présence de données et de tendances claires qui démontrent que ces préjudices sont perpétués, nous pouvons poser un grief ou impliquer les inspecteurs du ministère du Travail, lorsqu'approprié. Le plus important, c'est que nous poussions collectivement nos employeurs respectifs à indiquer par écrit leurs actions (ou inactions) concernant ces recommandations appuyées par des données et que nous partagions les résultats avec l'ensemble du syndicat. Nous pouvons et devrions utiliser ces mécanismes afin de tenir nos employeurs responsables de façon uniforme concernant les dangers dans nos lieux de travail qui sont appuyés par des données et qui ne sont toujours pas atténués présentement.

Une partie du travail « le long du parcours » est le besoin de

repenser ce qui constitue un danger dans les discussions en santé et sécurité. Les représentants certifiés ont la consigne de signaler les dangers qui correspondent beaucoup plus fidèlement aux systèmes de repérage, que nos employeurs sont heureux de conserver comme statu quo, puisqu'ils sont plus faciles à gérer. Jones et Okun discutent d'une liste de caractéristiques de la culture de suprématie blanche qui est présente dans nos organismes, qui témoigne de cette tendance vers le maintien de l'ancienne façon de faire les choses. Par exemple, les auteurs décrivent la tendance des organismes à fonctionner « de façon urgente » dans le but de résoudre les problèmes (Jones and Okun, 1999). D'une perspective de santé et sécurité, cela entraîne la création de listes de vérification pour les inspections de santé et de sécurité qui n'incluent pas les questions plus complexes comme les dangers psychosociaux ou les impacts de l'oppression sur les travailleuses et les travailleurs. Jones et Okun soulignent également une tendance vers la quantité plutôt que la qualité où « toutes les ressources de l'organisme sont utilisées pour réaliser des buts mesurables » (Jones et Okun, 1999). Lorsque nous traduisons ceci en travail en matière de santé et

sécurité, il se reflète lorsqu'on parle du nombre d'inspections de bouches de ventilation, de changements de filtre ou d'incidences de glissades et trébuchements. Bien qu'il s'agisse d'éléments importants à discuter et à prendre note, il y a une forte concentration sur ce type de dangers, ce qui entraîne des réunions de comité où les programmes portent davantage sur le bien-être d'un édifice physique que la santé et la sécurité de nos travailleuses et de nos travailleurs qui y travaillent. Les dangers psychosociaux sont complexes et nécessitent plus de temps et de ressources afin d'y remédier. Nous devons mettre en question la notion que, même si un danger est complexe, cela ne veut pas dire qu'on ne devrait pas lui accorder la priorité. Voilà comment situer le travail de lutte contre l'oppression comme enjeu de santé et de sécurité.

OSSTF/FEESO a beaucoup de travail en matière de lutte contre le racisme et de lutte contre l'oppression au sein de notre propre Fédération. Nous avons nos propres obstacles à la participation qui ont entraîné l'absence ou la réduction au silence de la voix de groupes à la recherche d'équité. Le rapport du TUC intitulé *Health, Safety and Racism in the Workplace: A Study of Black Workers' Experiences* indique que dans le



contexte du Royaume-Uni, « les travailleuses et les travailleurs Noirs forment une minorité disproportionnée de représentants en santé et sécurité » (p. 3). Le rapport souligne également qu'une partie de la raison pour le manque de représentants racialisés était la peur de victimisation, de représailles et de dangers psychosociaux connexes en raison de trop d'interactions avec l'administration (TUC, 2022). Je crois réellement qu'en termes de propres pratiques d'OSSTF/FEESO, un examen de la composition démographique de nos représentants de santé et sécurité serait de la plus haute importance lorsqu'on examine l'influence que l'oppression systémique continue d'avoir dans nos propres espaces. La présence de représentants qui reflètent la diversité des communautés dans lesquelles nous vivons et travaillons serait extrêmement profitable afin de cerner les pratiques racistes et oppressives insidieuses dans nos lieux de travail. Il est important de relever la représentation, mais il est tout aussi essentiel d'offrir des espaces sécuritaires, exempts de conséquences pour celles et ceux qui signalent des situations, qui favorisent la tenue de ces conversations. Bien qu'il soit important de créer des espaces et des occasions, nous devons également nous rappeler que des obstacles à la participation continuent d'exister dans nos espaces de travail et syndicaux qu'il incombe à tous d'aborder. J'ose espérer que peut-être nos agentes et agents de lutte contre l'oppression, de lutte contre le racisme et en matière d'équité récemment établis au niveau des districts pourraient nous aider à lutter contre cet aspect de notre pratique.

Dans la section de la conclusion du rapport du TUC, il est noté qu'il y a « un lien intrinsèque entre la race

et la santé et sécurité et l'inégalité du risque » (TUC, 2022). Bien que cette recherche ait été conçue principalement pour étudier les expériences des travailleuses et des travailleurs Noirs pendant la pandémie, elle a déterminé en général qu'une « ...concentration sur le risque peut faire en sorte que l'impact du racisme est négligé comme facteur central de la santé et de la sécurité des travailleuses et des travailleurs » (TUC, 2022). Il semble plus que temps qu'OSSTF/FEESO commence à encourager nos unités de négociation à ne pas permettre aux employeurs d'isoler le travail en matière d'équité de l'impact du racisme et de l'oppression sur la santé et la sécurité des travailleuses et des travailleurs. En même temps, comme Fédération, nous devrions être déterminés à éliminer les obstacles existants qui empêchent ou découragent ou empêchent les membres à la recherche d'équité de participer davantage aux espaces de santé et de sécurité. L'habilitation, le mentorat et l'occasion demeurent fermement au sein de notre syndicat. Nous avons besoin d'un plus grand nombre de représentants qui reflètent les communautés et la composition de nos lieux de travail. Le travail en matière d'équité est difficile —mais il s'agit d'une stratégie d'atténuation nécessaire pour favoriser la santé et la sécurité de nos membres. Nous avons besoin de plus d'actions « le long du parcours » maintenant pour y arriver correctement. Lorsque le concept de la santé et la sécurité est isolé de l'équité et de la lutte contre l'oppression, il freine certains des aspects de la décolonisation les plus difficiles et les plus importants de nos lieux de travail et de nos espaces syndicaux qui doivent se produire.

---

**Chris Clarke** est vice-président de l'Unité de négociation du personnel enseignant du District 14, Kawartha Pine Ridge.

## Works Cited

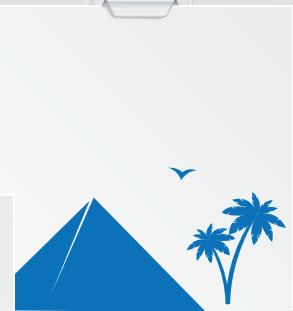
- Abdillahi, I. & Shaw, A., (2020). "Social Determinants and Inequalities in Health for Black Canadians: A Snapshot." *Public Health Agency of Canada*. Ottawa, ON. Retrieved from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/health-promotion/population-health/what-determines-health/social-determinants-inequalities-black-canadians-snapshot.html>
- Kenneth, J. & Okun, T. (1999). "White Supremacy Culture." dRworks Collaborative. Internet. Retrieved from: [https://www.whitesupremacyculture.info/uploads/4/3/5/7/43579015/okun\\_-\\_white\\_sup\\_culture.pdf](https://www.whitesupremacyculture.info/uploads/4/3/5/7/43579015/okun_-_white_sup_culture.pdf)
- Nembhard S. & White K., (2020, November 11). "It's Time to Declare Racism a Public Health Issue." *Urban Wire Institute*. Washington D.C. Retrieved from: <https://www.urban.org/urban-wire/its-time-declare-racism-public-health-issue>
- Nestel, S. (2012, January). "Colour Coded Health Care: The Impact of Race and Racism on Canadian's Health." *Wellesley Institute*. Toronto, ON. Retrieved from: <https://www.wellesleyinstitute.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/Colour-Coded-Health-Care-Sheryl-Nestel.pdf>
- Trades Union Congress <TUC> (2020, July). "Health, Safety & Racism in the Workplace: A Study of Black Worker's Experiences." *Centre for Research on Employment and Work, University of Greenwich*. Retrieved from: <https://www.tuc.org.uk/sites/default/files/2022-08/HealthSafetyRacism.pdf>
- VAW Learning Network, (n.d.) "More Exposed & Less Protected in Canada: Racial Inequality as Systemic Violence During COVID-19." *Centre for Research & Education on Violence Against Women & Children*. London, ON. Retrieved from: <https://www.vawlearningnetwork.ca/docs/Systemic-Racism-Covid-19-Background.pdf>

# Transformational, active changes



THE ROLE OF  
THE EQUITY,  
ANTI-RACISM, AND  
ANTI-OPPRESSION  
OFFICER IN  
OSSTF/FEESO  
BARGAINING UNITS  
AND DISTRICTS

by **Troy  
Cluff**

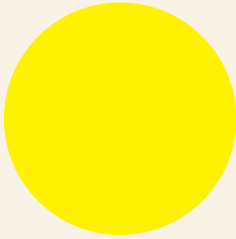


Without a commitment to equity and racial justice, unions risk ending up in the dustbin of history.

On behalf of the Federation's In-House Equity Team, I was happy to accept this privileged opportunity to retell the message I shared at this year's President's Symposium, with a hope to advance our discourse on the nature and importance of the role of the Equity, Anti-Racism, and Anti-Oppression Officer in our Bargaining Units and Districts.

The stories I shared at the symposium were about a jar, a professor, and a dialectic; they were purposefully arbitrary. In fact, one of the concepts I covered and hope to retell here is located within "Anecdote of the Jar," a poem by Wallace Stevens, which reads as follows:





### *The Anecdote of the Jar*

*I placed a jar in Tennessee;  
And round it was, upon a hill.  
It made the slovenly wilderness  
Surround that hill.*

*The wilderness rose up to it,  
And sprawled around, no longer wild.  
The jar was round upon the ground  
And tall and of a port in air.*

*It took dominion everywhere.  
The jar was gray and bare.  
It did not give of bird or bush,  
Like nothing else in Tennessee.*

by Wallace Stevens 1919

In this poem, a simple jar is giving meaning to the space it is in. In fact, it “[takes] dominion everywhere,” and even has the capacity to transform the landscape around it, making it “no longer wild.”

The poem speaks to this odd tendency we possess where we empower arbitrary structure, like the jar, so that it prescribes meaning and identity to the things surrounding us. Think no further than landmarks such as the CN Tower or the Rogers Center in Toronto; the Hamilton steel mills; or the Peace Tower at Parliament Hill in Ottawa—all structures with significant cultural symbolism that tend to flash front-of-mind when mentioning these milieus.

And yet, they only really capture a very insignificant portion of these cities’ storied histories, communities, and cultures. They also fail to capture any stories predating the cities altogether.

Fascinatingly, this tendency to empower symbol and structure transcends the physical as well, as arbitrary structural or symbolic underpinnings often also tend to ground our understandings of the ways in which organizations, community, and society are constructed and function—including the organizations we work for,

that we work with, and by which we are governed.

What is interesting about this concept in terms of our advocacy, is that this same proclivity for relying on symbol and structure can be leveraged by introducing other seemingly arbitrary things into those settings for the purpose of familiarizing, deconstructing, and transforming the way they are structured and understood—just like the subject in Stevens’ poem, who introduces the jar into the Tennessee wilderness, and subsequently observes the transformative impact it has on their perception of the landscape around it.

It is the very introduction of something—even if seemingly arbitrary—its introduction impacts the gravitational field which subsumes our understanding of things. Like the jar, fascinatingly, it starts to hold dominion over the normally incomprehensible, giving it clearer identity and effectively making it no longer wild to us.

Interestingly, we do not expect that these arbitrary conceptual vehicles be perfect in form. In the case of this article, for example, there may have been a number of more effective metaphors to rely on rather than a jar in Tennessee. Nevertheless, its introduction serves the more important purpose of establishing some conceptual apparatus and some pedagogical vehicle to help us understand how arbitrary structure can be in the organizations we work with every day, and how we rely on arbitrary things to ground not only our understanding of the way things exist, but also our acceptance of it, when things actually could exist much differently.

Introducing other, seemingly arbitrary things can impact those structures and symbols



## Approaching an advocacy-for-equity role

**1.**

The time and care afforded to the role (and its work) is likely to have a substantial impact on its effectiveness. Taking the time and care to ensure it is performing well will help drive it away from simply being performative.

**2.**

It is best to acknowledge and work with where communities or incumbents are actually at, and engage with them to work through priority issues and configure best practices over time to drive toward arriving at a more nuanced and perfected version of the role. Recognize that it may not be perfect, that there is always more work to be done, and that there are always better ways to do it.

**3.**

Providing some genuine recognition and positive affirmation for the work that has been done, the work that is being done, and the work that will be done is also going to go a long way toward establishing a culture of care for the completion and continuity of the work in the role, and for its ongoing projects.

**4.**

Providing appropriate though realistic supports for the role in terms of resources and genuine coordinating efforts is also likely to have a substantial impact on its effectiveness and success.

**5.**

Continually re-affirming how crucially important this work actually is will help inspire and empower people towards completing it.

surrounding us, and help us to: think critically about them; deconstruct them; and reconceptualize how they might come to exist in more just ways.

The introduction of the OSSTF/FEESO Equity, Anti-Racism, and Anti-Oppression Officer position can be thought of in this way.

The object of such a role is to introduce this transformative capacity, and it truly can hold this power. The questions of whether how the role exists in your community is perfect or not, or seemingly arbitrary at first look, or perhaps not quite equally comprehensible to everyone yet—these really are second-

ary to the crucial importance of having the role in place in the first place, so that it may warp the space-time of the integrating structures and symbols of our society where exclusion, racism and oppression continue to exist, and catalyze transformation in those spaces.

But just because the Federation's local Equity, Anti-Racism, and Anti-Oppression Officer role may possess this capacity does not necessarily mean that it will be automatically and effectively wielded. Planning, approach, and care for this role is inevitably necessary to help drive its success.

In my own career, I have often turned my mind to this particular question: how to configure the best approach and long-game strategy in advocating for projects and work like this. I think about how practically spending time, energy, and care can impact the reception of our advocacy and amplify its impact.

In this context, for the Equity, Anti-Racism, and Anti-Oppression Officer role, there are five simple approaches that I think are at least worth thinking about when contemplating an advocacy-for-equity role:

Importantly, spending time struggling over complex projects



with intersecting and sometimes difficult issues is essential to our collective process of learning, of establishing a cycle of critical reflexiveness, and of progressing.

We need to think on how to frame pathways forward to more equitable and just communities by posing critical questions, such as: how do we become equitable? how do we become just? what actions are anti-racist? how do we subvert or reconcile with oppression and marginalization?

In fact, you should even be asking what those things actually mean, in your local, based on the practical circumstances. Who will your actions impact? How have the metrics been defined for even making that assessment, and whose voices were involved in defining them? What channels exist for you to exert influence, and what channels could be created? What can you start doing, right now?

While the questions themselves may be simple in nature, obviously the answers are not always so.

In fact, the answers to these questions will introduce a confluence of factors in the diversity of our local contexts, such that it needs to be considered, deeply and critically, how reconciliation and resolution to the tensions between where you may be at and where you would like to be actually looks like, in practice.

What the position looks like in practice and how it functions must necessarily be flexible. This is why suggested guidelines appear to be generalized, and also why spending some analytical energy on critical questions, on reconceptualization, and on critical reflexiveness is required.

It is also why the role is striving to be better and better over time. It can be a continued work in progress. There ought to be far less apprehension about introducing or performing this work either correctly or optimally, if it has not already been formally started in your local; the greater apprehension should rest with the implications of not doing anything at all.

All of that said, one thing is for certain: achieving synthesis of tensions is a process that is necessarily predicated on action, just as transformation and the process of becoming something is. In order to execute the role's object, intent, and purpose to impact, to transform, and to work at resolving the tensions wrought by oppressive forces, it is necessary to instigate action.

These actions do not necessarily need to be elaborate. In fact, simple is best, especially at inception. But in grappling with these concepts in local contexts, it is important that a significant degree of the focus is on action—even simple action.

Spending some of that analytical energy on formulating and revisiting an action plan is an excellent practice. Similar to the actions themselves, any plan developed does not necessarily need to be complex or elaborate. In fact, it can simply emulate or align with the provincial organization's *Action Plan to Support Equity, Anti-Racism, and Anti-Oppression*. Setting even a few simple goals to accomplish every year is pragmatic.

In any case, being active is essential to instigate the synthesis or transformation to more just communities, and it is therefore an essential step to focus on what actions can and should be

taken in this role.

Working with advocates that predated the In-House Equity Team, local officers already doing this work, provincial committees and work groups, and the provincial network of Equity, Anti-Racism, and Anti-Oppression Officers being established through the constitution of these roles in every OSSTF/FEESO Bargaining Unit across the province, the hope of its visionaries is that ideas for best practices and suggested actions can be generated and shared, and that this facilitates progressing on the worthy goals which motivate the position.

