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uniforum



Unifor was well represented at the UN Commission on the Status of Women seen here (L to R) Women's Department Staff Representative Barb Dolan, MP Niki Ashton, Unifor Women's Department Director Julie White and CLC Women's & Human Rights Director Vicky Smallman.

Forestry strategy an example for others

A long-anticipated forestry plan for New Brunswick, followed the next day by an announcement by JD Irving of a \$513 million investment, should be an example to industry and governments across

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Unifor women go to the UN

A delegation from the Unifor Women's Department took part in the 58th session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW58) over the last two weeks at the United Nations headquarters in New York. Unifor women were part

of the international trade union delegation, representing member states of the UN. The women spent the two weeks taking part in discussion sessions and lobbying member states to ensure that the agreed conclusions are adopted by the close of the UNCSW58. "Women in the trade union movement play a critical role in holding governments around the world to account," said Julie White, Director of the Unifor Women's Department.

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Truckers secure deal

This week, truck drivers reached an agreement with the federal and provincial governments and Port Metro Vancouver that ensured a return to work at the port—and the end of debate regarding back-to-work legislation. "We had been clear from the very beginning that negotiation is the only way to achieve labour peace," said Jerry Dias,

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#unifor

Here's a selection of tweets about @UniforTheUnion

@VancouverSun : Union (@UniforTheUnion) asks for negotiations before truckers are forced back to work @PortMetroVan ow.ly/2F35tX #bcpoli #vanpoli

@sagbc : "It's time to change the world. And raise expectations" says @Kathaforunifor from @UniforTheUnion at #LabourFair22 keynote talk

In brief

Another attack on workers' rights: Bill C-525

Workers deserve a voice and representation.

Across Canada, many political leaders are taking action to weaken workers' rights.

Nationally, Bill C-525 will be voted on shortly. This legislation makes it harder to unionize.

Let your MP know that you are opposed to Bill C-525 because unions make workers' lives better.

You can find your MP at: www.elections.ca 

Civil disobedience if pipeline approved

Burnaby Mayor Derek Corrigan said in an interview this week that he would stand in front of bulldozers if that's what it would take to stop the implantation of a new Kinder Morgan pipeline.


Instead of creating new jobs at the Chevron refinery in Burnaby, the proposed pipeline—also opposed by Unifor—would carry raw bitumen to supertankers bound for Chinese or American refineries. 

Photo spotlight

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Women activists gathered at the Family Education Centre in Port Elgin.



Raylene Lee (left), president of Unifor Local 4624, presents a cheque to Debbie MacAuley from the Transition House Foundation as part of IWD 2014.

Women, Power and Political Action


Member education is an important part of the work Unifor does. Earlier this month, women Unifor members gathered at our Family Education Centre in Port Elgin for five women-specific courses, including Women, Power and Political Action.

"Unifor members are so eager to build their capacity

as activists and leaders," remarked Julie White, Director of the Women's Department. "And if we are going to successfully protect our jobs and build more just communities for all, we need strong, empowered, skilled leaders."

Over the course of the week, women members learned about lobbying

elected officials, public speaking and creative action. In addition to building important skills, members were also able to connect with each other.

To learn more about Unifor's Education courses, please visit <http://www.unifor.org/en/member-services/education>. 

Unifor takes action to protect Health Accord

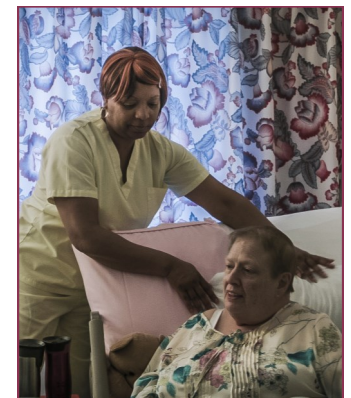
On March 31, 2014, the Canada Health Accord expires. The Accord provides the provinces with stable transfer payments from the federal government. The Harper government is refusing to renegotiate which will result in severe underfunding for healthcare across the country.

