



IN THIS ISSUE:
UNIFOR TAKES ACTION ON PARLIAMENT HILL
 >> **PAGE 2**
MEMBER APPEAL TO HELP DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SHELTERS
 >> **PAGE 4**
BLACK HISTORY MONTH POSTER
 INSIDE

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Members advocate for gender equality at the Women's March in London, ON.

The women are marching

On January 21, the day after the US inauguration took place, millions of people worldwide took to the streets to participate in the Women's March and Unifor was well represented in 30 Canadian cities.

Although the original call to action was for a march in Washington, the protest went international to support women in the United States who are fighting for justice and to collectively raise our voices for gender equity. Here in Canada, organizers also wanted to send our own governments a message that we won't be silent or idle around attacks on gender equity or an agenda of hate, racism and bigotry. The overall message of the day was to say no to hate and yes to justice, equity and social change.

Canadian organizers acknowledged that the lived experience of racism, xenophobia, homophobia and transphobia, sexism

>> **Continued on page3**

Social Justice Fund improves lives

The Unifor Social Justice Fund is actively improving the lives of people in Canada and around the globe, with 103 projects in 44 countries receiving funding this year.

"The Social Justice Fund supports a wide variety of worthy causes," said Unifor

>> **Continued on page2**

BC training activates election organizing

British Columbia's upcoming provincial election could put an end to the failing 16-year Liberal reign.

Unifor activists from across BC are rolling up their sleeves to be a key part of turning the tide back towards a progressive government. On January 27 and 28, more than 30 members from Kitimat, Prince George, Vancouver,

Island, and Metro Vancouver gathered at the union's Western Regional office to develop a plan and build outreach skills.

"We have a responsibility to mobilize union members," said Krista Lee Munro, a member at Local 111 who is booked off to coordinate Unifor's efforts in target ridings in the Metro Vancouver area.

>> **Continued on page3**

Unifor Celebrates Black History Month

During Black History Month, Unifor honours the history, heritage and resistance of people of African and Caribbean descent in Canada.

The month is a time to educate and rededicate ourselves to the effort of building a just society, and to continue to challenge discrimination and anti-black racism whenever, and wherever, it is encountered.

Throughout February, events will take place in communities to recognize, share and celebrate the achievements and contributions made by members of the Black community. If your local is organizing an event, share the details with us! Email: communications@unifor.org

Included in this newsletter is a Black History Month poster to display on your union bulletin board.



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Unifor members take it to the hill

Dozens of Unifor members were in Ottawa this week as part of two separate lobby efforts, meeting with Members of Parliament to discuss challenges facing the media industry, and the future of medicare.

"Consumption of news and information in Canada has never been higher," said Unifor Media Director Howard Law, who led a delegation of 20 journalists and workers.

"Never before has there been such incredible access to media, including news, television and movies, whenever and wherever wanted."

The challenge however is that the ad-driven model for funding production of the news and ensuring Canadian content in our media is



Strategy sessions to prepare to lobby MP's in support of Canadian media.

cheap digital ads from tech giants such as Google and Facebook, Law said, making it increasingly difficult to pay for all that content being consumed at record levels.

"Canadians must have access to reliable national and international news and to local news and programming that will inform them about their communities," Law said.

Also in Ottawa were about 50 Unifor members engaged in a lobby organized by the Canadian Health Coalition

bring in a national pharmacare program.

"Despite universal medicare, we need a national pharmacare program to not only increase access to health care, but to lower overall drug costs," said Katha Fortier, Assistant to the National President, who took part in the CHC lobby.

Unifor has been a strong advocate for improving medicare, including establishing a pharmacare program.

>> Continued from "Social Justice Fund improves lives" on page!

Director, Human Rights and International Department Mohamad Alsadi. "The fund sponsors front-line humanitarian, development and social justice programs that are working to help create a better world for us and for the next generation."

Unifor's social justice work maintains a local, Canadian and international focus. Projects in Canada include Aboriginal education initiatives, refugee sponsorship, support for women's shelters and donations to food banks, while internationally assistance provides health care, financial aid and protection for worker and human rights in developing



Social Justice Fund donations to the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) assist displaced Syrian children to access shelter, food, schooling and community services.

countries.

The Social Justice Fund is a registered charity, maintained by contributions from Unifor employers negotiated during collective bargaining. Currently, one-third of all Unifor collective agreements support the Fund. In an effort to

increase participation to all workplaces and expand the charitable work carried out on behalf of members the union has made it a priority.

To learn more about our Social Justice Fund and how your local can get involved visit unifor.org/sjf

>> Continued from “The women are marching” on page 1

and oppression existed long before President Trump took power, but the mobilizations were important because his actions and words have provided a new opening for hate.