It is important to note how absolutely crucial this work is, and to acknowledge that we all have a role to play in its execution as we strive to create more just and equitable communities.

---

**Troy Cluff** is an Executive Assistant in the Negotiations/Contract Maintenance department of OSSTF/FEESO.





# Designed for a healthy future

Carol Phillips  
Phil Silverstein

OSSTF/FEESO's new  
Provincial Office building

At the edge of the Don Valley Ravine in North York, the new OSSTF/FEESO Provincial Office and multi-tenant building at 60 Mobile Drive is envisioned as an enduring, sustainable building inspired by its unique context and the identity of the Federation that provides a healthy and responsible protective environment.

When Moriyama Teshima Architects were commissioned with this project, we first did our due diligence to examine the possibility of renovating and adding to the existing building that stood on the site. The original building, while structurally sound, was at its end of life, the mechanical systems were old, inefficient, and not to today's standards for emissions to the environment. The deep floorplates and layout did not meet the best practices for inclusivity, wellness, or accessibility. Following a robust review of the existing building's ability to be adaptively reused, it was determined that the project simply had too many limitations to become a healthy and inclusive work environment. When the decision was taken to rebuild, together with OSSTF/FEESO we established guiding principles for the design. These principles are:

i.

**Sustainability  
(environmental and  
financial)**

ii.

**Healthy work  
environment**

iii.

**Reflection of the Mission  
of OSSTF/FEESO**



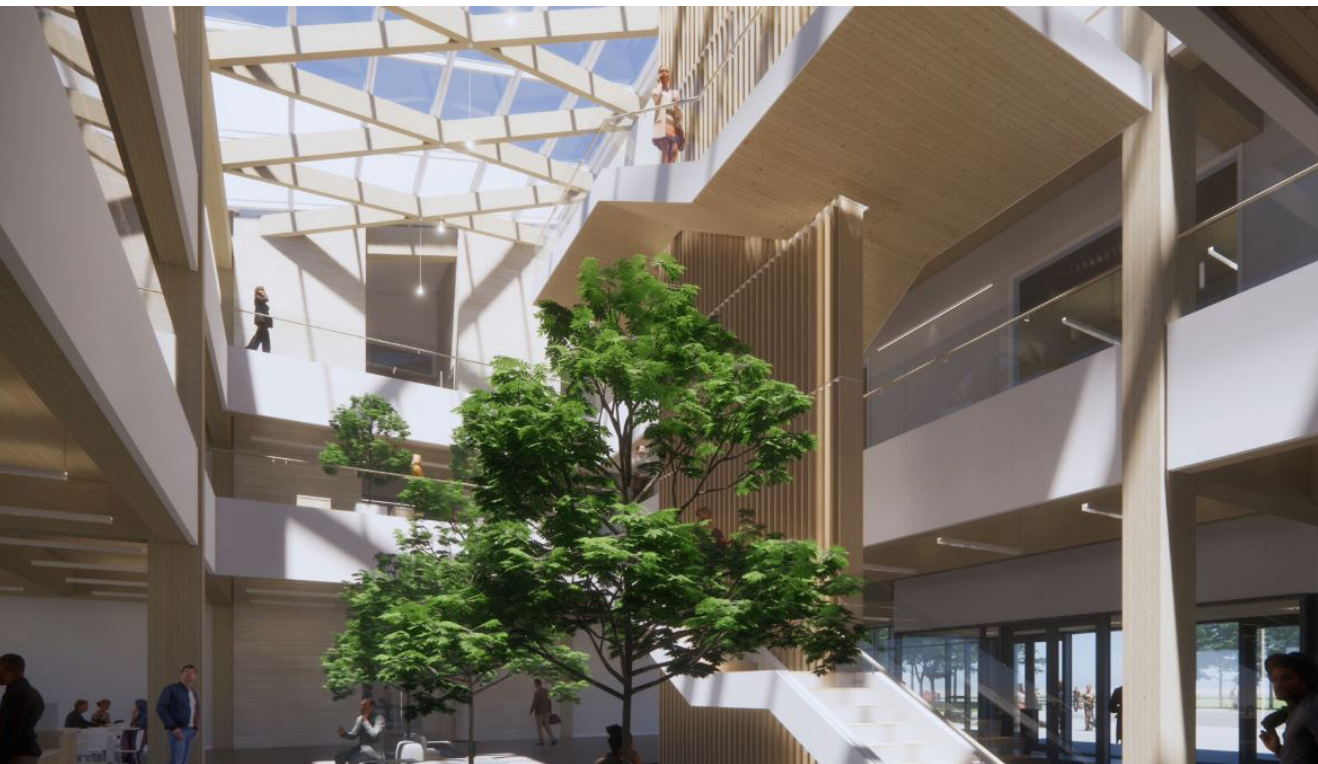


Image of the central atrium courtesy of Moriyama Teshima Architects rendering by Doug & Wolf

The resulting design was achieved in a highly collaborative process which included OSSTF/FEESO, BTY group, a series of expert consultants, as well as Eastern Construction. The design of the building now under construction, is anchored in a responsibility to the Members of OSSTF/FEESO who work and visit the Provincial Office as well as to the context and fragile nature of our environment in the climate emergency. This dedication to responsible development is poignantly evident in the building's site.

The key distinction of the project is that it will be a 125,000 square foot three-storey facility with a single level of parking underground, service loading, and all the current OSSTF/FEESO departments occupying approximately half of the square footage. The remainder of the space includes leased space for income contributing to long-term financial stability as well as shared spaces for the activities of the Federation, including some larger scale meetings and gatherings. The heart of the building is its three-storey central atrium space where there will be an informal lounge space, visual and actual connections to the outdoors, food services, as well as the ability to house social events for the larger community of OSSTF/FEESO. A feature stair connects the three above-grade levels with the reflecting pool that sits below it and is bathed in natural light from above. These features will provide a sense of connection to nature and the outdoors throughout the year for workers in the building and for its many visitors.



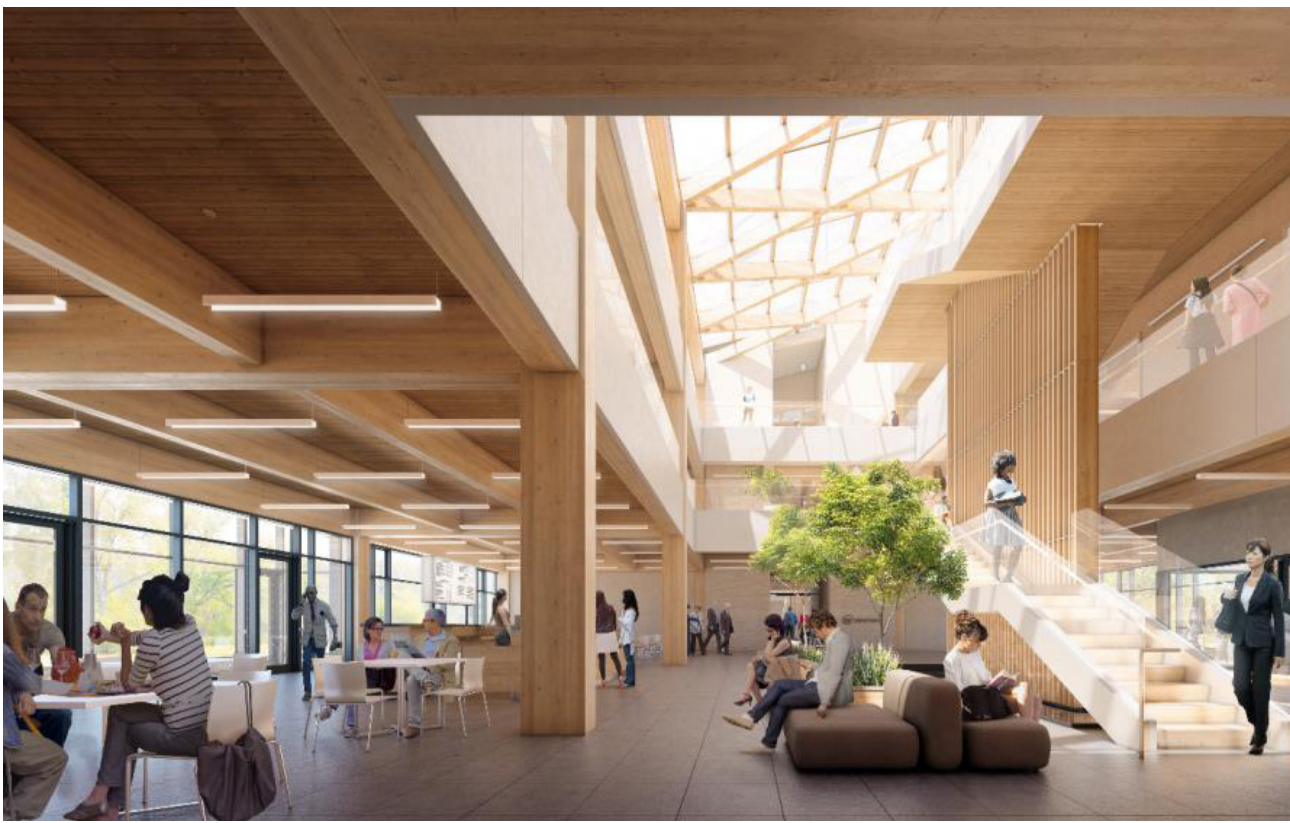


Image of the central atrium courtesy of Moriyma Teshima Architects, rendering by Doug & Wolf

The atrium plays a key role in this LEED Platinum, low embodied carbon building solution that utilizes passive and renewable systems to reduce the overall energy consumption of the building, resulting in both a positive model for buildings as well as lowered operational costs. The building is on target to achieve LEED Platinum certification. LEED stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, a globally recognized certification process that involves third party verification. Denoting excellence in sustainable design and green building leadership, Platinum is its highest tier low carbon design and is not only a reference to reducing or eliminating fossil fuel fired energy sources for heating, cooling, and lighting the building. I also refers to the reduction in high embodied carbon construction materials, leading to the use of mass timber for the majority of the structure of the building in lieu of concrete or steel. Both in the actual material and their fabrication methodologies, concrete and steel represent significant negative impact in the form of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions into the atmosphere. While there is work being done to reduce the footprint of these industries, wood is a natural carbon sink and if harvested sustainably, we can use this carbon sequestering material and protect it within a high-performance building for another hundred years and use this durable and beautiful material instead of high emitting materials.

About 90% of Canada's forestry industry harvests from forests that are publicly owned. For-

ests such as the one in Chibougamau, Quebec where the wood for the building comes from, are subject to robust and regulated forestry management plans that are decades in duration and focus on sustainability. Sustainable forestry includes protection, conservation, and regulated harvesting. It means that a replanting regime is put in place as room is made in the forests for new growth, thus creating a more circular and resilient industry than exists with other materials. Using wood for the construction of buildings is at once very innovative as well as very familiar. For smaller scale and residential construction, wood has always been a construction product. What we are seeing now is the uptake of timber, in the form of mass timber systems in larger scale construction, as the innovation of mass timber has emerged along with changes in codes and regulations allowing the building industry to prioritize a shift to low carbon material use. Mass timber is the technology of taking smaller pieces of wood and laminating them together to make them stronger and more appropriate as large-scale structural materials in bigger buildings. Currently it really is the only low embodied carbon and renewable option for structural systems.

There are significant benefits to using timber, the most significant of which is the carbon sequestering nature of the material along with the renewability. Beyond this, surrounding building users and visitors with a natural material provides health benefits. Biophilia is the term used to de-



# 63%

*reduction in total energy use*

*Will operate at 67 kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/yr*

*(Typical building would operate at 162 kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/yr)*

# 60%

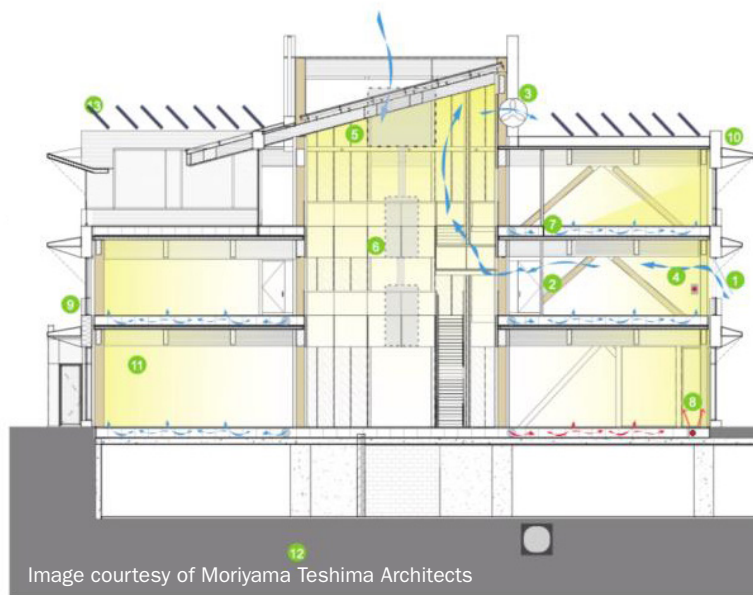
*reduction in annual thermal energy consumption*

# 84%

*reduction in greenhouse gas emissions*

# 22%

*building electrical demand provided by solar PV*



scribe our innate attraction and sense of wellbeing when we are around nature and natural systems. We believe that the warmth and colour of the material, its texture and presence, will create a calming and healthy environment that will reduce stress by acting as a welcoming and warm place for those in these environments. During construction we have also found a culture of detailed integration and pre-planning; every pipe and connection is located and every hole or penetration or steel connector is in place when the timber arrives on site. As the process is largely prefabricated the construction process is crane driven and can be sequenced for a quieter, less problematic, and less disruptive construction process for both the job site and the OSSTF/FEESO community who are currently temporarily located in a neighbouring building.

The materiality of the building is only one aspect of the environmental commitment in the building design. The OSSTF/FEESO Provincial Office and multi-tenant building is targeting LEED Platinum Certification and is an exemplary project for the use of passive systems and regenerative protocols. The project includes a ravine restoration plan that re-introduces plants such as trilliums which are unique and indigenous to the Don Valley, and a responsible storm water management plan that includes large planting beds in the parking areas filled with plants and trees that thrive in wet environments. These plants will take up and naturally process the storm water

run-off prior to it infiltrating and eventually making its way into the water system. Together with the approach to the landscape, the building utilizes passive systems such as a natural ventilation system that combines a solar chimney so that we can use minimal fan energy to vent the building, a robust daylighting and sun shading strategy so that we can maximize daylight and views while mitigating heat gain, solar photovoltaics on the roof for solar harvesting, and a geoechange system, all of which help to reduce the need for mechanical and electrical sources for fresh air, conditioned air, and artificial lighting.

The atrium plays a significant role in the features mentioned above that reduce the building's energy consumption. Firstly, the atrium skylight brings natural light deep into the building's centre space, reducing the need for artificial lighting. Secondly, it is designed to heat up and therefore create a stack effect or air buoyancy that causes air to flow upwards from cooler to warmer locations. Therefore, when appropriate, the natural ventilation system will be used. With minimal fan energy, air will flow in through the operable windows in the building and naturally flow up and out of the atrium skylight vents, continuously flushing the building with fresh air. When the building requires active mechanical heating and ventilation, we have taken steps to select efficient equipment and to have sensors and monitors to optimize the system. The solar photovoltaic array (PV) on the roof will also work to supply

some of the building's energy needs.

The net-zero carbon emissions requirements for this building were largely achieved via a seventy-two borehole geexchange heating and cooling system, daylight harvesting strategies, and the solar PV array on the roof. In addition, the high-performance building envelope which includes triple glazed window system within an R32 thermally broken rainscreen wall supported off vertical Cross Laminated Timber (CLT) panels help reduce the size of the mechanical plant. Each floor of the building has two decoupled Energy Recovery Ventilator (ERVs) that distribute air through a ductless raised access floor (RAF) system to swirl diffusers. The RAF allows us to fully expose the beautiful wood structure above while creating highly efficient displacement air to all spaces.

Finally, the building is designed with people and inclusion in mind. In the atrium and the workspaces, choices are given to occupy more social or more focused spaces. There are meaningful connections to the exterior with excellent views on every level and a terrace overlooking the ravine at grade, with another on the third floor. The building will have gender neutral washrooms and be fully accessible as will the landscaped terraces. Within the workspaces, each floor has meeting spaces, a kitchenette, and a mixture of work



Image courtesy of Moriyama Teshima Architects, rendering by Moriyama Teshima Architects

environments. Private offices will be framed in demountable partitions for long term flexibility, and these will be placed on the interior of the floorplate to give a democratic access to daylight for all the workers in the building. These interior offices will strike the right balance of acoustic privacy, confidentiality, and visibility for a healthy environment.

At the terminus of Mobile Drive, those who come to 60 Mobile Drive will find a new type of healthy work environment enveloped in natural materials and connected to the ravine.

This design represents a commitment to a future where we see ourselves as part of nature, not separate from it. The building celebrates a sense of community and common values while designing for the diverse needs in contemporary workplaces for a mix of private, quiet, collaborative, social, and communal spaces. Scheduled to be completed in early 2024, this will be a place of welcome for all.