"It is because I believe so strongly in the value of public health care that I became a Registered Practical Nurse," explained Katha Fortier, Ontario Regional Director at Unifor.


"And it is for that same

reason that I am proud that Unifor represents 28,900 workers in health and social services across the country and is deeply involved in the fight for public health care."

Unifor will be joining people across the country to ensure our health care system has the funding it needs, starting with a National Day of Action on March 31. "This is just the beginning our campaign to protect public health care—and we will continue to pressure the federal government right until the 2015 election," Fortier said.



Unifor represents 28,900 workers in health and social services.

To learn more, visit www.healthcoalition.ca or email healthcare@unifor.org. 

UNIFOR COMMUNICATIONS - KATIE ARNUP, SARAH BLACKSTOCK, IAN BOYKO, SHELLEY BURGoyNE, SHANNON DEVINE, MARIE-ANDRÉE L'HEUREUX, STUART LAIDLAW, AND ANNE MARIE VINCENT

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the UN"
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"Governments will often pay lip service to women's equality, including here in Canada, but unfortunately, that's where their commitment ends."

"As trade union women, our job at UNCSW is to ensure that we expose our governments' lack of commitment to child care, public services and a national inquiry into missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls, all issues important to Canadian women."

White also said the session was an important reminder about continuing to strengthen work around equality within the union.

Read about UNCSW58 or check out UniforWomen on Facebook. 

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"Forestry strategy an
example for others"

Canada, Unifor National President Jerry Dias says.

"We are very happy to see this new plan," said Dias, who attended the Irving announcement. "This is a perfect example of government, companies and organized labour working together for the betterment of our economy."

The provincial plan is a much-needed step before any potential industry investment can take place, said Rino Ouellet, Atlantic area director for Unifor.

"It is important that we see investment and commitment to our forestry industry," said Ouellet.

"Companies were unable to make those investments without knowing what their resource forecasts would look like, but with this plan,



Jerry Dias is thanked by Jim Irving (left) and NB Premier David Alward following his address at a Saint John pulp mill.

we expect those investments to happen."

Unifor, which has lobbied the province for years for a stable forestry plan, represents more than 2,550 workers in the forestry sector in New Brunswick and more than 25,000 across Canada.

The forestry sector has changed dramatically in the last decade due to shifting

global demand, and was among the hardest hit in manufacturing during the recent recession, with a nearly 50 per cent loss in jobs in the Atlantic region.

The plan promises more Crown land and greater protection for wildlife zones – merging the interests of industry, Aboriginal communities and environmental groups. 

Did you know?

Unifor represents more than 21, 800 Forestry workers across Canada.

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Unifor National President. "Respect for workers' rights and good faith negotiation is what is in the best interest of workers and the broader public. We were not going to be moved on this," he said.


Intense bargaining took place while back-to-work legislation was being debated in the legislature.

"From the beginning, we knew that negotiation was the only way to end this dispute," stressed Dias.

"We were willing and eager to negotiate around the clock. We understood the significance of the work stoppage. We were frustrated that Federal Transportation Minister Raitt did not share this understanding. This work stoppage was protracted

because of the unwillingness of Minister Raitt to participate in the necessary dialogue."

Unifor-Vancouver Container Truckers' Association (VCTA) collective agreement expired in June 2012. Since then, the union has been raising concerns that long line-ups and wait times at the Port of Vancouver are costing truck drivers money. Unifor-VCTA is calling for increased rates of pay and wants the rates standardized and enforced across the sector to put an end to under-cutting.

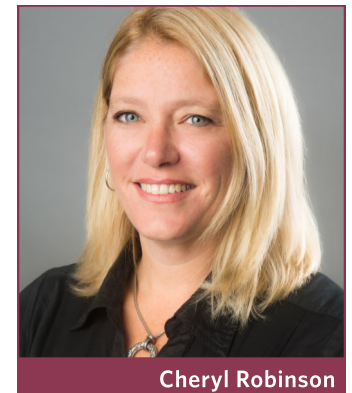
"This is an agreement that working truckers can be satisfied with," said Paul Johal, Unifor-VCTA president. "But enforcement of it will be critical to keeping the ports open." 

