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VOLUME 2, NO.8

WWW.UNIFOR.ORG

APRIL 24, 2014

uniforum



Bell Canada workers rallied twice this month to protest reclassifications that led to pay cuts. Story Page 3.

Yussuff running for CLC president

Hassan Yussuff, a committed labour activist with deep roots in Unifor, has announced that he is running to be the next president of the Canadian Labour Congress.

Unifor's National Executive Board has unanimously endorsed

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Unifor meets Bangladeshi workers

Two members of Unifor's National Executive Board were part of a delegation to Bangladesh this week to meet with survivors of last year's deadly Rana Plaza collapse, their families and government and union leaders.

"Workers in Bangladesh need greater rights to free

collective bargaining, as well as safe workplaces and a living wage," said Randy Kitt, Unifor's Media Sector chair, in Bangladesh with Ruth Pryce, the Aboriginal and Racialized Workers representative on the NEB.

They met several workers and families, including: Sharla, whose brother died in the collapse, leaving three children; Shahana, whose daughter died and her body was never recovered; Majiber, pinned under the rubble for four days listening to co-workers' screams; and

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Be visible, Dias says

Labour leaders need to make themselves more visible if they hope to fight off the attacks on working people in this country, Unifor National President Jerry Dias told a recent Leadership meeting in Toronto.

"We need to be out there, making our voices heard. That's how we make a difference," Dias said.

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#unifor

Here's a selection of tweets about @UniforTheUnion

@esooze: #unifor stevedores & labour movement will act if Sydney Ports Corp doesn't reverse decision to go non-union thechronicleherald.ca/novascotia/120... #canlab

@Jordan_J_T: #Unifor's J.Brennan: "labour unions are a key part of the institutional basis of a shared prosperity" @ccpa series: ow.ly/vTg6Y

In brief

CLC Summer School

The Canadian Labour Congress will be hosting two week-long schools at the Family Education Centre in Port Elgin this summer

First will be the Women's Summer School, July 13-18. Courses include Instructor Training for Women, Nurturing and Empowering Health and Safety Women Advocates, Parliamentary Procedure and Public Speaking for Women, Sisters in the Struggle (ETFO members only), Union Communications for Women, and Women in Leadership.

The following week, July 20-25, will be the Ontario Region's Summer School. Courses include Collective Bargaining, Facing Management, Instructor Training, OFL-ODRT WCB Program, Steward Training, Taking Unions into the Next Generation and Transforming Conflict. These two schools are a great opportunity to connect with members from a variety of unions, to benefit from expert instructors and to build our collective skills through high-quality labour education.


If you have any questions about the schools, please contact the CLC Ontario Regional Office at 416-441-3710 or 1-800-387-3500, ext. 222 or 221, or email ontario@clc-ctc.ca. 

Photo spotlight: Bangladesh

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PHOTO BY RANDY KITT

Two Unifor NEB members went to Bangladesh for the anniversary of the Rana Plaza



PHOTO BY RANDY KITT

Life is difficult for working people in Bangladesh, where good jobs are scarce.

Bill C-525 a step backward

Despite a last-minute amendment removing the worst part of the Harper government's anti-labour Bill C-525, the newly passed bill is still a big step backward for labour law in this country. Unifor, Canada's biggest union in the private sector, is calling for it to be defeated in the Senate.


"This bill would set federal labour legislation and labour relations back decades, and for no good

reason," said Unifor National President Jerry Dias.

Bill C-525, which received third and final approval in the House of Commons last week and now proceeds to the Senate, would make it more difficult to organize a union in federally regulated industries - such as telecommunications, railways and airlines - and easier for a union's bargaining rights to be

revoked.

The bill would also end the current provision for certification without a vote where a majority of workers in a workplace have signed a union card.

"Once a majority of workers have declared that they want to join a union by signing cards, the government should not stand in the way of them doing so by erecting a second obstacle to certification," Dias said. 

Embrace diversity for renewal

The labour movement needs to embrace diversity, including young workers, immigrant workers, and women, a recent guest to Unifor's British Columbia office told activists there.