---

**Carol Phillips** is a Partner at Moriyama Teshima Architects.

**Phil Silverstein** is a Project Manager, Contract Administrator, Designer, and Job Captain at Moriyama Teshima Architects.



Image courtesy of Moriyama Teshima Architects, rendering by Bredan Bergem



Image courtesy of Moriyama Teshima Architects, rendering by Bredan Bergem





# Conçu pour un avenir sain

Nouvel édifice du Bureau provincial d'OSSTF/FEESO

Carol Phillips  
Phil Silverstein

En bordure du ravin Don Valley à North York, le nouveau Bureau provincial d'OSSTF/FEESO et nouvel édifice multi-locataire au 60 Mobile Drive est envisagé comme un édifice tenace et durable inspiré par son contexte unique, l'identité de la Fédération qui offre un milieu sain, responsable et protecteur.

Quand la firme *Moriyama Teshima Architects* a été retenue pour ce projet, nous avons d'abord appliqué nos critères de la diligence raisonnable pour étudier la possibilité de rénover et d'ajouter à l'édifice existant qui occupait l'emplacement. L'édifice original, bien que de structure solide, en était à sa fin de vie, les systèmes mécaniques étaient vieillissés, inefficaces et ne répondaient pas aux normes actuelles en matière d'émissions et de l'environnement. Les profondes plaques de base et le plan ne répondaient plus aux meilleures pratiques en matière d'inclusion, de bien-être ou d'accessibilité. À la suite d'un examen robuste de la capacité d'adaptation de l'édifice existant pour sa réutilisation, il a été déterminé que le projet présentait simplement trop de limitations pour se devenir un milieu de travail sain et inclusif. Quand la décision a été prise de reconstruire, ensemble avec OSSTF/FEESO, nous avons établi les principes directeurs pour le concept. Ces principes sont :

i.  
**Durabilité  
(environnemental  
et financier)**

ii.  
**Milieu de travail sain**

iii.  
**Reflet de la Mission  
d'OSSTF/FEESO**

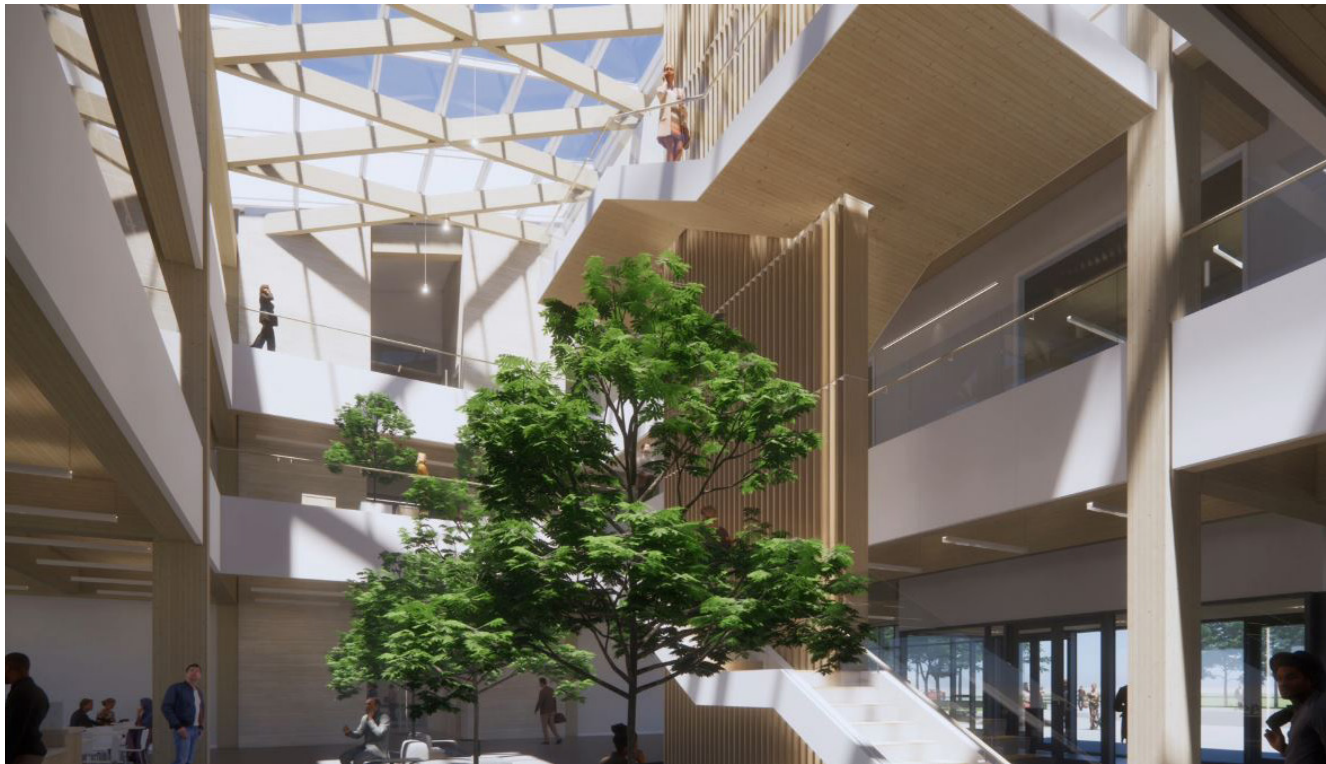


Image de l'atrium central, gracieuseté de *Moriyama Teshima Architects*, dessin par Doug et Wolf

Le concept conséquent a été réalisé au terme d'un processus très collaborateur incluant OSSTF/FEESO, *BTY Group*, une série d'experts-conseils ainsi qu'*Eastern Construction*. Le concept de l'édifice, présentement en cours de construction, est ancré dans une responsabilité aux membres d'OSSTF/FEESO qui travaillent et visitent le Bureau provincial ainsi que dans le contexte et la nature fragile de notre environnement en cette urgence climatique. Cet engagement à l'élaboration responsable est des plus évidents à l'emplacement de l'édifice.

La distinction clé du projet est qu'il deviendra un édifice de 125 000 p<sup>2</sup> de trois étages doté d'un seul niveau de stationnement sous-terrain, une aire de livraison et tous les secteurs actuels d'OSSTF/FEESO occupant environ la moitié de la superficie. Le reste de l'espace comprend de l'espace de location aux fins de revenu, contribuant à une stabilité financière à long terme, ainsi que des espaces communs pour les activités de la Fédération, y compris certaines réunions et certains rassemblements de plus grande envergure. Le cœur de l'édifice est son espace d'atrium central de trois étages où il y aura un espace de salon informel, des connexions visuelles et réelles de l'extérieur, des services alimentaires, ainsi que la possibilité d'organiser des événements sociaux pour la plus vaste communauté d'OSSTF/FEESO. Un escalier remarquable joint les trois étages supérieurs, doté d'un miroir d'eau aménagé au-dessous et jouit d'un bain de lumière naturelle qui jaillit de plus haut. Ces caractéristiques offriront un sentiment de lien avec la nature et l'extérieur tout au long de l'année pour les travailleuses et les travailleurs et les nombreux visiteurs.

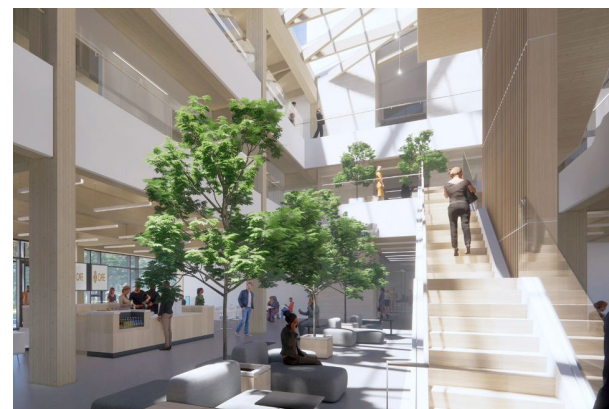






Image de l'atrium central, gracieuseté de *Moriyama Teshima Architects*, dessin par Doug et Wolf

L'atrium joue un rôle clé dans cet solution d'édifice de certification *LEED Platinum* à faible empreinte carbone qui se sert de systèmes passifs et renouvelables pour réduire la consommation générale d'énergie dans l'édifice, résultant ainsi en un modèle positif pour les édifices et en des coûts de fonctionnement amoindris. Cet édifice est bien lancé pour atteindre la certification *LEED Platinum*. *LEED* est l'acronyme de *Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design*, un processus de certification reconnu mondialement qui nécessite une vérification par un tiers. L'excellence en matière de leadership pour les concepts durables et les édifices verts, *Platinum* est le concept le plus avancé en termes de faible empreinte carbone et n'est pas seulement un barème pour la réduction ou l'élimination des sources d'énergie à carburant fossile pour le chauffage, la climatisation et l'éclairage de l'édifice. Il porte également sur la réduction de matériaux de construction à faible empreinte carbone, entraînant l'usage de bois massif pour la plus grande partie de la structure de l'édifice, plutôt que du béton ou de l'acier. Même en terme des matériaux mêmes et de leur méthode de fabrication le béton et l'acier représentent tous deux un impact négatif important sous forme d'émissions de CO<sub>2</sub> dans l'atmosphère. Bien qu'il y ait des efforts déployés pour réduire l'empreinte carbone de ces industries, le bois est un évier naturel de carbone et, s'il est récolté d'une façon durable, nous pouvons utiliser ces matériaux à séquestration de carbone et les protéger dans un édifice hautement performant pendant une autre période de 100 ans et nous servir de ce matériau durable et pittoresque plutôt que de matériaux à fortes émissions de carbone.

Environ 90 % des ressources forestières au Canada proviennent de forêts appartenant à des intérêts publics et, par conséquent, au peuple canadien. Les forêts comme celle à Chibougamau (Québec) d'où provient le bois d'OSSTF/FEESO sont assujetties à des plans rigoureux et réglementés de gestion des ressources forestières qui s'étalent sur des décennies et se concentrent sur la durabilité. La sylviculture durable comprend la protection, la préservation et la récolte réglementée. Cela signifie qu'un programme de replantation est mis en place alors que de l'espace est libéré dans les forêts pour de nouvelles croissances, créant ainsi une industrie plus circulaire et résiliente que dans le cas des autres matériaux. L'usage du bois pour la construction d'édifices est un concept tout aussi très innovateur que très familier. Dans le cas des constructions moins imposantes et résidentielles, le bois a toujours fait partie des matériaux de construction. Ce que nous remarquons maintenant, c'est une augmentation de l'usage du bois, sous la forme de systèmes de bois massif dans la construction de plus grande envergure, puisque l'innovation du bois massif a émergé, ainsi que des changements dans les codes et les règlements, permettant à l'industrie de la construction d'accorder la priorité à une tendance vers l'usage de matériaux à faibles émissions de carbone. Le bois massif est une technologie qui consiste à prendre de plus petits morceaux de bois et de les contrecoller ensemble pour les rendre plus forts et mieux adaptés comme pièces d'une structure à grande échelle dans les plus grands édifices. Présentement, il s'agit réellement de la seule option à faible empreinte carbone et renouvelable pour les

# 63%

Réduction de l'énergie totale utilisée

Fonctionnera en fonction de 67 kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/année (un bâtiment typique fonctionnerait en fonction de 162 kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/année)

# 60%

Réduction de la consommation annuelle d'énergie thermique

# 84%

Réduction des émissions de gaz à effets de serre

# 22%

Demande en électricité de l'édifice fournie par des panneaux solaires photovoltaïques

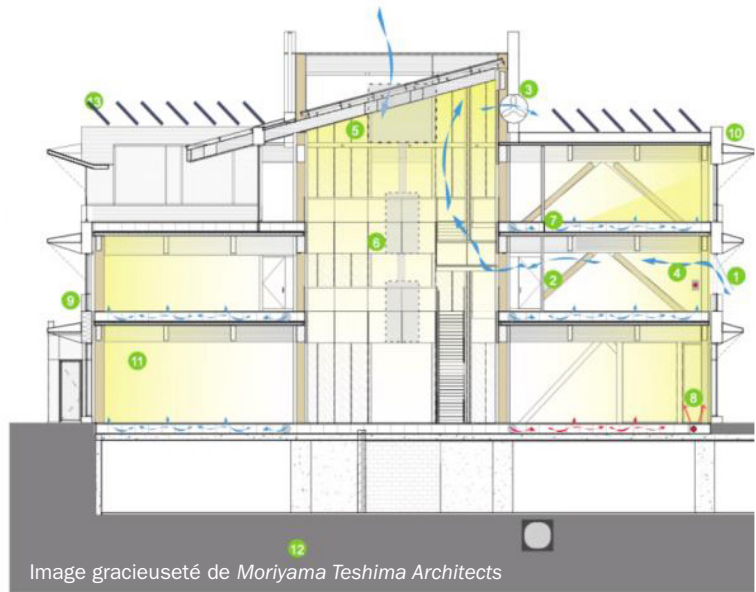


Image gracieuseté de Moriyama Teshima Architects

systèmes structurels.

Il y a de nombreux bienfaits à l'usage du bois, dont le plus important est la nature d'emprisonnement du carbone du matériau, ainsi que son caractère renouvelable. Outre cela, le fait d'entourer les utilisateurs et visiteurs de matériaux de construction naturels offre des bienfaits pour la santé. La biophilie est le terme utilisé pour décrire notre attraction innée et notre sentiment de bien-être lorsque nous nous trouvons à proximité de la nature de systèmes naturels. Nous croyons que la chaleur et la couleur des matériaux, leur texture et leur présence engendreront un milieu apaisant et sain qui réduira le stress en agissant comme un lieu accueillant et chaleureux pour ces environnements. Au cours de la construction, nous avons également trouvé une culture d'intégration et de préplanification détaillées; chaque conduit et connexion est situé et chaque trou, pénétration ou branchement en acier est en place lorsque le bois arrive à l'emplacement. Puisque le processus est en grandes parts préfabriqué, le processus de construction est dirigé par des grues et peut être séquencé pour favoriser des travaux plus silencieux. Il s'agit d'un processus de construction moins problématique et dérangement, tant pour l'emplacement des travaux que pour la communauté d'OSSTF/FEESO qui est temporairement logée dans un édifice avoisinant.

Le choix des matériaux de l'édifice n'est qu'un des aspects de l'engagement écologique dans le concept de sa construction. Le Bureau provincial d'OSSTF/FEESO et nouvel édifice *multi-locataire* vise une certification *LEED Platinum* et se veut un projet exemplaire dans l'usage des systèmes passifs et de protocoles de régénération. Le projet

comprend un plan de restauration du ravin qui favorise la renaissance de plantes comme le trille qui est autochtone et unique à la région de Don Valley, ainsi qu'un plan de gestion responsable des eaux d'orage qui comprend de grandes platebandes dans les aires de stationnement, remplies de plantes et d'arbustes qui sont bien adaptés aux milieux humides. Ces plantes absorberont et traiteront naturellement les eaux d'orage avant son infiltration et atteignent à la fin le système des eaux. Combiné à l'approche adoptée en matière d'aménagement paysager, l'édifice utilise des systèmes passifs comme un système de ventilation naturelle qui combine une cheminée solaire, nous permettons de n'avoir recours à un usage que minimal de l'énergie d'un ventilateur pour aérer l'édifice, une stratégie robuste pour l'usage de la lumière du jour et d'ombrage interne pour que nous puissions tirer le maximum de la lumière du jour et des vues tout en atténuant le gain de chaleur, un système solaire photovoltaïque sur le toit pour l'exploitation de l'énergie solaire, ainsi qu'un système géothermique. Ces éléments aident à réduire le recours aux sources mécaniques et électriques pour l'air frais, l'air climatisé et l'éclairage artificiel.

L'atrium joue un rôle important dans les caractéristiques susmentionnées qui réduisent la consommation d'énergie de l'édifice. Tout d'abord, la lucarne de l'atrium laisse entrer la lumière naturelle jusqu'au fond de l'espace central de l'édifice, réduisant ainsi le besoin pour l'éclairage artificiel. Ensuite, il est conçu pour se réchauffer et par conséquent créer un effet de cheminée ou une poussée d'air qui fait en sorte que l'air se déplace vers le haut, des endroits plus



frais aux endroits plus chauds. Par conséquent, en temps approprié, le système de ventilation naturelle sera utilisé. Grâce à un usage minimal de l'énergie de ventilateur, l'air circulera par les fenêtres ouvrables dans l'édifice et s'échappera vers le haut par les bouches de ventilation de la lucarne, renouvelant continuellement l'air de l'édifice par de l'air frais. Pour les périodes auxquelles l'édifice nécessite un chauffage ou une ventilation mécanique active, nous avons pris des dispositions pour sélectionner un équipement efficace et avoir des capteurs et des dispositifs de surveillance dans le but d'optimiser le système. Les panneaux solaires photovoltaïques sur le toit permettront également de répondre à certains des besoins de l'édifice en matière d'énergie.