Robinson wins award

Unifor National Executive Board member Cheryl Robinson was awarded the **Women in Leadership Award** from the New Brunswick Federation of Labour on March 22.


Committed to advancing workers' rights and women's equality, Robinson has been active on all Unifor campaigns, particularly those addressing women's equality, and was a CLC delegate to the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women in 2012 and 2013.

She has also been active at the NBFL and the Saint John Labour Council, and is a very proud Unifor local



Cheryl Robinson

union leader.

The award recognizes women who have distinguished themselves in the labour movement for making a lasting and significant contribution to the promotion of the principles and policies of their union, the broader labour movement and to the advancement of the social and economic welfare of workers in the province. 

New appointments

Assistant to the President

Scott Doherty - Unifor Western Regional Director and National Executive Board member, appointed as Assistant to National President Jerry Dias, effective March 9, working out of the National office.

Member Mobilization

Roland Kiehne - Unifor

Local 112 President and NEB member, appointed Director of Membership Mobilization and Campaigns, effective March 16, working out of the National office.


Service

Brian Murphy - Unifor Local 2121 President, appointed service representative in Newfoundland, effective March 2.

Gary Beck - Unifor Local 707 President and National Executive Board member, appointed service representative working out of the National Office, effective March 2.

Ronald Nantel - Unifor Local 3094 President, appointed service representative, working out of the Rouyn, Quebec, office, effective January 19
Eric Titley - Temporary national staff representative, appointed

to permanent status as a service representative, working out of our Montreal office.

Mike Reuter - service representative has transferred to our London office, effective March 2.
Tom Datillo will assume responsibilities for Recreation
Chris Buckley will assume responsibilities for the Strike/Defense Fund Program. 

Oshawa trades council marks 70 years

This month marks the 70th anniversary of the first meeting of the Oshawa Tool, Die and Maintenance Council, which was the first ever meeting of a UAW-CIO Skilled Trades Council in Canada.

This group morphed into what we know today as the Unifor Oshawa & Area Skilled Trades Council.

Reading about the inaugural meeting, held on March 9, 1944 was such a breath of fresh air as we reflect on the vision that

the workers had in 1944 - so similar to why we carry on our fight as the Unifor Canadian Skilled Trades Council today.

The reason that the men sat around the table in the first place, was to discuss trades' concerns regarding rate of pay, classifications, "to see the apprentices get a fair and decent deal," and to prevent the dilution of skilled personnel by the company by establishing a "Journeyman Committee."

They discussed how the


council would function and where the council would hold its rightful place within the union, without being a threat to the shop committee.

This group understood the council could help the shop committee when skilled trades issues arise, being a strong voice for trades within the union to provide assistance to the shop committee, therefore advancing trades issues from a single source, at the bargaining table as well as

during the life of the collective agreement.

From the outset, the group spoke of organizing every tradesperson in the district, thus promoting the "Council Journeyman's Card" - the method we use to identify journeypersons in Unifor to this day.

For more information on the Unifor Canadian Skilled Trades Council go to:

www.uniforskilledtrades.ca 

Inter-province apprentice plan a good start

A move by western premiers to enable skilled trades apprentices to move between provinces without having to restart their training is a good start, but more provinces need to be involved, Unifor's Skilled Trades Council Chair says.

"We see a huge number of apprentices unable to complete the program

because they lose their job and are unable to find other work," said Dave Cassidy, National Skilled Trades Council Chair.

Cassidy said apprentices should be able to move between all provinces without losing credit for the hours they have worked or training they've received.

"It is important for

apprentices to be able to move where there are jobs available and still have their experience recognized."

At a meeting in Regina recently, the premiers of Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia agreed that by next fall apprentices in the skilled trades will be able to move between the provinces

without having to start their training all over again.

The Unifor Skilled Trades Council was proud to support a three-year project in the Atlantic to harmonize apprenticeships at its meeting in November, as well as national strategies by the Canadian Council of Directors of Apprenticeships. 