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uniforum



Unifor marked the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination with a special event at the Local 1285 hall on March 20 with speeches, dance and awards.

Unifor mobilizes for Prairie elections

Unifor activists across Saskatchewan contributed to the Saskatchewan NDP's gains in the provincial election held on April 4.

Although the conservative Saskatchewan Party won another term, the NDP picked up 10 seats, one more than they had going into the election, and strengthened its role as the principled defender of public services and Crown corporations.

"We knew this campaign was going to be challenging, which is why we focused our efforts on raising awareness about the value of Crown corporations in the everyday lives of people in Saskatchewan," said Joie Warnock, Unifor Western Director.

"There is no doubt that Saskatchewan's profitable Crown corporations will be

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Unifor fights racism

Unifor marked the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination with an event March 20 at the Unifor Local 1285 union hall in Brampton, Ontario.

The event was put on by the GTA Aboriginal and Workers of Colour caucus and the Women's Committee from Local 1285 Brampton.

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Comox closure date set despite several concerns

Despite the protests of front line officers that is a dangerous move, the Canadian Coast Guard is rushing ahead with plans to close the Marine Communications and Traffic Services (MCTS) centre in Comox, B.C., on May 10.

Unifor Local 2182 says that ongoing audio quality issues at other MCTS centres are so serious that

the safety of vessels and the coastline are at risk.

"Radio transmissions received in Victoria and Prince Rupert are, in some circumstances, literally impossible to understand," said Joie Warnock, Unifor's Western Director. "The coast guard needs to put the brakes on and analyze the threat to marine safety. We aren't waiting to say 'we

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Join Unifor at CALM

If you are involved with communications in your local read this!

The Canadian Association of Labour Media (CALM) is the only organization that brings labour communicators (web administrators, newsletter writers and editors) together, across unions, regions and sectors, to strategize and acquire tools to improve communications.

This year's annual conference is in Quebec City on May 12-14. Unifor is excited to hold a special lunchtime session on Saturday, May 14 for all Unifor members.

No matter what your skill level is, this is an opportunity to learn, to share and to strengthen your skills – so join us!

Register online today at calm.ca/conference.



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Reach us at:

Uniforum

Unifor Communications
205 Placer Court, Fifth Floor
Toronto, Ontario, M5H 3H9

1-800-268-5763

communications@unifor.org

www.unifor.org

Speak out with Unifor on gender inequality

Women in Canada still make 30 per cent less than men in non-union workplaces. The reality for racialized and First Nations women and women with a disability is that the average gap substantially increases given the discrimination these women face.

Annually Equal Pay Day, which is primarily marked in Ontario is celebrated in April, this year it is Tuesday, April 19. This day reflects the date that women have to work to earn the same amount that men earned at the end of the previous year. On Equal Pay Day, join Unifor by wearing red to symbolize how far women are "in the red." Share a photo of you or with members from your union local on social media and



On April 19, Tweet or post on Facebook a photo of yourself wearing a red shirt, with the hashtag #EqualPayDay.

include #EqualPayDay.

"Closing the gender wage gap is about more than just about pay equity, legislation on pay isn't enough to tip the scales of inequality for working women," Women's Director Lisa Kelly said.

Unifor made a submission to the Gender Wage Gap

Committee calling for government action. Learn more at unifor.org.

"The government has a fundamental role to play in each of these areas, but to ensure change is more than a few cents in wages we must keep pressure on the government," Kelly said.

>> Continued from "Unifor fights racism..." on page 1

There were several speakers, and Winnie Ng, who retires in June as the CAW-Sam Gindin Chair in Social Justice and Democracy at Ryerson University, was given an award in recognition of her efforts to help working people and to fight racism.

Ng encouraged those gathered to keep up the good fight, spread the word, and have a stronger more diverse union.

Unifor International Department Director Mohamad Alsadi called for the end of mistreatment of Aboriginal Workers & Workers of Colour. He also called for greater participation in union leadership from diverse groups.



Winnie Ng, who retires in June as the CAW-Sam Gindin Chair in Social Justice and Democracy at Ryerson University, was presented with a special award by Andrew Young from Local 4271.

Farheen Khan, who ran as an NDP candidate in Mississauga in the last federal election, described how her community built a mosque when she was a child. Khan said that once she started wearing a hijab she experienced

discrimination at school. It was then that she vowed not to compromise out of fear.

Entertainment was provided by Aboriginal women hand drummers and the Ngoma Afrikan Drum and Dance Ensemble.

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under attack under Brad Wall’s next term, so it was important for us to begin our campaign now.”

Unifor members Jennifer Bowes and Greg Olson ran spirited campaigns in Saskatoon-University and Yorkton respectively, with Bowes nearly winning her seat.

They were assisted by numerous Unifor activists and union leadership.