Les exigences en matière de neutralité en carbone pour cet édifice ont été atteintes en grande partie grâce à un système de chauffage et de climatisation géothermiques à 72 forages, à des stratégies d'exploitation de la lumière du jour et de panneaux solaires photovoltaïques sur le toit. De plus, l'enveloppe de cet édifice hautement performant, qui comprend un système de fenêtres à triples vitrages dans un mur pare-pluie d'un coefficient R32 à rupture thermique soutenu par des panneaux structurels contrecollés à la verticale aide à réduire la taille des systèmes mécaniques. Chaque étage de l'édifice est doté de deux ventilateurs de récupération d'énergie indépendants qui distribuent de l'air par un système de planchers d'accès surélevés vers des diffuseurs hélicoïdaux. Le système de planchers d'accès surélevés nous permet d'exposer complètement la belle structure de bois en haut tout en créant un déplacement très efficace de l'air dans tous les espaces.

Enfin, l'édifice est conçu avec à l'esprit les



Image gracieuseté de Moriyama Teshima Architects, dessin par Moriyama Teshima Architects

gens et l'inclusion. Dans l'atrium et les espaces de travail, les choix sont offerts pour une plus grande part d'espaces sociaux ou d'espaces de concentration. Il y a des connexions pertinentes à l'extérieur, notamment d'excellentes vues à chaque étage et une terrasse avec vue sur le ravin au niveau du sol, et une autre au troisième étage. L'édifice sera doté de salles de toilettes neutres sur le plan du genre et sera entièrement accessible, tout comme le seront les terrasses aménagées. Dans les espaces de travail, chaque étage sera doté d'espaces de réunion, d'une cuisinette et d'un mélange d'espaces de travail. Les bureaux privés seront cadrés en cloisons démontables aux fins de flexibilité à long terme. Et ils seront placés à l'intérieur de la plaque de fonds pour accorder un accès démocratique à la lumière du jour pour toutes les travailleuses et tous les travailleurs dans l'édifice. Ces bureaux intérieurs atteindront l'équilibre parfait de discrétion acoustique, confidentialité et visibilité, favorisant un milieu sain.

Au bout de Mobile Drive, celles et ceux qui se rendent au 60 Mobile Drive y découvriront un nouveau type de milieu de travail sain, entouré de matériaux naturels et lié au ravin.

Ce concept représente un engagement envers un avenir où nous nous voyons comme faisant partie de la nature et non en marge de celle-ci et célébrons un sentiment de communauté et de valeurs communes tout en répondant aux besoins divers des lieux de travail contemporains, pour une combinaison d'espaces privés, silencieux, collaboratifs, sociaux et communs. L'achèvement de la construction étant prévue pour le début de 2024, ce sera un lieu accueillant pour tous.

**Carol Phillips** est partenaire chez *Moriyama Teshima Architects*.

**Phil Silverstein** est chef de projet, administrateur de contrat, concepteur et chef de chantier chez *Moriyama Teshima Architects*.



Image gracieuseté de Moriyama Teshima Architects, dessin par Bredan Bergem



Image gracieuseté de Moriyama Teshima Architects, dessin par Bredan Bergem

# DON'T SHORTCHANGE

PUBLIC  
EDUCATION

STUDENTS

SCHOOLS

UNIVERSITIES

Join us in protecting and strengthening  
public education in Ontario



Here  
For  
**Students.**

LEARN MORE AT  
[HEREFORSTUDENTS.CA](http://HEREFORSTUDENTS.CA)



# NE PÉNALISEZ PAS L'ÉDUCATION PUBLIQUE LES ÉLÈVES LES ÉCOLES LES UNIVERSITÉS

Joignez-vous à nous pour protéger et renforcer l'éducation publique en Ontario



Here  
For  
**Students.**

POUR EN SAVOIR PLUS  
HEREFORSTUDENTS.CA

# The 67th session of the commission

## Empowering women around the world

by Allison Cillis, Lisa Mongrain, and Treasure Zahorowski



The 67th Session of the United Nations' (UN) Commission on the Status of Women (UNC-SW67) was held March 6-17, 2023 at the United Nations headquarters in New York. Representatives of Member States, United Nation entities, as well as Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)—accredited Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) from all regions of the world were invited to contribute their knowledge and experience around this year's theme "Innovation and Technological Change and Education in the Digital Age for Achieving Gender Equality and the Empowerment of all Women and Girls."

The United Nation Commission on the Status of Women featured more than 800 events, delivered over two weeks that

aimed to inform, engage, and inspire grassroots efforts and advocacy to empower women and girls around the world.

We all worked together with the same goal of closing the gap in a digitalized world, understanding that the digital divide is the new face of gender inequality. While technology should be embraced as it has the potential to advance women and girls, it can also exacerbate and widen the impacts of gender inequality, often intersecting and heightening other inequities. Technology facilitated gender based violence can also include online threats or insults, online harassment, stalking through the use of social media, shared personal data (passwords, banking information, and addresses), and sharing images without consent.

We feel privileged and honoured to have been a part of this conference representing OSSTF/FEESO on behalf of the Canadian Labour Congress. We represent the Student Support Professionals from District 6A, Thunder Bay, Educational Support Staff from District 9, Greater Essex, and the Teachers/Occasional Teachers in District 21, Hamilton-Wentworth. This opportunity gave us great insight into the challenges faced by women and girls living with intersectional identities and of the power we can harness when we join forces for our collective betterment. We feel blessed to be women in Canada having the rights we have as women, but it is important to recognize that there is still much work to do as we still see such divides still hap-



pening in our various work sites and within our communities. We must join with our sisters and allies within our Federation and the global community.

We cannot sit here in complacency. We need to bridge the digital divide to achieve gender equality. We need to ensure gender equality is at the forefront of all action in shaping a feminist digital future. Globally, women together are stronger than ever!

**Allison Cillis** is a Member of the Teacher/Occasional Teacher Bargaining Unit of District 21, Hamilton-Wentworth, is a provincial CPAC member and sits on the provincial Equity Advisory workgroup

**Lisa Mongrain** is a Member of the Student Support Professionals Bargaining Unit of District 6A, Thunder Bay and is the Chair of the provincial Status of Women committee.

**Treasure Zahorouski** is a Member of the Educational Support Staff Bargaining Unit of District 9, Greater Essex and is a member of the provincial Human Rights committee.





# TAKING STOCK OF INCLUSIVE WORKPLACES

Exploring accessibility and inclusivity for Deaf and Blind OSSTF/FEESO Members

by  
Tamara  
Witcher

“What does a fully inclusive workplace look like for Deaf and Blind Members?” It may seem like a straightforward question, and the answer should simply be, “the idea that everyone should be able to use the same facilities, take part in the same activities, and enjoy the same experiences, including people who have a disability or other disadvantage,” (*Cambridge Dictionary*).

However, it is not a simple question. Often, employers (and some employees) like to think they have done their part in making the workplace more inclusive by developing a policy that addresses inclusion for all. Understanding inclusion and how to be inclusive is more about culture; it requires being understanding, open-minded, accepting of change, and truly collaborative. In my view, the collaboration part and the culture of the inclusion process requires a lot of time, effort, and willingness on both sides to work together.

Often I go into meetings and discussions with hope that authentic collaboration is going to happen. Employers and managers have asked for my feedback and perspective on making a place more inclusive. I do my research before the meetings, I write notes and summaries of ideas and suggestions that I present to the groups of people seeking my input; but then, the collaboration is only superficial. Employers want to look like they are collaborating with me, or other people like me, when in fact, they have already created their own ideas of what



inclusion in the workplace should look like. So, after the “collaborative” meetings, I often see that none of my suggestions are put into action, or the employers choose only the easiest and simplest recommendations, ignoring everything else that needs to go into pushing the workplace to be (more) inclusive. Sometimes it takes more than a gentle nudge to help people grasp the types of changes that are required to create truly inclusive practices. Change the approach, the goal is the same—true inclusion.

The most important thing that anyone can do to make a place more inclusive, is to include the disabled and marginalized people in the room where decisions are being made. Ruth Bader Ginsburg famously said, “Women belong in all places where decisions are being made. It shouldn't be that women are the exception.” Let's also apply that sentence to everyone else: “Deaf/Blind/disabled/marginalized people belong in all places where decisions are being made. It shouldn't be that Deaf/Blind/disabled/marginalized people are the exception.”

Another point to understand is that inclusion often requires accommodations before a space is developed—not after it is developed. For example, when creating a space, consider ALL the accommodations before the space is created. Ramps benefit all—what if you broke your legs, had surgery, or twisted your foot? Subtitles benefit everyone—what if you need to participate in a

Zoom webinar, but you are sitting next to your sleeping baby and you cannot turn up the volume out of fear of waking up the baby, or if the audio is not working properly on your laptops? The best accommodations benefit everyone. Anyone can become disabled any day; anyone can suddenly become Deaf, Blind, low-vision, or unexpectedly have Deaf, Blind, low-vision children.

In addition, no two Deaf/Blind/disabled/marginalized people have the same needs, beliefs, or experiences. A group of disabled people may have similar needs, but we are not all the same. For example, two Deaf people may prefer different American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters; one may like to sit in the front and in a corner of a room to see the interpreters more clearly like I do, another may prefer to blend in with other people, sit in the middle of a room, and not be so easily identified as the Deaf person in the room. We may have varying ASL fluency and levels of understanding different ASL interpreters, in the same way non-Deaf people understand various dialects differently. Blind and low-vision people are also all different—some have more sight than others, some can only tell when it is dark or light, and some have tunnel vision. Would you provide the same sight-based services to all Blind and low-vision people with various degrees of sight? I do know a few people who have suddenly become Deaf without warning, experiencing a sudden life-changing event.



**Deaf/Blind/  
disabled/  
marginalized  
people belong  
in all places  
where decisions  
are being made.  
It shouldn't  
be that Deaf/  
Blind/disabled/  
marginalized  
people are the  
exception.**

When collaborating to make your workplace more inclusive consider:

Would they have the same ASL knowledge, ASL fluency, and understanding of Deaf culture and identity as other Deaf people who have been using ASL their whole lives?

Inclusion is more than checking off a list to ensure that you have done all the things that you are expected to do. Inclusion is a feeling, a culture of belonging and community, where everyone is valued and respected.

Most importantly, let us make the decisions for us, in the workplace. Do not make excuses for why our needs cannot be met; instead, if you do not know how our needs can be met, ask us how.

---

**Tamara Witcher** is the President of District 30, Provincial Schools Authority Teachers (PSAT).

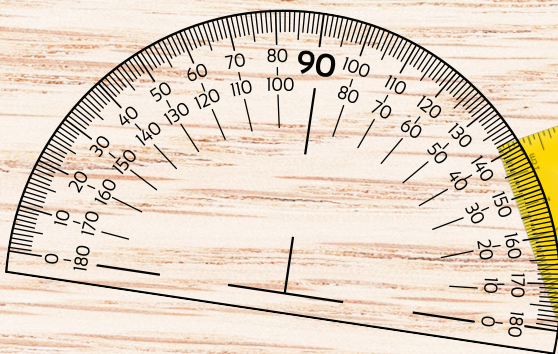
Are there policies on inclusion in your workplace? How can employees report discrimination? Are the employees protected from reprisals if they report discrimination or demand accommodations?

Is the policy and the reporting process clear? Do the employees know that they exist, do they know where to find them, and is the policy regularly reviewed and updated?

Can you request consultation services from various organizations and associations for the Deaf, for the Blind, and others?

Are workshops and professional development training regularly provided? Are these trainings accessible, affordable, and open to all?

Can you ask employees and colleagues who identify as Deaf/disabled/marginalized for their feedback? Are you prepared to take all their feedback and put them into action? If not, why not?







# BLUE

# is the new **ENCOURAGING** **GOLD** **YOUTH TO** **CONSIDER THE** **SKILLED TRADES**

**BY ELEANOR MACNIVEN & JOHN DELOREY**

In 2020, the Ontario government promised to invest \$75 million to expose high school students to the skilled trades. This was a lofty endeavor considering technology courses were being cut, school budgets slashed, higher class sizes implemented, and mandatory online learning was introduced. Two years later Monte McNaughton, Ontario Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training, and Skills Development, continues to stress that “Our mission is to get more people into the skilled trades across Ontario... There are a lot of people retiring out of the skilled trades and for far too long governments have said the only way to be successful is to go to university.” He further states, “These are opportunities we need to tell parents, young people, and educators that they are purpose driven careers and we need to get people in here” (“Province commits \$1.5 million for skilled trades in the north.” [TBNewsWatch.com](#)).

Fast forward to 2023 and where are we now? How successful have government initiatives been in enticing students to enter the trades? How well versed are educators in the apprenticeship pathway as a viable option for our youth? Data from November 2022 lists







116,499 registered apprentices in Ontario. Of that number, 24% identified as female and only 6% are under the age of 20 (Apprenticeships-Open Government Portal). Many government initiatives target secondary school students who can begin their apprenticeship journey as early as grade 11 in the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP). The government lists 14,335 secondary students as participating in OYAP in 2020. Last year the numbers increased to 17,689. However, looking at registered apprentices with an actual training agreement in 2020 the number is only 2,588. Only 18% of those participants actually became registered apprentices the following year. Research needs to be conducted to determine why such a small number pursued the skilled trade pathway. A likely reason is that employers require more enticements to register a student while they are still in school.

Even with all of the awareness launched around skilled trades professionals and the attempt to recruit young people into the trades, many negative perceptions continue to exist. Students, their parents and guardians, and even many educators think that being a skilled trade professional is an entry level, low paying, dirty job. “These are

good paying jobs with pensions and benefits, where you can buy a home and raise a family,” McNaughton states. The average salary for an apprentice in Ontario is approximately \$49,000, (Apprentice average salary in Canada, 2023 “Talent.com,” 2022) with a starting salary of approximately \$35,000. There is the added appeal that an apprentice is earning while they learn and often have little or no student debt by the time they are qualified in their early 20s.

The biggest misperception that needs to be challenged is that a career in the skilled trades is for students who lack the ability to go to college or university. Changing this mindset starts with educators in the system.

During COVID-19 many Ontarians had the ability to work from home. Trades professionals did not have that option and most remained gainfully employed. Several memes were created on social media during the pandemic due to the high demand of trades professionals that included sentiments like, “I appreciate the person with an art or history degree... but I NEED that driver, mechanic, butcher, plumber, carpenter, welder, line-man.”

“As educators, we need to stop telling our kids that a four year degree is the only path to success,” states John Delorey, Chair of Technological Education/Construction Teacher at Superior Collegiate and Vocational Institute. Career options in the skilled trades need to be highlighted in every secondary course. Those who work with students need the background knowledge to support student choice in this pathway.

We can assist all educators in their acknowledgement that

“Skilled trades are highly valued and often overlooked when people are searching for career paths,” as McNaughton comments. Every school board has an OYAP coordinator that can come into classes to provide presentations or attend school open houses. Every school board has access to Dual Credit programs in which students can try a first year college course while still in high school. Many of these are offered in trades-related areas. Most schools also have at least one Specialist High Skills Major program, again often in a trades area. Guidance staff can be provided with slide decks for reference, and posters are available from [oyap.com](http://oyap.com) that highlight the advantages of the different pathways available for students, including apprenticeship. Looking forward, lesson plans could be developed in every subject area that demonstrate how skilled trades and relevant careers match the curriculum.

Skilled trades are necessary and it is vital for our students to be aware of all opportunities for their future. But don't take our word for it—listen to the voices of our students. Simon Sebesta and Luukas Niemisto, recent graduates from Superior Collegiate and Vocational Institute in Thunder Bay. Simon participated in the Specialist High Skills Major program in manufacturing. As part of this training program he gained many certifications including First Aid, CPR, Working at Heights, Aerial Lift Platform training, and Confined Space Awareness training. As well, he participated in a dual credit college course that was team taught with a Confederation College instructor where he earned a portion of his Shielded Metal Arc Welding College welding credit. He was also able to gain an apprentice-

ship at Canadian Pacific Rail as a Railway Car Mechanic through the opportunities presented to him while in school. He notes that,

One of the requirements to be hired was to attend training in Winnipeg for two weeks before I started my three-year apprenticeship in September 2022.

In my daily activities, on the job I have used my welding skills to repair various components on the railcars.

Other things I have learned to do include moving railcars with a track mobile, how to operate a forklift, changing wheels on the railcars, and inspecting trains.

I also get the chance to go out of town on road trips to repair railcars and locomotives.

It has been an amazing opportunity to work with new people and to work on numerous projects and tasks.

Focusing on the trades in high school, [and especially] welding, was a good choice because it has allowed me to get a job right out of school and I feel it will be a lifelong career for me.

Luukas was given a taste of the skilled trades during a reach ahead summer program at Superior Collegiate and Vocational Institute which offers a welding camp for Grade 8 students during July each year. Luukas registered for the reach ahead program where he was able to earn a high school credit in Exploring Technologies (TIJ101). Lucas says:

This exposure to the skilled trades gave me a desire to learn more about hands-on learning.