Unifor Local 2002 hosted Kent Wong, director of the Centre for Labour Research & Education at University of California at Los Angeles, at the New Westminster office on April 12.

Wong said unions will not be successful in outreach to existing


members, or have much luck organizing new ones, unless the movement's leadership reflects the diversity of its membership.

Wong also stressed the need to reclaim political power through grassroots organizing. He said that, in the United States, when the labour movement has relied on the Democratic Party alone to protect the rights of workers, unions have been regularly disappointed.

Instead, Wong advocates for building and



Kent Wong spoke to BC activists.

maintaining a more engaged and mobilized membership base that can put political pressure on governments of all stripes at all levels. 


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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Parveen, who lost her husband, and can no longer send her children to school.

“Meeting some of the Rana Plaza family’s and survivors was very heart-wrenching,” Pryce said.

NDP MP Matthew Kellway and seven other Canadian union representatives were also in the delegation meeting a Bangladeshi garment union leader to offer support. Rana Plaza, where workers made clothes for top North American brands, collapsed April 24, 2013, killing 1,129 people.

The tragedy was the focus of Unifor’s World Day for Decent Work declaration last fall. 

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Many of the industries that Unifor represents are facing challenges these days, including the media, Dias said, speaking at the offices of Local 87-M, which represents workers at Ontario’s top newspapers.

Those challenges won’t be met without talking to our members, Dias said, adding we can’t stop there. It is vital, he said, that labour leaders also talk to non-members, to politicians and to business people.

That’s how change is made, he said.

“Unifor was born to change Canada,” Dias said.

“And we are going to build Unifor by being an organization that our



Toronto Mayoral Candidate Olivia Chow, second from right, spoke at the Toronto Leadership meeting.

members are proud of.”

Toronto mayoral candidate and former NDP MP Olivia Chow also spoke, saying governments can do more to help young people

find jobs and build a future.

“To start with, we can require that any company getting a city contract have apprenticeships for young workers,” said Chow. 

Navistar Update

Hearings before the Financial Services Tribunal wrapped up earlier this month in the ongoing Navistar pension wind up dispute.

Much evidence was put forward, and the Unifor team believes the original decision of the Acting Superintendent supporting the union’s position will be upheld.

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Yussuff’s candidacy.

“Hassan has a tremendous passion and commitment towards improving the lives of workers and their families,” Unifor National President Jerry Dias said.


“This would be an important progressive step, not only for our union but for the entire labour movement.”

Yussuff became active in his union while working at the GM Truck Centre, then represented by the CAW. He came through the ranks as an activist and plant chairperson before joining the staff at the CAW, eventually being named the union’s first National Human Rights Director.

Yussuff has been

Secretary-Treasurer of the CLC since 2002, and co-chaired the CLC Anti-Racism Task Force. He fought successfully to persuade the Harper Conservative government to protect workers’ wages during bankruptcy.

More recently, he has worked closely with Unifor to improve the Canada Pension Plan, as well as providing strategic leadership against Bill C-377. Internationally, Yussuff is President of the Trade Union Confederation of the Americas.

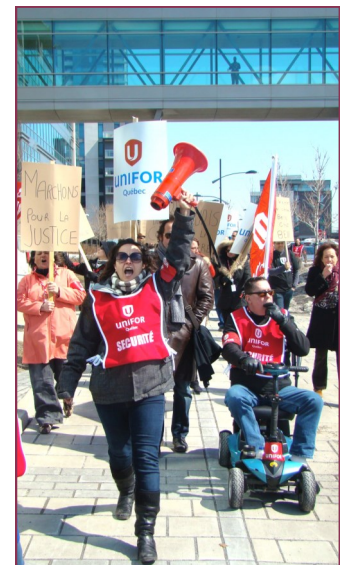
All Unifor locals are encouraged to send their full delegation to the CLC Convention in Montreal from May 5 to 9. Any locals with unused credentials should courier original forms immediately to Peter Kennedy, National Secretary-Treasurer. 