“I’m very proud of our campaign in this election, and I am looking forward to continuing to build our activist base to hold the Sask Party government accountable,” said Christy Best, Unifor’s Prairies Council Chairperson.

Unifor activists also made

significant contributions in Saskatoon-Westview, Regina Douglas Park, and Moose Jaw Wakamow.

Next door, Unifor activists are playing a significant role in the Manitoba election, set for April 19, helping out local candidates and contributing to the provincial efforts.

NDP Premier Greg Selinger is vying for another term in office. Advance polls open April 9, and remain open for a week until April 16

For a primer on the main issues in the Manitoba election, go to: unifor.org/manitobavotes.

“The Conservatives are threatening to take us backwards towards an era of divisive cutbacks and labour strife,” the site warns

The site looks at such



Unifor Local 468 activists came out recently in support of Winnipeg NDP candidate Nahanni Fontaine in the ongoing Manitoba election.

issues as safety at work, childcare, fighting poverty and retiring with dignity.

The NDP has pledged to invest \$25 million in building community-operated childcare facilities if elected

Unifor is encouraging its 12,900 members in the province to get involved with the election.

“This election is a stark choice between making progress on social

and economic issues or letting the Conservatives implement Stephen Harper-style policies in Manitoba,” Unifor National President Jerry Dias says in a letter to Manitoba members.

“The government hasn’t been perfect, but real progress has been made over the last decade that we should fight to protect and build upon. I don’t believe now is the time to go backwards.”

>> Continued from “Comox closure date set...” on page 1

told you so’ after a tragic accident.”

To hear the transmission go to: soundcloud.com/unifor

The coast guard is choosing to close the Comox centre even before an ongoing study by the House of Commons Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans wraps up in May.

“It is grossly improper for the coast guard to act without the Standing Committee’s recommendation,” said Warnock.

“The coast guard is acting without the input of Parliament and against the vigorous objection of front line communications officers who know the risks

better than anyone else.”

The Comox location provides an emergency back-up for Victoria and Prince Rupert MCTS centres as the only centre located outside the tsunami hazard zone and built to post disaster standards.

By monitoring traffic, MCTS centres are the first line of defense for mariners in distress or when an ecological disaster strikes.

Over the last two years, nine of the 22 MCTS centres were closed without consulting industry, mariners, the public, or the union.

Allan Hughes, President Unifor Local 2182, which represents Coast Guard workers, is scheduled to testify before the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans in Ottawa on April 12 about MCTS closures.

Accucaps lockout ends after three weeks

Unifor Local 27 members at drug manufacturer Accucaps Industries in Strathroy, Ontario, are back on the job after being locked out for more than two weeks.

“This puts the company in a competitive position, it helps our members,” Local 27 President Jim Reid told local media.

The 140 members ratified a new deal March 27. They had been locked out March 10, with the company offering no wage increases for about 90 per cent of the members.

The deal includes wage increases for the lowest paid workers of \$1.50 an hour, about 60 per cent of the membership. The top-

paid members get a lump sum equal to 2.5 per cent of their pay.

All members will get a \$600 signing bonus and improvements to vision and other benefit plans.

The plant makes gelatin capsules for drugs and vitamins.





IN THIS ISSUE Unifor will continue to stand up for Crown corporations after the Saskatchewan election. Unifor fights racism. Local communicators encouraged to attend the CALM Conference in May. Equity Day is April 19. Accucaps lockout ends with pay increases for the lowest paid.

Adopt child care changes, Unifor urges Nova Scotia

Unifor is urging Nova Scotia to immediately implement the recommendations from its review on regulated child care.

“The report’s findings speak for themselves that our child care system is in desperate need of investment,” said Unifor Atlantic Regional Director Lana Payne.

“Child care workers are severely underpaid and there are simply not enough regulated spaces in the province. Parents also need affordable and accessible childcare. This will be such a great boost for families, and for our economy.”

The Nova Scotia Review of Regulated Child Care

issued recently echoes many of the concerns outlined in Unifor’s submission to the government on child care.

Nova Scotia’s child care workers earn \$4 per hour less than the national average and are the lowest-paid in the country, many making barely above minimum wage.

Unifor child care workers at Town Day Care in Cape Breton were on strike last March and brought attention to the serious challenges facing childcare in the province, including how underpaid early childhood educators are.

“This is a battle we’ve been fighting for over 30



Unifor is encouraging the Nova Scotia government to live up to the recommendations in its recent report on childcare.

years in this province, as we’ve been consistently under-funded,” said Lisa Gentile, Local 4600 unit chair. “The kids and the parents deserve more. We need changes sooner rather than later.”

“The benefits of investing in early childhood education and child care can be seen quickly and impact everything from health outcomes, to education outcomes to economic activity,” said Payne.