In grades 9 through 12, I took most of the technological

educational classes offered at my school.

After graduation from Superior, I enrolled in the one year welding techniques program at Confederation College.

This program provided both the theoretical and hands-on knowledge required to advance all of my skills obtained over the years, including the ability to test for my Shielded Metal Arc Welding ticket.

With a reference from my instructors, I was given an interview at the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America local 1669, Thunder Bay.

I wrote the mathematical aptitude tests and within three days, I was working in Kapuskasing as a carpenter/welder on the Little Long Hydro Dam project.

This has been a great experience. I live in a remote camp environment where I work 14 days on and 7 days off.

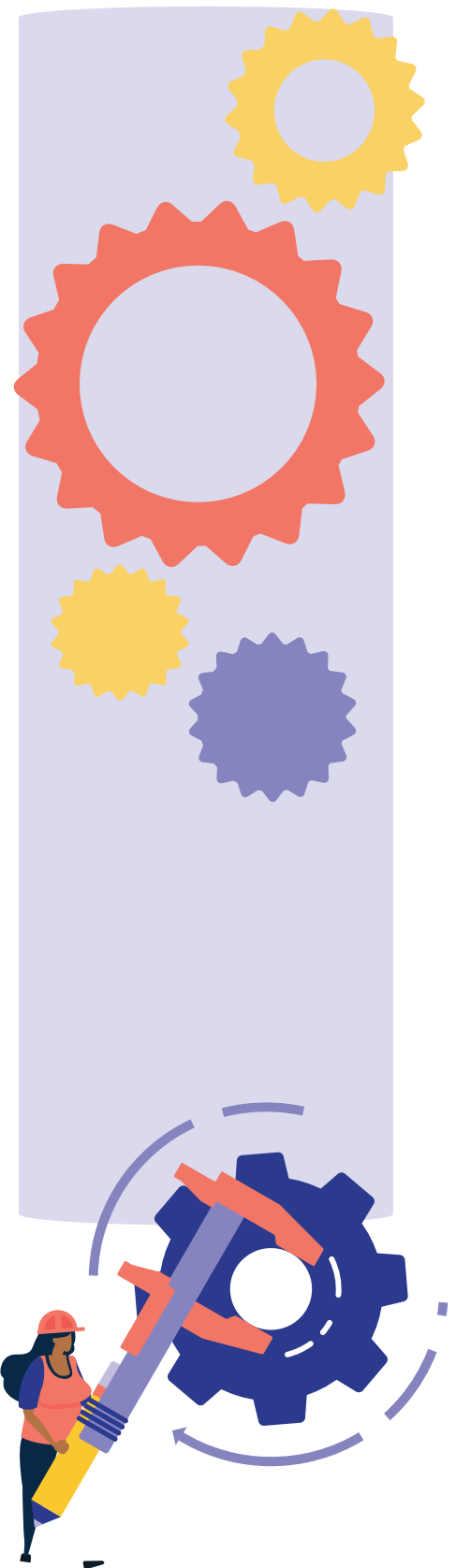
I am enjoying applying my skills and education but also meeting people from all over Canada and the world.

It is helpful for the government to infuse dollars into trades programs and aggressively advertise the need for apprentices, but without the support of front line educators, and providing resources to assist them, many students would miss out on knowing about the career of a lifetime!

---

**Eleanor MacNiven** is a Member of the Teacher Bargaining Unit of District 29, Hastings—Prince Edward.

**John Delorey** is a Member of the Teacher Bargaining Unit of District 6A, Thunder Bay.





*celebrate pride!*  
*célébrer la fierté!*



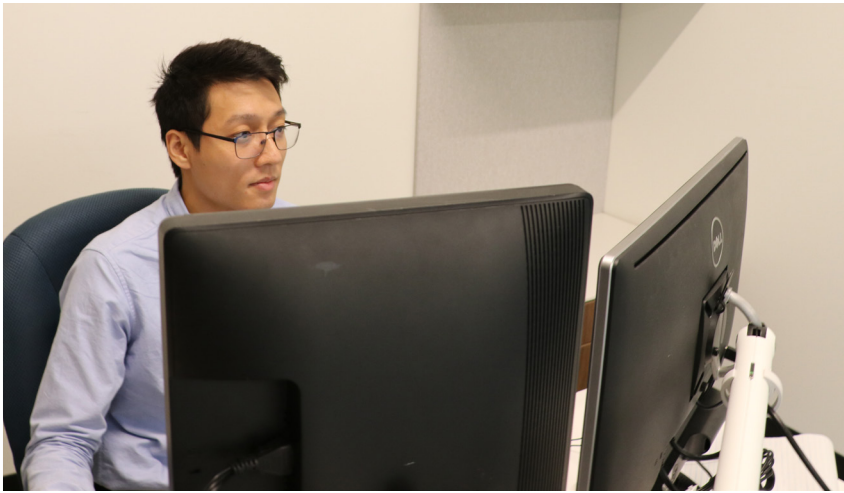
## Pride around Ontario 2023

- May 27–June 3** Elliot Lake [www.elpride.ca](http://www.elpride.ca)  
**May 27–June 4** Niagara [www.prideniagara.com](http://www.prideniagara.com)  
**June 1–29** Thunder Bay [www.thunderpride.ca](http://www.thunderpride.ca)  
**June 3** Barrie Pride [www.facebook.com/BarriePride](http://www.facebook.com/BarriePride)  
**June 3 and 4** Stratford [stratfordpride.com](http://stratfordpride.com)  
**June 3 and 4** Pembroke [www.pembrokepride.com](http://www.pembrokepride.com)  
**June 3–10** Timmins [www.timminspride.com](http://www.timminspride.com)  
**June 3–10** Bay of Quinte Pride [bayofquintepride.ca](http://bayofquintepride.ca)  
**June 3–24** Lanark County Pride [www.queerconnectionlanark.ca](http://www.queerconnectionlanark.ca)  
**June 4** Durham [www.pridedurham.ca](http://www.pridedurham.ca)  
**June 4** Brampton Pride [www.brampton.ca](http://www.brampton.ca)  
**June 5–11** Brookville [www.brockvillepride.com](http://www.brockvillepride.com)  
**June 8–18** Guelph [www.guelphpride.com](http://www.guelphpride.com)  
**June 16–17** York Pride [yorkpride.ca](http://yorkpride.ca)  
**June 16–18** Kingston [www.kingstonpride.ca](http://www.kingstonpride.ca)  
**June 17** Brantford [brantfordpride.com](http://brantfordpride.com)  
**June 24** Halton [www.pflaghalton.ca/halton-pride-fest](http://www.pflaghalton.ca/halton-pride-fest)  
**June 24–25** Toronto [www.pridetoronto.com](http://www.pridetoronto.com)  
**June** Dryden Pride [www.facebook.com/RainbowAllianceDryden](http://www.facebook.com/RainbowAllianceDryden)  
**June** Grey Bruce [www.facebook.com/GreyBrucePride](http://www.facebook.com/GreyBrucePride)  
**June** Hamilton [www.pridehamilton.com](http://www.pridehamilton.com)  
**June** Sault Ste. Marie [www.facebook.com/Sault.Pride](http://www.facebook.com/Sault.Pride)  
**June** Borderland Pride–Fort Frances [www.borderlandpride.org/2023](http://www.borderlandpride.org/2023)  
**June** Kenora [www.facebook.com/kenorapride](http://www.facebook.com/kenorapride)  
**July 4–10** Kawartha Pride [www.facebook.com/KawarthaLakesPride](http://www.facebook.com/KawarthaLakesPride)  
**July 11–17** Sudbury [www.sudburypride.com](http://www.sudburypride.com)  
**July 13–23** London [www.pridelondon.ca](http://www.pridelondon.ca)  
**July 22–30** Muskoka [www.muskokapride.com](http://www.muskokapride.com)  
**July 24–Aug 6** Simcoe Country [www.simcoepride.com](http://www.simcoepride.com)  
**Aug 8–13** Windsor-Essex [www.wepridefest.com](http://www.wepridefest.com)  
**Aug 11–19** Chatham–Kent [www.ckpride.com](http://www.ckpride.com)  
**Aug 19–27** Ottawa [capitalpride.ca](http://capitalpride.ca)  
**Aug 21–27** Minden [www.mindenpride.ca](http://www.mindenpride.ca)  
**August** Manitoulin [www.facebook.com/PRIDEManitoulin](http://www.facebook.com/PRIDEManitoulin)  
**Sept 14–24** Peterborough–Nogojivanong [peterboroughpride.ca](http://peterboroughpride.ca)

# SUPPORTING WORKERS THROUGH THE LAW

## OSSTF/FEESO'S STUDENT-AT-LAW

BY ANSON CAI



After graduating law school, law students must complete an “articles clerkship” before being called to the bar and becoming a fully licensed lawyer. I have been fortunate enough to be the OSSTF/FEESO Student-at-Law for 2022-2023 and have been in this position since August 2022.

As the Student-at-Law, I work in OSSTF/FEESO Provincial Office’s Member Protection department supporting the three in-house legal counsel, Heather Alden, Susan Luft, and Jesse Gutman. My work falls primarily into three categories—representing Members at their regulatory colleges like the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) or College of Early Childhood Educators (CECE), assisting with grievance arbitrations, and finally, conducting legal research.

My brief time in the Member Protection department has highlighted the importance of legal support in the day-to-day operation of the union.

The legal process often feels like a labyrinth when Members encounter it face-to-face for the first time. It can be daunting to suddenly have allegations brought against them by their regulatory college or have an upcoming arbitration

where their employment and livelihood are affected. For many, the only frame of reference are legal dramas on TV that emphasize the drama and not so much the legal. While entertaining, these shows only exacerbate the stress by mystifying and glorifying the law. Fortunately, Members have the backing of an experienced team in the Members Protection department that can decode this opaque legal process.

Legal support is exactly that—support. The labour movement is inherently worker-led and places the voices of workers first. Within that movement, unions and their lawyers seek to address the power imbalances between the employer and workers to provide space for workers to coalesce and improve their working conditions. My role as an articling student and within the legal department is to empower the workers through the law by holding other parties accountable.

For example, while the OCT or CECE’s duty is to “serve and protect the public interest,” mine is to represent Members and hold the regulatory college responsible in establishing misconduct in every allegation brought forward. A Member ought not to be punished

for allegations that have not been proven.

Similarly, in grievance arbitrations, employers ought to duly follow their obligations as set out in the collective agreements that our bargaining teams have carefully negotiated for. You have rights as OSSTF/FEESO Members that are outlined in your collective agreements and in legislation. When school boards infringe on those rights, your local union representatives may invoke the legal process by filing grievances. If the union local and school board are unable to resolve the matter, the grievance is referred to the Member Protection Work Group, where staff at OSSTF/FEESO Provincial Office review whether these cases have merit to go to arbitration. Throughout this process, we rely on the parameters of the law to protect your rights.

The legal department by its very nature operates in support of the labour movement. Labour law is primarily governed by the *Labour Relations Act*. The name says it all—unlike in civil law or criminal cases, labour law is unique in that there is an ongoing relationship between the parties. At its best, the force of the law is not noticeable as both parties work together to achieve the common goal of a harmonious and safe workplace. There is a forward thinking, long-term vision that promotes a positive work environment. However, at its worst, the weight and protection of the law (backstopped by the legal department) is necessary to ensure that an employer cannot flagrantly disregard your rights.

---

**Anson Cai** is the Student-at-Law at OSSTF/FEESO Provincial Office.



# THERE ARE NO SHORT CUTS TO CREATING THE UNION OR WORLD WE WANT

## HOW ONTARIO STUDENTS' UNIONS FOUGHT FOR THEIR SURVIVAL

BY  
**NOUR ALIDEEB**

In January 2019, I got a wake-up call that all union members and organizers need. I was more than halfway through my second term as Chairperson of the Canadian Federation of Students-Ontario (CFS-Ontario), where I represented over 350,000 domestic and international post-secondary students across the province. It had been a tumultuous few years, with campus conservatives (unsuccessfully) organizing to take over students' unions, people like Jordan Peterson building a following and fight-

ing against pronouns and gender neutral washrooms, anti-choice groups picketing campuses, and a handful of white nationalist groups calling for all-white students' unions and "freedom of speech" as code for the freedom to hate. We knew that Premier Ford was no friend of progressives or the student movement so his election in June 2018 felt like a sucker punch. Our campuses were going through massive cultural and political shifts, and oftentimes it was students' unions and campus groups that

were fighting back and creating safe havens for members. Despite the challenges we faced, we were making progress on important student issues like access to grants instead of loans, sexual violence and harassment supports, and cutting red tape for international students to live and work in Ontario. It wasn't all doom and gloom; however, the value of a provincial and national student movement was quickly put to test when Premier Ford announced the "Student Choice Initiative," massive cuts

*/continued on page 52*

# IL N'Y A PAS DE RACCOURCI POUR CRÉER LE SYNDICAT OU LE MONDE QUE NOUS VOULONS

COMMENT LES SYNDICATS  
D'ÉTUDIANTES ET D'ÉTUDIANTS  
ONT LUTTÉ POUR LEUR SURVIE

PAR  
NOUR ALIDEEB

En janvier 2019, j'ai reçu l'appel dont tous les membres du syndicat et organisateurs avaient besoin. Je me trouvais à plus de mi-chemin dans mon mandat de présidence de la Fédération canadienne des étudiantes et étudiants—Ontario, où je représentais plus de 350 000 étudiants locaux et internationaux du postsecondaire de partout dans la province. Nous avons passé quelques années tumultueuses alors que les conservateurs sur campus

s'étaient organisés (sans succès) à prendre le contrôle des syndicats d'étudiants, des gens comme Jordan Peterson qui rassemblaient des partisans et luttait contre les pronoms et la neutralité des salles de toilettes, des groupes anti-choix qui érigeaient des lignes de piquetage sur les campus et une poignée de groupes nationalistes blancs qui prônaient des syndicats d'étudiants formés de blancs seulement et la « liberté d'expression » codée comme liberté d'exprimer sa haine.

Nous savions que le premier ministre Ford n'était aucunement l'ami de progressistes ou du mouvement des étudiants, alors son élection en juin 2018 a été perçue comme un coup bas. Nos campus traversaient des changements culturels et politiques massifs et, souvent, ce sont les syndicats d'étudiants et les groupes de campus qui résistaient et créaient des espaces sécuritaires pour les membres. Malgré les défis auxquels nous faisons, nous réalisons les progrès sur des

*/suite à la page 53*



to student financial aid and catastrophic changes to the funding formula for post-secondary institutions.

The Student Choice Initiative (SCI) was a policy directive, mandating universities and colleges to create an online platform where students could opt-out of their membership dues to students' unions and campus groups. It was essentially Ford's first underhanded attack at the Rand Formula, which requires students and workers to pay dues for the services of their school or workplace unions. With the SCI we were the guinea pigs. He touted this as a way to "put money back in people's pockets," using some of our own language to play on how expensive post-secondary education was. This directive was a problem because not only was it deceiving, it was also a direct attack on democratically established students' unions and campus

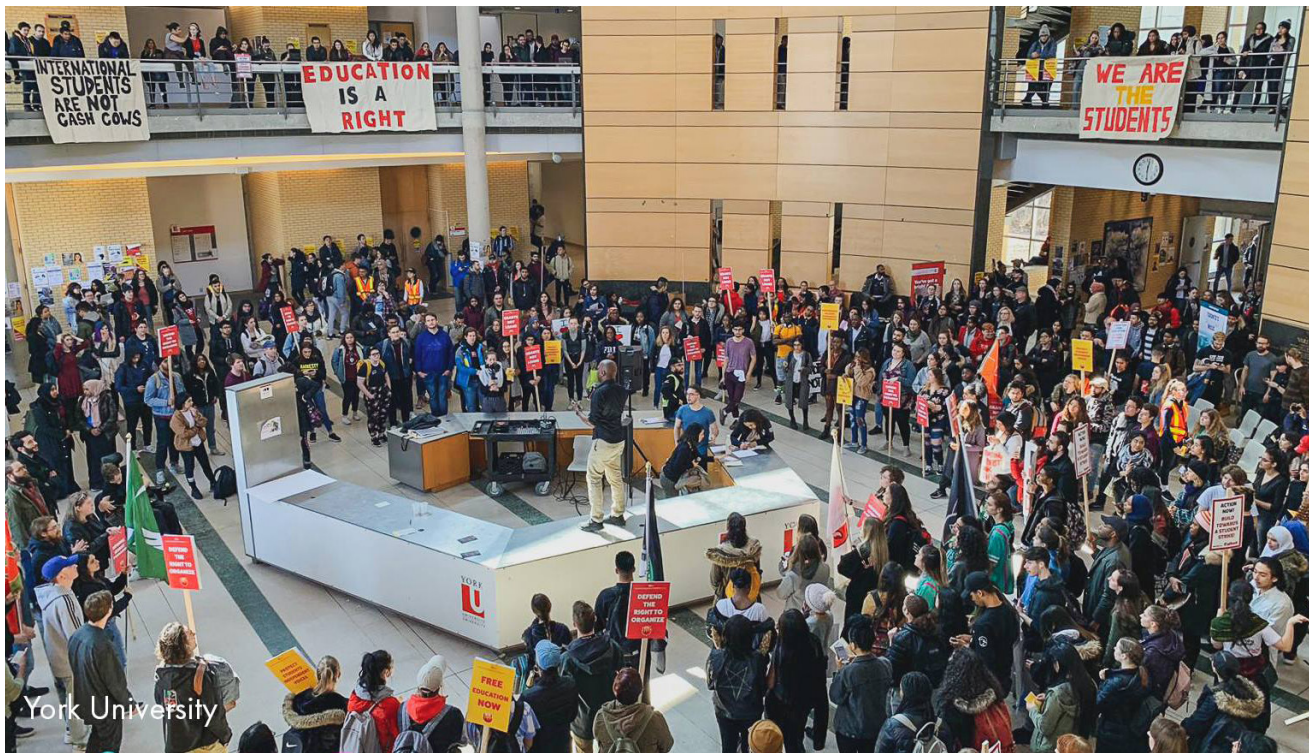
groups. Ford was not interested in saving students money—he (and his supporters) wanted to weaken the collective power and infrastructure that students have built over generations to hold governments like his accountable. He practically said so himself in a fundraising email. For years, the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario had it out for students' unions. Why? Well, students aged eighteen to twenty four popularly voted either NDP, Green, or Liberal based on their riding. Polling data also demonstrated that people were less likely to vote Conservative if they had a post-secondary degree. So, what better than to destabilize the breeding grounds for progressive organizing and political thought?