Bell workers rally

Bell Canada workers in Quebec rallied twice this month to protest the company’s decision to reclassify more than 350 members in Ontario and Quebec.


The move would see many members moved to a lower wage class. Unifor, which negotiated a salary freeze for the duration of the current collective agreement, has strongly denounced this measure and has instructed its legal team to examine possible courses of action to challenge it under the law and the collective agreement.

Members in Montreal and Quebec City organized marches on April 3 and 17 to show their solidarity and support for affected



Bell Canada workers rallied twice in April.

members.

Unifor represents more than 26,700 telecommunication workers across Canada. 

Oilsands worker killed on eve of Day of Mourning

This year's Day of Mourning to recognize workers killed on the job comes just days after an oilsands worker died on the job, the second one this year.

"With great sadness we report the death of a member in a workplace facility," Unifor Local 707A Secretary-Treasurer Angela Adams wrote in a letter to members of the Fort McMurray local.

Shane Daye, 27, who grew up in Fort MacMurray, was killed April 20 in an

area that contained electrical panels. The Suncor employee had just earned his journeyman electrical ticket.

"Every year, hundreds of thousands suffer injury or illness because of their working conditions," Unifor National President Jerry Dias said in a recent letter to Unifor locals across the country. "And some of these workers die on the job."

Dias is urging Unifor leaders and activists to actively support Day of

Mourning observances in their communities on April 28, often organized by local labour councils.

"Let us collectively ensure that this year's Day of Mourning observances sends a strong message to all governments of their obligation and responsibility to strongly enforce health and safety laws and regulations," Dias wrote.

"We need to tell our elected politicians we want action and we intend to support only those who will

give us this commitment."

There were 977 on-the-job deaths in Canada in 2012, a 29 per cent increase since 1993, Saskatchewan and Yukon had the highest per-capita death rates.

Women are far more likely than men to be killed in the workplace by firearms.

There were 245,365 workplace injuries across Canada in 2012 that were serious enough to force people to stop working. 

Nova Scotia local raises funds to save a landmark

Members of Local 2182 proudly launched the "Save Canada's Lighthouses" wristband campaign at the Atlantic Regional Council meeting in Halifax.

Eight-year-old Anderson Fukala, son of a local member, came up with an idea to sell red and white wristbands for \$2 in support of a community heritage society.

This society is dedicated


specifically to the protection of the Sambro Island lighthouse located at the entrance of the Halifax harbour. Rich in history, this is the oldest surviving lighthouse in North America, having served Canada since 1759.

Members worked with junior volunteers who managed to sell more than 100 wristbands in just over a day. Sales surpassed



Eight-year-old Anderson, son of a Unifor member and seen here with Unifor National President, is raising money to save a Nova Scotia lighthouse.

1,000 for the week and the local continues to help with printing, shipping, and Twitter promotions. Visit

www.2182.ca or [@UniforLocal2182](https://twitter.com/UniforLocal2182) for wristband and campaign info. 

Sydney stevedores take their case to mayor

Unifor Local 4624 workers met with Sydney Mayor Cecil Clarke after being told they no longer had jobs due to a Sydney Ports Corp. decision to hire non-unionized workers ahead of the upcoming cruise ship season.

"It is nothing more than pure arrogance from Sydney Ports Corp. Inc. to dismiss the workers and their union rights without

any discussion," said Linda MacNeil, National Representative for Unifor.

"This could also impact the strong economic stimulus the cruise ship season brings to the City of Sydney and surrounding communities."

The municipality leases the dock to Sydney Ports Corp. MacNeil pointed to the arrival of a new company, Logistec, last

year as a good example of how to avoid any interruptions in service at the dock. Logistec signed a memorandum of agreement recognizing the union and no labour disruptions occurred.

MacNeil said he is confident that city council will act quickly to address this issue ahead of the May 7 start to the cruise ship season.

The sudden change in staffing has also raised questions about how the Sydney Ports Corp. plans to operate in the future.

"This is the kind of act we'd expect from a multinational corporation with no roots in our community, not from one of our own," said Lana Payne, Unifor Atlantic Regional Director. 