From coast to coast to coast Unifor members took to the streets to march in solidarity and raise our voices for gender justice.

Toronto was one of

the largest gatherings as more than 60,000 demonstrators marched through downtown with signs, chants and of course pink knitted hats. About a thousand people gathered in Halifax, one of the largest crowds ever seen at Grand Parade. Speakers included Unifor Canadian Freelance Union member Suzanne MacNeil, who spoke of the dangers of authoritarians like Trump who promise working people the moon.



Sisters represent at the Halifax Women's March.

>> Continued from “BC training activates...” on page 1

“From union organizing rights to good resource jobs, working people have lost so much under the BC Liberals.”

Unifor has identified five key issues for the member-to-member campaign, priorities focus on areas critical to reducing inequality and building a more sustainable province. Policies and research on childcare, transit, forestry, minimum wage, and housing will also help inform campaign materials and expose the government's record.

“The Christy Clark government has made a mess of everything from public education to public transit,” said Gavin McGarrigle, BC Area

Director. “Unifor will pull out all of the stops to elect a government that will side with working people, not wealthy donors.”

Throughout the weekend, Unifor activists heard from NGO campaign specialists at Organize BC about tactics for recruiting volunteers and organizing phone and door-to-door canvasses.

“There are no shortcuts to making change, especially during provincial elections,” said Celine Trojand, a trainer with Organize BC who facilitated many sessions. “It's really important that Unifor creates a space for union activists to come together, learn concrete tools for election organizing and start mobilizing.”



Marching Unifor strong at the Ontario Legislature.

In Newfoundland, due to a winter storm, organizers got creative and took their action online.

The Women's March was one form of resistance but this must continue. Recent events have shown that now is an important moment to come together to push for social justice for the most marginalized and oppressed among us.

Whether it is through

union education, political action, or government lobbying - together our union can make a difference in the face of hate. Unifor Women's Committees are already talking about organizing for International Women's Day on March 8 - stay tuned!

View more Women's March photos at:

[Facebook.com/UniforCanada](https://www.facebook.com/UniforCanada)

Join the Canadian Association of Labour Media

Does your Local struggle to generate content for your website? Are you constantly searching for articles or images for your newsletters? Would you like to have access to a network of union communications workers and volunteers?

The Canadian Association of Labour Media (CALM) is a cooperative of 200 unions in all regions and sectors across Canada. CALM organizes conferences and training, creates content and coordinates Canada's only awards program for excellence in union communications. CALM members have access to consulting services, discounted rates for the annual CALM conference

and use of all CALM content and presentation modules for free.

If you could benefit from some extra communications help, consider joining CALM. Membership dues start at \$110 for unions with up to 500 members and increase slightly based on membership size.

The annual CALM conference will take place May 5 - 7 in Toronto. From writing techniques, website building and basic photography workshops to engaging panel discussions, the bilingual conference is the essential event for all union communications workers and volunteers. For more information please visit www.calm.ca.



IN THIS ISSUE Members rally at Women's Marches to fight misogyny, racism and fear. Unifor takes action in Ottawa as Parliament resumes. BC activists ready for political battle with election training. Unifor's Social Justice Fund, making a difference locally and around the world. Celebrating Black History Month and more!

Small gesture has big impact

One person can make a difference. This is the message that Tom Murphy, retired member and past President of Unifor Local 101R, wants to share.

During his five terms as President, Murphy made a point when travelling to collect complimentary toiletries from hotels that he stayed in. Each morning he would gather soaps, shampoo, conditioner, and lotion, ensuring the products would be replenished during multi-night stays for him to collect again the next day.

Every December, Tom and his wife Susan would sort and pack up the personal care items to deliver to Calgary's YW Sheriff King Home crisis

shelter, a haven for women and their children fleeing family violence, for use and distribution to other local women's shelters.

"It's a simple gesture but one person, over one year, can collect a fair amount," said Murphy.

Since Murphy retired he no longer travels as extensively, now he is appealing to other members to carry on his generous tradition.

"I ask all those who travel or attend conventions to please take up the practice of collecting and donating the toiletries that are included in your room," said Murphy. "It's a very simple task, but it can have such a huge impact."

If you don't travel often,



Tom Murphy, retired member and past President of Local 101R, aids domestic violence shelters by collecting and donating hotel toiletries.

toiletries, first aid supplies and other health essentials can be purchased directly to donate to crisis and homeless shelters in a community near you. You may also consider converting your drug or grocery store loyalty card

points into a gift card to donate.

Do you have a story to share? If you know of a Unifor member, or if your Local is helping to make a difference in the community share your story by emailing communications@unifor.org.