Going into post-secondary education often coincides with students' first introduction to unionism and participation in democratic processes like elec-

tions and referenda. The spaces that students' unions and campus groups create are where students develop their political ideology and find themselves and their communities. They're also the places where students can access cost (and life) saving services like discounted transit tickets, food banks, or sexual violence and mental health supports. Students' unions naturally drive change because it's where students' curiosities and interest come to life and where their skills, whether academic or personal, are finessed. On more than one occasion, students have shared how getting involved in a club, course union, campus paper, or their students' union changed their life for the better.

After decades of government underfunding and piecemeal solutions in post-secondary, being a student in Ontario had become increasingly difficult.





questions d'importance pour les étudiants, comme l'accès à des bourses plutôt que des prêts, le soutien en matière de violence sexuelle et de harcèlement et la réduction des formalités administratives pour permettre aux étudiants internationaux de vivre et de travailler en Ontario. Tout n'était pas sombre, toutefois, la valeur d'un mouvement provincial et national des étudiants a rapidement été mise à l'épreuve lorsque le premier ministre Doug Ford a annoncé son « Initiative de liberté de choix des étudiants », des coupures massives à l'aide financière aux étudiants et des changements catastrophiques à la formule de financement pour les établissements postsecondaires.

« L'Initiative de liberté de choix des étudiants » (« ILCÉ ») était une directive de politique confiant aux universités et collèges le mandat de créer une plateforme en ligne où les étudiants peuvent refuser de payer

leurs cotisations aux syndicats d'étudiants et les groupes de campus. Il s'agissait essentiellement de la première attaque de Doug Ford contre la Formule Rand, qui exige à ce que les étudiants et les travailleurs paient des cotisations pour les services de leur école ou de leur lieu de travail, et les syndicats, nous avons été les cobayes de Doug Ford. Il a vanté les mérites de ceci en prétendant que c'était une façon de « remettre de l'argent dans les poches des gens », en servant de nos propres paroles pour jouer sur le fait que l'éducation postsecondaire coûtait très cher. Cette directive était problématique parce que non seulement était-elle trompeuse, il s'agissait en plus d'une attaque à l'endroit des syndicats d'étudiants et les groupes de campus démocratiquement établis. L'intention de Doug Ford n'était pas de permettre aux étudiants de faire des économies—il (et ses supporters) voulait affaiblir le pou-

voir collectif et l'infrastructure que les étudiants ont bâti sur des générations afin de tenir responsables les gouvernements comme le sien. Il l'a pratiquement dit lui-même dans un courriel de collecte de fonds. Pendant des années, le Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario a eu des démêlées avec les syndicats d'étudiants. Pourquoi? Eh bien, les étudiants âgés de 18 à 24 ans ont plutôt eu tendance à voter soit pour le NPD, le Parti Vert ou le Parti Libéral, selon leur circonscription. Les données de sondage indiquent également qu'il était moins probable que les gens votent pour le Parti Conservateur s'ils avaient un diplôme postsecondaire. Par conséquent, que mieux de déstabiliser la source de l'organisation progressive et de la réflexion politique?

Souvent, le début de l'éducation postsecondaire coïncide avec la première introduction des étudiantes et étudiants au syndicalisme et à la participation

/suite à la page 55





At the time, we were paying the highest tuition fees in the whole country and dealing with unaffordable housing, transportation, and food costs. Almost every student was working at least

cause how could the largest students' union in the province be against putting money back in students' pockets or a 10% tuition fee freeze?

All I knew was that we had to

members. It was a testament to that fact that we always win the hearts and minds of our members when we organize. At the CFS-Ontario, we supported students' unions and campus groups across the province in creating campaigns that spoke about the importance of being a union member. We highlighted key aspects like our past victories, cost-saving services created by and for students, our democratic processes and the importance of pooling our resources to fight for students' rights and values. Then we made sure that we spoke to every single student, campus group, course union, news outlet, elected representative, labour union, and parent. We had flying squads, rallies, regional organizing meetings, walk-outs, sit-ins, and other actions to en-

---

***All I knew was that we had to act quickly  
because if we didn't, students would be worse off  
for generations to come.***

---

one job to make ends meet and unfortunately, it wasn't unusual for students to have to choose between putting food on the table or buying textbooks. All this made the work of students' unions and campus groups so crucial. But naturally, many members thought that the SCI would be a good cost saving measure without realizing what it meant for these places to be defunded.

The SCI was my first introduction to Ford's communications playbook. He brilliantly announced this "money saving" measure alongside a 10% tuition fee freeze. I had no idea how we were going to clap back without sounding alarmist be-

act quickly because if we didn't, students would be worse off for generations to come. We had to fight back with every tool in our toolbox.

**How we got organized**

We took two routes to fight back—first, we launched a large-scale campaign to show the value of our students' unions and campus groups. When the SCI was announced, we had about five months to get organized before students enrolled in courses for the following academic year. Ford purposefully made the opt-out of membership dues an online process because he did not want us connecting with

sure that people knew exactly how damaging Ford's government and the SCI was. It was important to send a clear message to the Ford government that students would not fall for their lies, that we were united against his attacks to destabilize us, and that the real issue was the cost of tuition fees, not our students' unions and campus groups.

In tandem, we filed a legal challenge against the policy directive because the SCI went against students' right to organize. Though Ontario does not have formal legislation that protects students' unions like Quebec does, there was enough precedence to stop the government

à des processus démocratiques comme les élections et les référendums. Les espaces que les syndicats d'étudiants et les groupes de campus créent sont des lieux où les étudiantes et les étudiants développent leur idéologie politique, se trouvent dans leur communauté. Ils sont également où les étudiantes et les étudiants peuvent accéder à des services économiques (et de la vie quotidienne) comme des billets de transport en commun à rabais, les banques alimentaires et les soutiens en matière de violence sexuelle et en santé mentale. Les syndicats d'étudiants entraînent naturellement le changement, car c'est là où les curiosités et les intérêts des étudiantes et étudiants prennent naissance et où leurs aptitudes, qu'elles soient académiques ou personnelles, sont affinées. À plus d'une occasion, les étudiantes et étudiants ont partagé dans quelle mesure leur participation à un club, un syndicat de cours, un journal de campus ou leur syndicat d'étudiants a amélioré leur vie.

Après des décennies de sous-financement gouvernemental et de solution de fortune, la vie d'une étudiante ou d'un étudiant en Ontario devient de plus en plus difficile. À l'époque, nous payions les frais de scolarité les plus élevés au pays et devions composer avec des possibilités de logement, des services de transport et des coûts alimentaires inabordables. Presque toutes les étudiantes et tous les étudiants avaient au moins un emploi pour boucler les fins de mois et, malheureusement, il n'était pas inusité de voir des étudiantes et étudiants devoir choisir entre se nourrir ou acheter des manuels de cours. Tout cela

rendait essentiel le travail des syndicats d'étudiants et des groupes de campus. Cependant et naturellement, bon nombre de membres ont cru que l'ILCÉ constituerait une bonne mesure pour faire des économies sans se rendre compte de ce que cela représentait de couper les vivres de ces endroits.

L'ILCÉ a été ma première initiation à la stratégie de communication de Ford. Il a

---

***Tout ce que je savais, c'était que nous nous devions d'agir rapidement, sinon les étudiantes et les étudiants allaient devoir composer avec une pire situation pendant des générations à venir.***

---

brillamment annoncé cette mesure « permettant de réaliser des économies » en même temps qu'un gel de 10 % des frais de scolarité. Je n'avais aucune idée comment nous allions réagir sans nous montrer alarmistes, parce que comment le plus important syndicat d'étudiants de la province pourrait-il se prononcer contre remettre des fonds dans la poche des étudiantes et des étudiants ou un gel de 10 % des

frais de scolarité?

Tout ce que je savais, c'était que nous nous devions d'agir rapidement, sinon les étudiantes et les étudiants allaient devoir composer avec une pire situation pendant des générations à venir. Nous avons dû riposter au moyen de tous les outils dans notre boîte à outils.

### **Comment nous nous sommes organisés**

Nous avons riposté de deux façons – tout d'abord, nous avons lancé une campagne à grande échelle pour montrer la valeur de nos syndicats d'étudiants et de nos groupes de campus. Quand l'ILCÉ a été annoncée, nous n'avions que cinq mois à nous organiser avant que les étudiantes et étudiants s'inscrivent à des cours pour la prochaine année scolaire. Doug Ford a intentionnellement fait en sorte que le droit de refuser de payer les cotisations syndicales soit un processus en ligne parce qu'il ne voulait pas que nous ayons un contact avec les membres. Cela témoignait du fait que nous gagnions toujours le cœur et l'esprit de nos membres quand nous nous organisons. À la FCEE-Ontario, nous soutenions les syndicats d'étudiants et les groupes de campus de partout dans la province en créant des campagnes qui soulignaient l'importance d'être un membre syndical. Nous avons souligné les aspects clés comme nos victoires antérieures, les services de réduction des coûts créés par et pour les étudiantes et étudiants, nos processus démocratiques et l'importance de mettre nos ressources en commun pour lutter au nom des droits et des valeurs des étudiantes et des étudiants. Ensuite, nous nous sommes





from easily dissolving them. The Ontario courts also questioned Ford's true intentions about saving students money, given that he also cut financial aid at the same time. The government tried to claim that the SCI brought along more transparency and choice but the court judges rightfully highlighted the fact that students already had that through democratic pro-

cesses like students' union and campus group elections and referenda. I'll admit that I was very scared in January, but after each conversation with members and after our court date, I knew that we were going to win.

we saw the final numbers of how many students remained members after course selection ended and we won our court challenge against the Ontario government we felt invincible. It was a much-needed reminder that our students' unions and campus groups were worth fighting for and that the students united will never be defeated.

Ford being re-elected to a second term, I know we can create strong unions and the society we envision if we implement these key lessons:

---

***It was a much-needed reminder that our students' unions and campus groups were worth fighting for...***

---

The campaign was exhausting, and the court decision felt like it took an eternity. But when

**Key lessons**

Shortly after we won our legal challenge, the world was thrust into a pandemic that changed everything. The landscape in education, health care, and labour has changed drastically and people across the province are struggling more so than they were before. Despite Premier

1. There are no short cuts to effective organizing. We cannot create the world that we want overnight. It takes time, so be thorough, patient, and dedicated to the people and causes you care about.
2. Unions are only as effective as we make them. Our active participation is needed because no one else will fight for us like we do. Our bosses, administrations, and governments are going to play by their own rules. We cannot rely on them to get what we need.
3. People want and need connection. We cannot take each other for granted or underestimate the value of finding common ground and purpose. It's where we draw our strength from to fight for a better world.
4. Every single person has an

assurés de parler à chaque étudiante et étudiant, groupe de campus, syndicat de cours, poste de média, représentant élu, syndicat et parent. Nous avons organisé des équipes mobiles, des rassemblements, des réunions régionales d'organisation, des débrayages, des occupations et d'autres moyens de pression pour faire en sorte que les gens savent dans quelle mesure le gouvernement Ford et l'ILCÉ étaient. Il était important d'envoyer un message clair au gouvernement pour indiquer que les étudiantes et étudiants n'allaient pas croire ses mensonges, que nous étions unis contre ses attaques pour nous déstabiliser et que le véritable enjeu était le coût des frais de scolarité et non les syndicats d'étudiants et les groupes de campus.

En même temps, nous avons déposé une contestation contre cette directive de politique parce que l'ILCÉ allait à l'encontre du droit des étudiantes et

des étudiants de s'organiser. Bien que l'Ontario n'ait pas de loi formelle qui protège les étudiantes et les étudiants comme il existe au Québec, il y avait suffisamment de

---

***Cela a été un  
rappel impératif  
que nos syndicats  
d'étudiants et  
groupes de  
campus en  
valaient la lutte...***

---

précédents pour empêcher le gouvernement de les dissoudre facilement. Les tribunaux de l'Ontario ont également mis en question les véritables intentions de Doug Ford au sujet des économies réalisées pour

les étudiantes et étudiants, puisqu'il a aussi fait des coupures à l'aide financière dans la même période. Le gouvernement a tenté de prétendre que l'ILCÉ apportait une meilleure transparence et un choix, mais les juges de la cour ont souligné avec raison le fait que les étudiantes et les étudiants avaient déjà cela par des moyens démocratiques comme les élections et référendums organisés par les syndicats d'étudiants et les groupes de campus. Je dois admettre que j'ai eu très peur en janvier, mais après chaque conversation avec des membres et après date de notre comparution, j'ai su que nous allions gagner.

La campagne a été épuisante et la décision de la cour a semblé durer une éternité. Cependant, quand nous avons vu les derniers chiffres du nombre d'étudiantes et d'étudiants étaient demeurés membres à la fin de la sélection des cours et que nous avions





/continued from page 56

issue that matters to them. Take the time to really get to know people, what drives them, gets under their skin, scares them, and makes them happy.

5. There are going to be tough questions so it's important to have honest and tough conversations. Being critical is often what drives us to create change.
6. We need to know our histories. We need to share stories, victories, and challenges; it helps remind us that we've won before, and we can win again.
7. A better world is possible and it's worth fighting for.

As union members, workers, students, and regular citizens, it is up to us to protect what we value. Don't wait for an existential crisis to fight back and create the world or union you want.

---

**Nour Alideeb** (she/her) was the Chairperson of the Canadian Federation of Students- Ontario between 2017-2019. She is now the Government and External Relations Specialist for the Ontario Nurses' Association.



***WE WON!***  
***VICTORY IS OURS!***

**COURT OF APPEAL UPHOLDS  
POLICY TO BE UNLAWFUL**

gagné notre contestation devant les tribunaux contre le gouvernement de l'Ontario, nous nous croyions alors invincibles. Cela a été un rappel impératif que nos syndicats d'étudiants et groupes de campus en valaient la lutte et que les étudiantes et étudiants qui s'unissent ne connaîtront jamais la défaite.

### Leçons clés

Peu de temps après que nous ayons gagné notre contestation judiciaire, le monde a été lancé dans une pandémie qui a tout changé. Le paysage en éducation, en soins de santé et dans le travail a grandement changé et les résidentes et résidents de partout dans la province sont dans une situation beaucoup plus difficile que dans le passé. Malgré la réélection du premier ministre Ford pour un deuxième mandat, je sais que nous pouvons créer de forts syndicats et la société que nous imaginons si nous appliquons ces leçons clés :

1. Il n'existe pas de raccourci à une organisation efficace. Nous ne pouvons pas créer le monde que nous voulons du jour au lendemain. Cela prend du temps, alors soyez attentifs aux détails, patients et dévoués aux personnes et aux causes qui vous tiennent à cœur.
2. Les syndicats ne sont aussi efficaces que nous les rendons. Notre participation active est requise parce que personne d'autre ne luttera pour nous comme nous le faisons. Nos patrons, les administrations et les gouvernements vont jouer selon leurs propres règles. Nous ne pouvons pas nous y fier pour obtenir ce dont nous avons besoin.
3. Les gens veulent une connex-

tion et en ont besoin. Nous ne pouvons pas nous prendre comme acquis les uns les autres ou sous-estimer la valeur de trouver un bien commun et une cause commune. C'est de là que nous puisons notre force de lutter pour un monde meilleur.

