



Convention Bulletin

Sunday October 19

Parsons, Thunstrom, Buchanan Elected

UNW Convention Closing Media Release

Yellowknife, NT (October 20, 2014) – More than 60 delegates gathered in Yellowknife October 17 to 19 for the 16th Triennial Convention of the Union of Northern Workers under the conference theme, Building Solidarity Through Representation.

Members elected Todd Parsons to his fifth term as President. Gayla Thunstrom was elected to her fourth term as 1st Vice President, Marie Buchanan was elected 2nd Vice President and Miriam Gordon was elected to her second Equity Vice President term. Regional Vice Presidents elected were Alex Lambrecht—Somba K'e; Chris Potyok—North Great Slave; Lauraine Armstrong—Fort Smith; Roy Courtoreille—Hay River; Val Robertson—Beaufort Delta/Sahtu; Christina Holman—Deh Cho; Ivan Landry—Kimberlite.

Delegates and member observers were joined by leaders including Public Service Alliance of Canada North (PSAC) Regional Executive Vice President Jack Bourassa, Northern Territories Federation of Labour President Mary Lou Cherwaty, Western Arctic MP Dennis Bevington and Yellowknife Mayor Mark Heyck.

Barbara Byers, Secretary Treasurer of the Canadian Labour Congress, gave the keynote address to delegates on the theme "Building Union Power Through Representation". Public Service Alliance of Canada National President Robyn Benson addressed delegates on the need to protect the gains of past struggles, protect public services, and defeat the Harper government.

Delegates reviewed and approved the UNW's three-year, \$14 million budget, reviewed and passed amendments to by-laws, heard a report on construction of the UNW's new offices and elected delegates to attend the PSAC National Convention.

Convention delegates attended the October 17 mass rally at the Legislative Assembly, calling for withdrawal of Bill 12, the Northern Employee Benefits Pension Plan Act, and calling for an end to privatization of services at Stanton Territorial Hospital.

A silent auction raised a \$10,000 donation to the Lynn Brooks Safe Place for Women. Donations of almost \$10,000 were raised for an Ebola emergency contribution to Doctors Without Borders.

Ken Stewart, the departing Regional Vice President for Deh Cho, was honored for his more than 30 years of service to the UNW, and Roxanna Baisi, UNW Director of Membership Services, received her 30 Year Long Service Award.



The members of the Union of Northern Workers new executive are: (front row left to right) Regional Vice President (RVP) Deh Cho Christina Holman; 1st Vice President Gayla Thunstrom, 2nd Vice President Marie Buchanan, RVP Lauraine Armstrong—Fort Smith, (back row l to r) RVP Alex Lambrecht—Somba K'e; RVP Ivan Landry—Kimberlite; RVP Chris Potyok—North Great Slave; President Todd Parsons; RVP Val Robertson—Beaufort Delta/Sahtu; Equity Vice President Miriam Gordon; RVP Roy Courtoreille—Hay River.

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President Todd Parsons Acceptance

Newly re-elected President Todd Parsons thanked delegates for their strong demonstration of support for his renewed presidency. He repeated the priorities emphasized in his campaign: completion of the new House of Labour building project; protecting the gains of past agreements and pursuing continuing improvements in future contracts; a steady increase in communications with members and heightened public profile and recognition for the UNW; and, fighting any further contracting out of services, and the NEBS pension bill.



Delegates Step Up on Donations

The Silent Auction at the Convention banquet raised \$5,000 for the Lynn Brooks Safe Place for Women in Yellowknife. The contribution was matched from UNW special funding for a total donation of \$10,000. Sister Adama Stevens of Local #3 passed the donation box and challenged locals to contribute to an Ebola emergency donation for Doctors Without Borders. Almost \$10,000 was raised. Further donations can be sent to Local 3, PO Box 2753, Inuvik, X0E 0T0.



Aboriginal Blessing Closes Convention

Deh Cho Regional Vice President Christina Holman lead (left to right) President Todd Parsons, Recording Secretary Louise Lagace, 1st Vice President Gayla Thunstrom and all delegates in an Aboriginal Blessing to close proceedings.

***“Building
Solidarity
Through
Representation”***