4. Toute personne a une question qui lui est importante. Prenez le temps de bien connaître les gens, ce qui les incite, ce qui les dérange, ce qui leur fait peur et ce qui les rend heureux.
5. Il y aura des questions difficiles alors il importe de s'engager dans des conversations honnêtes et intenses. Le fait d'avoir un œil critique est souvent le moteur qui nous pousse à créer un changement.
6. Il nous faut connaître nos antécédents. Partagez des histoires, des victoires et des défis. Cela aide à nous rappeler que nous avons déjà gagné auparavant et que nous pouvons encore y arriver.
7. Un monde meilleur est possible et il en vaut la lutte.

Comme membres du syndicat, travailleuses ou travailleurs, étudiantes ou étudiants et citoyennes ou citoyens ordinaires, il nous incombe de protéger ce à quoi nous accordons une valeur. N'attendez pas de vivre une crise existentielle avant de lutter et de créer le monde ou le syndicat que vous voulez.

---

**Nour Alideeb** (elle/sa) était la présidente de la Fédération canadienne des étudiantes et étudiants - Ontario entre 2017 et 2019. Elle est maintenant spécialiste des relations extérieures et gouvernementales pour l'Association des infirmières et infirmiers de l'Ontario.

# URS!

# DS SCI



# YOUTH AGING OUT OF CARE

## STUDENTS NEED SUPPORTS BEYOND AGE EIGHTEEN

BY VERONICA MONTAGUE



Children and young people enter care when their living situation is not suitable for their growth and development (Tweddle, 2005). Consequently, the government takes legal custody and protection over children and determines their next living arrangement. Examples of the different living arrangements include but are not limited to community group housing, foster care, and institutional care (Sansone et al., 2020). Youth often leave their own homes as a result of neglect and abuse that takes place in physical, mental, emotional, financial, and spiritual forms. Other issues that remove children include structural challenges such as poverty, and overcrowded and unsafe housing (Fallon et al., 2021). It is notable to discuss how class, gender, and race interact in the child welfare system. There is plenty of scholarship on the overrepresentation of the Black and Indigenous families in the child welfare system.

For example, Black youth are more likely to be targeted than their white counterparts and brought into child welfare (Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies, 2015; Putnam-Hornstein et al., 2013). Child welfare reports are more likely to be conducted on Black, Indigenous, and racialized families because

of racial discrimination that stems from damaging stereotypes and assumptions of people of colour (Antwi-Boasiako et al., 2022b). In its report *One Vision One Voice*, the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies (OACAS) explores the systemic forces that bring Black families into contact with child welfare authorities (OACAS, 2016). The report provides the perspectives of families and community members on how anti-Black racism operates at institutional and individual levels (OACAS, 2016). It explores the impacts of child welfare involvement on Black families and makes recommendations on how to integrate an anti-Black racism lens throughout the child welfare system.

Canada's history of inequality and discrimination, coupled with its colonial legacy severely affects reasons why youth enter into care, and disproportionately affects their journey aging out of care (Bonnie & Facey, 2022). The term "Aging out" is used to describe the release of a young adult from the child welfare system at the age of majority. The province or territory sets the age of majority where the youth resides. Approximately 10% of youth are aged out of the welfare system yearly (Doucet, Greeson, & Eldeeb, 2022). Youths encounter many difficul-



ties and risk factors when transitioning out of the Canadian welfare system. These risk factors include lack of support before, during and after transition, as well as through unemployment and mental health issues. Black youth in particular, are prone to remain in care longer and receive less service and programs that would help them transition out of care (Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies, 2015). However, protective factors can also increase the positive outcomes of transitioning out of the systems, such as implementing programs that aid in self-identified issues, thereby increasing the resiliency of the youth.

### **Risk factors**

When the foster care system releases youth, they are at a higher risk of facing challenges than their counterparts. Youth aging out of care are susceptible to physical, emotional, and cognitive difficulties (Jones et al., 2015). These challenges include but are not limited to early pregnancy, chronic substance use, mental health issues, poverty, unemployment, and limited education. There is a disproportionate use of street drugs among youth aging out of care. When youth are involved in street activity, they are subject to crime, homelessness, and substance addiction (Schaffer & Anderson, 2016). Black children are more likely to be involved in the criminal justice system. In schools, Black children have higher delinquency rates than their white counterparts (Barth et al., 2020). Immigration, marginalization and racism also contribute to these socio-economic challenges that youth face (Antwi-Boasiako et al., 2022a). Also, these youth experience the tran-

sition into adulthood at a faster rate which can affect their ability to self-focus and build their own support system to help them in adulthood (Doucet, Greeson, & Eldeeb, 2022).

In addition to these challenges, these individuals also have the sustained issues of the trauma and maltreatment left behind by the welfare system (Daining & DePanfilis, 2007). Some of the most significant challenges youth have focused on have been the lack of emotional and social support. While their cited successes include surviving while fulfilling adult responsibilities such as managing bills, securing safe living spaces, and parenting, the necessity to be independent negatively affects the ability of the youth to develop and sustain supportive relationships. Many youths do not understand that their accelerated transition into adulthood, causing their hyper-independence, can affect them in building support systems (Goodkind, Schelbe, & Shook, 2011). The burden of these challenges and mental health issues contributes to the severely high rates of premature loss of life amongst youth (Schaffer & Anderson, 2016).

There is also a lot of misinformation or misunderstanding surrounding the transition out of youth who are unaware of the services and support that is available to them. Some youth are unaware that they can continue to receive support and assistance from the system after the age of majority. There are a number of reasons for these misunderstandings; for instance, some youths feel forced out, some do not understand the requirements they have to fulfill to stay in the system, and some youths are not sure where they

stand with the welfare system (Goodkind, Schelbe, & Shook, 2011). With the lack of access to resources, many youths do not feel capable enough to succeed independently. Not having adequate support during their transition can hinder positive outcomes.

**Canada's history of inequality and discrimination, coupled with its colonial legacy severely affects reasons why youth enter into care, and disproportionately affects their journey aging out of care.**

Bonnie & Facey, 2022

### **Factors that increase positive outcomes**

Few studies are available to describe what factors can cause positive outcomes among transitioned youth. However, studies explore the youths' self-reported service areas that may help in the successful transition from the system to adulthood and increase resilience. These service areas include but are not limited to money management, employment, education, and housing. Likewise, these services facilitate the preparation for independent living, the transition process, and the beyond. Independent living programs can improve specific outcomes pertaining to the areas of housing, education, and employment



(Daining & DePanfilis, 2007).

Culturally-based interventions are particularly helpful in increasing positive outcomes for Black, Indigenous, and racialized youth in Canada. For example, Indigenous communities have alternative approaches to well-being that are different from Western ways of living and thinking. Having programs that adopt

**Implementing programs within the foster and welfare care systems that cultivate and encourage resiliency can aim to circumvent the impact of the risk factors faced but transitioning youth.**

Daining & DePanfilis, 2007

indigenous principles not only respects Indigenous cultures, but acknowledges the validity of their knowledge and ways of healing (YouthREX, 2020). Cultural interventions are crucial to support the cultural and spiritual development of youth. Black, Indigenous, and racialized youth need specific services that cultivate safe environments where they can explore and connect with their identities (Stewart, 2018).

Some factors can increase the resilience of these youths. For instance, the age at which youth leave care can affect their resilience; older youth may do better

than their younger counterparts in the system. Also, youth who receive support from friends and family and have spiritual support are more resilient than those who do not. Implementing programs within the foster and welfare care systems that cultivate and encourage resiliency can aim to circumvent the impact of the risk factors faced but transitioning youth (Daining & DePanfilis, 2007).

In 2018, the provincial government increased the age of protection in Ontario to eighteen years old. As a result, youths aged sixteen and seventeen can reap the benefits of the Voluntary Youth Service Agreement. Likewise, sixteen and seventeen-year-olds are eligible for the full suite of child protection services. If necessary, youth can also have an out-of-home placement in the voluntary youth service agreement. The Continued Care and Support for Youth (CCSY) program is another resource for youths aged eighteen to twenty offering financial and non-financial support for those aging out of care. In addition, there are also transition and life skills programs targeting youth between sixteen and twenty four to transition successfully (Support for youth in the child welfare system, 2023).

**Where do we go from here?**

While many risk factors negatively affect our transitioning youth, there are programs that help prevent the adverse effects to the transition. There is much work to do for youth to ensure that this vulnerable group of individuals can overcome the difficulties set out before them and increase their resiliency. Ensuring that youth continue to participate in the services

and programs available may be vital in their successful transition to adulthood by equipping youth with the necessary tools and knowledge. More research is needed in this area to ensure our youths' safe arrival into adulthood from our welfare systems.

---

**Veronica Montague** is a Member of the Teacher Bargaining Unit of District 12, Toronto.

**Works Cited**

Antwi-Boasiako, K., Fallon, B., King, B., Trocmé, N., & Fluke, J. (2022a). "Addressing the overrepresentation of Black children in Ontario's child welfare system: insights from child welfare workers and community service providers." *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 123, 105423.

Antwi-Boasiako, K., Fallon, B., King, B., Trocme, N., & Fluke, J. (2022b). "Understanding the overrepresentation of Black children in Ontario's child welfare system: perspectives from child welfare workers and community service providers." *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 123, 105425.

Barth, R. P, Jonson-Reid, M., Greeson, J. K., Drake, B., Berrick, J. D., Garcia, A. R.,... & Gyourko, J. R. (2020). Outcomes following child welfare services: what are they and do they differ for black children?. *Journal of public child welfare*, 14(5), 477-499.

Bonnie, N. & Facey, K., with support from King, B., Fallon, B., Joh-Carnella, N., Edwards, T., Kagan-Cassidy, M., Black, T., Patrick-Drakes, V., & Anucha, C. (2022). "Understanding the Over-Representation of Black Children in Ontario Child Welfare Services." *Ontario Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect-2018*. Toronto, ON: Child Welfare

- Research Portal.
- Daining, C., & DePanfilis, D. (2007). "Resilience of youth in transition from out-of-home care to adulthood." *Children and Youth Services Review*, Vol.29 (9), p.1158-1178.
- Doucet, M. M., Greeson, J. K., & Eldeeb, N. (2022). "Independent living programs and services for youth 'aging out' of care in Canada and the U.S.: Asystematic review." *Children and youth services review*, Vol.142, p.106630.
- Fallon, B., Lefebvre, R., Trocmé, N., Richard, K., Hélie, S., Montgomery, H. M., ... & Soop, S. (2021). "Denouncing the continued overrepresentation of first nations children in Canadian child welfare: Findings from the first nations/canadian incidence study of reported child abuse and neglect-2019.
- Goodkind, S., Schelbe, L. A., & Shook, J. J. (2011). "Why youth leave care: Understandings of adulthood and transition successes and challenges among youth aging out of child welfare." *Children and youth services review*, Vol.33 (6), p.1039-1048.
- Jones, T., Mitchell, M., & Renema, S. (2015) "Will I make it on my own? Voices and visions of 17-year-old youth in transition." *The Journal of Child Adolescent Social Work*, 32, 291-300.
- Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies (2015). Race matters in the child welfare system. Toronto, ON. Retrieved from <https://www.oacas.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Race-Matters-African-Canadians-Project-August-2015.pdf>
- Putnam-Hornstein, E., Needell, B., King, B., & Johnson-Motoyama, M. (2013). "Racial and ethnic disparities: A population-based examination of risk factors for involvement with child protective services." *Child abuse & neglect*, 37(1), 33-46.
- Sansone, G., Fallon, B., Miller, S., Birken, C., Denburg, A., Jenkins, J., Levine, J., Mishna, F., Sokolowski, M. and Stewart, S. (2020). "Children Aging Out of Care." Toronto, Ontario: Policy Bench, Fraser Mustard Institute of Human Development, University of Toronto.
- Schaffer, M. & Anderson, L. (2016). "Opportunities in transition: An economic analysis of investing in youth aging out of foster care. *Fostering Change*." Vancouver, BC. Retrieved from <https://d3n8a8pro7vhm.cloudfront.net/vancouverfoundation/pages/83/attachments/original/1474042096/Fostering-Change-Opportunities-in-Transition-Report-Summary.pdf?1474042096>
- Stewart, S. (2018). "Supporting Indigenous youth experiencing homelessness." In Kidd, S., Slesnick, N., Frederick, T., Karabanow, J., Gaetz, S. (Eds.), *Mental Health and Addiction Interventions for Youth Experiencing Homelessness: Practical Strategies for Front-Line Providers* (89-100). Toronto: Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Press.
- Support for youth in the child welfare system*. (2023, 03 06). Retrieved from Ontario.ca: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/support-youth-child-welfare-system>
- Tweddle, A. (2007). Youth leaving care: How do they fare?. *New directions for youth development*, (113), 15-31.
- Youth Research & Evaluation eXchange (YouthREX). (2020). *Four Promising Practices to Support Indigenous Youth Experiencing Homelessness*. Toronto, ON: Author.





# Bargaining Unit BOOST

by Randy Banderob

"Bargaining Unit boost" is a regular column in *Education Forum* featuring an OSSTF/FEESO Bargaining Unit and the job class(es) within that unit. OSSTF/FEESO, founded in 1919, has over 60,000 Members across Ontario. They include public high school teachers, occasional teachers, educational assistants, continuing education teachers and instructors, early childhood educators, psychologists, secretaries, speech-language pathologists, social workers, plant support personnel, university support staff, and many others in education.

While many Members of OSSTF/FEESO start their days early opening up schools, preparing classrooms, or welcoming students, some Members of District 35, University of Guelph Technical, Administrative, Research, and Agricultural (TARA) group find their morning routines include feeding fish and checking on their cattle. This is no ordinary Bargaining Unit.

President Joe Rooyakkers and Vice President Elizabeth Copland were kind enough to give *Education Forum* a tour of some of their sites. While the University of Guelph is the main location for many of their Members there is also a second satellite campus and fifteen research centers across Ontario in towns such as Alma, Arkell, Bradford, Cedar Springs, Clinton, Elora, Emo, Huron, Kemptville, New Liskeard, Ponsonby, Ridgetown, Simcoe, Vineland, Winchester, and Woodstock.

The university is well known for its agricultural roots so it's not surprising that about half of the Bargaining Unit's Members work directly in the

field with job titles such as Agricultural Assistants, Research Technicians, Mechanics, Security Attendants, Food Workers, and Field Crop technicians. The other half of their Membership have jobs more typical to a university setting such as Administrative Assistants, Security Attendants, and Counsellors.

At the Alma Research Centre located just outside of Elora, OSSTF/FEESO Members raise several freshwater varieties of fish including salmon, trout, and arctic char. The research completed here contributes to the development of sustainable aquaculture techniques that reduce reliance on wild fish stocks.

One of the more unusual worksites is the Ontario Dairy Research Centre. The state-of-the-art 175,000 square foot facility looks less like a barn and more like a high-tech laboratory. With a capacity of six hundred cows and heifers, the centre boasts four different automated milking systems that provide vital research data. Dairy farmers are welcome to visit to learn the most current technologies available to make their own farms more efficient while keeping their herds healthy.

Despite the exotic and unusual nature of some of their Members' jobs, Joe and Elizabeth face some of the same challenges as other local leaders. Job security, benefit provisions, and pay equity are some of the common issues that they continue to deal with. In 2019 they worked with the University of Guelph to consolidate their pension plan with that of the University of Toronto and Queen's University. Like other Bargaining

Units that have sites across the province, communication has been a challenge, but one they have successfully managed.

"In addition to basic social media platforms and newsletters, we have created a travel and communications budget that allow members of the executive to be on site to work with Members on a regular basis," said President Joe Rooyakkers, "We have also purchased technology which allow our members to participate in membership meetings, lunch and learns, and university events that they would otherwise be excluded from."

Another challenge identified by Vice President Elizabeth Copland is an increase in workload and fairness: "When Members retire or vacate a position, administrative positions are being removed from the Bargaining Unit and placed into the Professional Staff Association, and remaining members aren't being compensated equally for similar work. When our Members see this, it frustrates them and creates a divide within the workplace that is difficult to manage."

Despite these challenges Joe, Elizabeth, and their executive continue to work and advocate for their Members.

"The most important thing that we can do as a local is ensure that our Members see us, know us, and know that they can approach us with anything. This is our true strength and is something that we continue to take pride in," said Joe. "Having high Member engagement builds strong locals."

---

**Randy Banderob** is an Executive Assistant in the Educational Services department of OSSTF/FEESO.

# Images from District 35, University of Guelph Technical Administrative, Research, and Agricultural workers

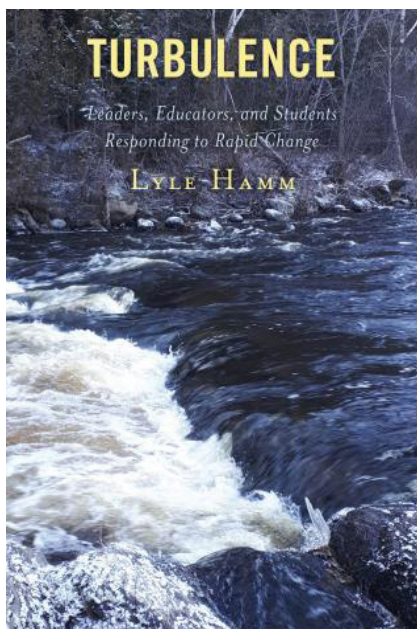


Photos provided by Randy Banderob



# Top picks

## Reviews



***Turbulence—Leaders, Educators, and Students Responding to Rapid Change* by Lyle Hamm  
Rowman and Littlefield (2021)  
Reviewed by Dan Earle**

Author, educator, administrator, professor, and researcher, Lyle Hamm's 2021 book *Turbulence—Leaders, Educators, and Students Responding to Rapid Change* attempts to describe the world of education right now. Describing both its challenges, and opportunities, attempting to provide readers with an opportunity to prioritize what is important for entire education teams in schools throughout North America.

Hamm provides an overview of the complex societal issues that have led to “turbulence” in our education system. By including questions at the end of each chapter, Hamm guides readers to realize the ability to remain optimistic and have hope by emphasizing the importance of au-

thentic relationships, personal connections, and the power of humanity as solutions in a post-pandemic world.

Some elements of the book may be provocative and controversial to some, especially chapter three—“1999-2020: Wrestling with Darkness,” where Hamm focuses on topics such as violence in schools, lockdowns, divisive communities, and what is referred to as the “Digital Nightmare.” However, for many working on the front lines in one of the many diverse roles in any school, this chapter offers a welcome reprieve from the onslaught of external actors who seek to capitalize on one of the last remaining public systems and audiences in Ontario.

As a teacher or education worker in Ontario, it is impossible not to recognize how chapter three captures exactly what unions and many stakeholders have been trying to raise the alarm bells about for many years. Political decision-makers in Ontario and across North America are already demonstrating a shocking willingness to “hand over the keys” to private, for-profit, firms. Corporations and their well-resourced interest groups peddle their “innovative” and “modern” technologies at the expense of what Hamm says are needed now, more than ever—authentic relationships, personal connections, empathy, and critical thinking.

The book's insights into the important role strong leadership plays in creating safe, inclusive, and vibrant schools will affirm what anyone working in a school already knows. It is very refresh-

ing to have an author acknowledge the various leaders in any school – official and unofficial. Navigating chaos and schools would never be possible without the leadership of all workers in a school, especially plant/maintenance/custodial staff, office clerical staff, and other professional and paraprofessional staff.

Despite the book's various positive elements, the fixation on the “moral imperative” of education workers and teachers and the oversimplification of the causes and far-reaching impacts of the turbulence and rapid changes is disappointing.

Schools are learning and working environments. The chaos and turbulence in society are not simply happening to students but, in fact, they impact every caring adult who works in public education. These challenges are compounded by the ongoing and persistent attack on education workers' and teachers' integrity, professionalism, and erosion of working conditions, and worker health and safety. Whether intentional or not, the author's lack of adequate acknowledgement of this fact would limit the reader's ability to find hope. Unless these issues are addressed, the storm raging in society and causing harm to learning and working environments may never be weathered.

Teachers and education workers generally embrace change and, despite what some may think, are adapting and improving their practices daily to meet the needs of their students. Hamm's strategies and calls for change are not necessarily

new or innovative.

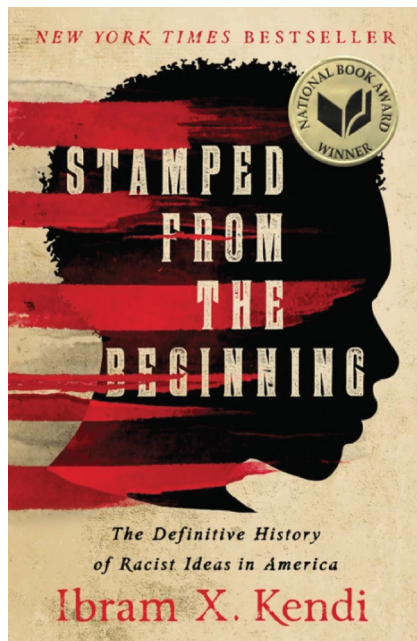
What is disappointing about *Turbulence*, is how the author fails to adequately acknowledge or discuss the root cause of chaos in Ontario education at the hands of the provincial government. The chronic underfunding by the current provincial government in Ontario combined with the imposition of pedagogy and curriculum changes with almost no consultation with educators and inadequate resources and plans for implementation are well documented.

There is no mention of the need for advocacy to reverse the destructive forces attempting to undermine public education in North America. Hamm identifies many causes of turbulence but unless there is an acknowledgment of the role and impact of government and other actors on the education system, and a call for a unified political and social pushback against them, all of Hamm's suggestions will not lead to any smooth waters in the days, months, or years ahead.

Overall, *Turbulence* offers moments of hope but falls short of offering those who work in public education the necessary playbook to truly end the turbulence and improve the learning and working conditions for students and staff working in schools in Ontario.

---

**Dan Earle** is an Executive Assistant in the Communications/Political Action department of OSSTF/FEESO.



***Stamped from the Beginning—The Definitive History of Racist Ideas* by Ibram X. Kendi  
Bold Type Press (2017)  
Reviewed by Solange Scott**

National Book award winner Ibram X. Kendi writes about the "Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America." Kendi encapsulates the struggle of Black people from the inception of slavery highlighting the delight that slave owners felt while enslaving Africans. Many slave owners noted that fairer-skinned enslaved people were "white enough to look upon... others were as black as Ethiops and so ugly that they almost appeared as visitors from Hell." Slave owners continued their attack on Black people by hypersexualizing them, making it justifiable to continuously rape women and children. They dehumanized Africans, likening them to animals, "a people of beastly living, without a God, law, religions

or common wealth." Kendi highlights the falsities of the notion that Africans were not wealthy. In fact, slave owners invaded many African countries because of their natural resources, such as gold and diamonds, while robbing them of their culture and religion. The world's richest man was an African named Mansa Musa. Mansa Musa was so wealthy that he single-handedly nearly collapsed the Egyptian economy as he freely gave away billions of dollars worth of gold to combat poverty.

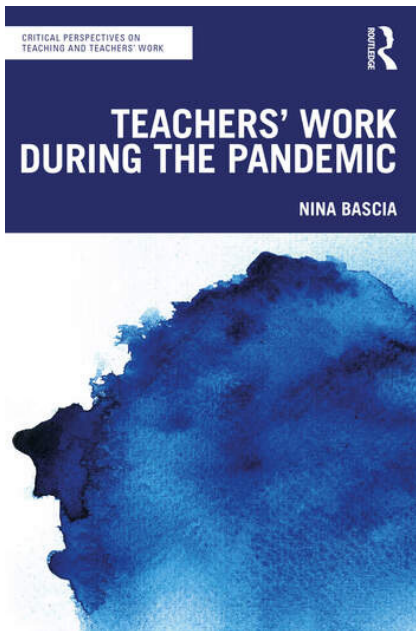
As African people were taken from their land and brought to America, they continued to experience extreme atrocities. Kendi notes that Christianity was viewed as only for white people; the British army freed enslaved people who conformed to their idea of Christianity. However, white Americans continued to uphold that Black people were incapable of becoming Christians, so the religion was reserved for white people. Kendi writes, "Christianizing the Negroes makes them proud and saucy and tempts them to imagine themselves upon an equality with the white people." Additionally, the author reminds readers of the history of gaslighting faced by Black women

Ibram X Kendi's *Stamped from the Beginning* is an excellent book for anyone willing to learn about Black people's struggles and their disadvantages from inception.

---

**Solange Scott** is the President of the Professional Student Services Personnel Bargaining Unit of District 12, Toronto.





***Teachers' Work During the Pandemic***  
by Nina Bascia  
**Routledge (2023)**  
Reviewed by Taylor Ellis

*Teachers' Work During the Pandemic* is an examination of changes posed to education workers by the COVID-19 pandemic in Ontario. The research compares educational policy and public discourse with longitudinal interviews of teachers, administrators, and union leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The book's analyses of the pandemic and teachers' work are probably of little utility to a wider teaching audience. The most important contribution is furthering our understanding of the ways that the apparent ineptitude of management during the pandemic is part of the core political framework under which public education in Ontario evolved. The book's core de-

scribes how education systems in Ontario are designed to undermine the professional status of teachers through centralization and hierarchical control (regardless of the party in the Premier's Office). The pandemic arose within this existing political landscape to exacerbate the status quo subordination of teachers to the class of "education decision makers" (e.g., principals, board office staff, Ministry of Education staff, etc.).

The final chapter, "Between a Rock and a Hard Place," describes the political role of "teacher organizations" (i.e., unions) in trying to navigate this subordinate role of their members relative to their employer and a wider public. In parallel to the overall subordination of teachers, the chapter argues that unions are similarly subordinated to employers and unable to intervene in most of the ways that matter in our day-to-day working lives (e.g., curriculum, policy, funding, teacher and student discipline, etc.).

*Teachers' Work During the Pandemic* provides a compelling case for its thesis, that teachers' professional dignity was challenged during the pandemic in new but also routine ways that could have been predicted based on the history of public education in the province. It then suggests that to "build back better" will require that teachers are included more systematically in exercising some degree of control over our work.

---

**Taylor Ellis** is a Member of the Teacher Bargaining Unit of District 14, Kawartha Pine Ridge.



# That feeling of being together

Individual actions for united progress



It feels quite amazing to again be able to gather at a rally, at a protest, a labour convention. It feels again like we are able to embrace the power of our togetherness as a means of standing up for goodness and fairness. At the same time, all around us are challenges—financial, political, personal. However, I’m confident we are moving forward in a way that will have a positive impact on our world.

We have seen movements with the Ontario Federation of Labour, the Canadian Labour Congress, the Ontario Nurses Association, and countless other labour groups, challenging government policies that continue to marginalize workers, especially female, Indigenous, and racialized workers. It’s this zeitgeist of activism that has me buoyed. It’s this shift in focusing on what we can do together that is so hopeful. Internationally, I’m excited by the work being done by organizations such as the Tri-National Coalition in Defense of Public Education and Education International. These organizations, of which OSSTF/FEESO is a member, are highlighting the vital role public education plays in fighting inequities and improving lives. It’s no secret that pub-

lic education is a powerful tool and one that we must continue to defend.

Right now, the work of public education includes taking an active role in de-colonizing education and curricula. Similarly, labour organizations including OSSTF/FEESO are working to de-centre their own whiteness and to shape a future that embraces and amplifies diverse voices. Civil society organizations around the world are calling for a Just Recovery that places our future in the hands of the many over the pocket books of a few multi-billion dollar companies. It’s this kind of global approach to activism that gets me most excited and lets me be the most hopeful.

What it says is that we are a community that believes in one another and a community that is ready to do the hard work to support one another. We know it is community that holds us together, that helps us shape the generations to come, and that can achieve greatness, even in the face of the greatest challenges.

Politically, this means communities fighting governments like that of Doug Ford – governments hell-bent on stripping away public services, community green

spaces, and social supports all in the name of supporting big-business. This kind of short-changing of our communities and the people within them has to stop. When for-profit takes priority over communities and people, we know we have a problem.

The tragedy of a government that can run rough-shod over decades-long social and environmental protections can be fought. It can be challenged. It can be reversed. Anti-Black racism and the continued impacts of our colonial legacy can and must be fought, challenged, and reversed. The very act of uniting as a community is powerful. Utilizing our centralized resolve to do better and expect better of our governments is the way to challenge selfishness and hate.

But what can this look like for us daily? It will be different for each of us, of course. But it will have some common earmarks. It looks like listening to one another, asking tough questions, standing up to tyranny, challenging misogyny, sexism, homophobia, racism, anti-Black racism, and all other forms of oppression. It also means taking our own steps towards reconciliation and repairing relationships with the first peoples of the land on which we live.

Be it a small action like writing to your local politicians or a larger action such as joining a community organization, Labour Council, or political party, your efforts matter. These acts are our uniting power and they make us all stronger. It’s the feeling of being together, making a difference, one action at a time.

**Karen Littlewood,**  
OSSTF/FEESO President



# Le sentiment de se retrouver

Des actions individuelles pour des progrès unifiés

C'est un sentiment merveilleux de pouvoir de nouveau se réunir dans le cadre d'un rassemblement, d'une manifestation ou d'une convention syndicale. Nous nous sentons comme si nous pouvons de nouveau saisir le pouvoir de notre solidarité comme moyen de nous dresser pour le bien et la justice. En même temps, nous sommes entourés de défis – financiers, politiques et personnels. Toutefois, nous avons confiance que nous allons de l'avant d'une façon qui aura un impact positif sur notre monde.

Nous avons remarqué des mouvements au sein de la Fédération du travail de l'Ontario, de Congrès du travail du Canada, de l'Association des infirmières et infirmiers de l'Ontario et d'innombrables autres groupes syndicaux, contestant les politiques gouvernementales qui continuent de marginaliser les travailleuses et les travailleurs, surtout les femmes, les Autochtones et les travailleuses et travailleurs racialisés. C'est cet esprit du temps en matière d'activisme qui m'encourage. C'est cette concentration réorientée sur ce que nous pouvons accomplir ensemble qui me donne tant d'espoir. Au niveau international, je suis captivée par le travail effectué par des organismes comme la Coalition trinationale pour la défense de l'éducation publique et l'Internationale de l'éducation. Ces organismes, dont OSSTF/FEESO est membre, soulignent le rôle vital que joue l'éducation publique dans la lutte contre les iniquités et l'amélioration des vies. Ce n'est pas un secret que l'éducation publique est un outil puissant que nous devons défendre.

Présentement, le travail de l'éducation publique comprend la prise en charge d'un rôle actif dans la décolonisation de l'éducation et des curriculums. D'une façon similaire, les organismes syndicaux, y compris OSSTF/FEESO, travaillent dans le but de décentraliser leur propre blancheur et de façonner un avenir qui accueille et amplifie les voix diversifiées. Les organismes de société civile de partout dans le monde demandent une Relance juste qui place notre avenir entre les mains du plus grand nombre plutôt que les poches de quelques entreprises valant plusieurs milliards de dollars. C'est ce genre d'approche globale à l'activisme qui m'emballle le plus et me permet d'avoir tant d'espoir.

Cette approche démontre que nous sommes une communauté qui croit les uns en les autres et une communauté qui est prête à déployer tous les efforts pour se soutenir mutuellement. Nous savons que c'est la communauté qui nous maintient ensemble, qui nous aide à façonner les générations à venir et qui peut réaliser de grandes choses, même face à de grands défis.

Du point de vue politique, cela signifie des communautés qui se dressent contre des gouvernements comme celui de Doug Ford – des gouvernements qui sont déterminés à éliminer les services publics, des espaces verts communautaires et les soutiens sociaux, tout cela au nom du soutien envers les grandes entreprises. Ce type de pénalisation de nos communautés et des gens qui s'y trouvent doit cesser. Lorsque les profits

ont la priorité sur les communautés et les gens, nous savons que quelque chose ne va pas.

Il est possible de lutter contre la tragédie d'un gouvernement qui peut se permettre de bafouer des décennies de protections sociales et environnementales. Le racisme anti-Noirs et les impacts incessants de notre héritage colonial peuvent et doivent être combattus, mis en question et renversés. Le simple fait de nous unir en tant que communauté est une puissance en soi. Notre moyen de mettre en question l'égoïsme et la haine est d'utiliser notre volonté centralisée de mieux faire et de s'attendre à plus de nos gouvernements.

Cependant, à quoi cela peut-il ressembler pour nous sur une base quotidienne? Ce sera différent pour chacun d'entre nous, bien entendu. Mais il y aura certains points communs. Il semble que le fait de s'écouter les uns les autres, de poser les questions difficiles, de se dresser contre la tyrannie, de mettre en question la misogynie, le sexisme, l'homophobie, le racisme, le racisme anti-Noirs et toutes les autres formes d'oppression.

Qu'il s'agisse d'une action minime comme écrire à vos politiciens locaux ou d'une action plus importante comme se joindre à un organisme communautaire, à un Conseil du travail ou à un parti politique, vos efforts comptent. Ces actions constituent le pouvoir qui nous unit et elles nous rendent plus forts. C'est un sentiment de se rassembler, de faire une différence.

**Karen Littlewood,**  
présidente d'OSSTF/FEESO

# Investing in Public Education **just makes sense.**



**Here  
For  
Students.**

 **OSSTF/FEESO**  
PROTECTING AND ENHANCING PUBLIC EDUCATION  
PROTÉGER ET FAIRE AVANCER L'ÉDUCATION PUBLIQUE







Monthly cash prizes!



OTIP RAEO.

# Treat yourself

because you've earned it!

Enter for your chance to win **1 of 12 monthly \$1,000 cash prizes**, plus the **grand prize of \$3,000!**

**Enter now: [OTIP.com/OSSTFwin](https://www.otip.com/OSSTFwin)**



No purchase necessary. Open to all active and retired Ontario education members. Must be an Ontario resident, minimum 18 years of age to enter. Contest closes December 31, 2023. Selected winners must correctly answer a skill-testing question. Full contest rules at [www.otip.com/contest-rules](https://www.otip.com/contest-rules). Odds of winning depend on entries received by the draw date for the prizes.