



# CUPE CELEBRATES . . . YEAR IN REVIEW 2011

Much accomplished, more to do



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# Much accomplished, more to do

Last year was a year of ground-breaking accomplishments and unprecedented challenges for our union.

From the worker takeover of Wisconsin's legislature to the regime-toppling Arab spring; from the birth of the Occupy movement, to the New Democratic Party's election as Canada's official opposition, many of 2011's defining moments were ones of collective action for a better world.

The call for democratic change, social justice and equality resonated in CUPE, as many members faced new challenges

in their workplaces, at the bargaining table, and in their communities. Their creative and courageous fightbacks led to many wins, and continue to build a stronger, more connected union.

Our members were engaged on many fronts, including in the democratic process. We were part of the historic federal NDP win, electing seven CUPE members and staff to the House of Commons. From coast to coast our members were on the front line defending public services and demonstrating leadership in their communities.

Faced with tragedy, our members opened their arms to each other and their neighbours. CUPE members pulled together as residents of Slave Lake fled wildfires, and showed similar support to flood-devastated communities in Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Quebec. The solidarity and compassion in the wake of the tragic First Air crash was another moment that moved and inspired our union.

CUPE's strength is in the communities where our members live and work. Canadians know us as their neighbours – the people who deliver vital public services and are active in many local groups and

sports teams. Every day, in cities and towns across the country, our members are deepening those community alliances, building the support and solidarity we need to stand together against right-wing attacks.

We can all be proud of CUPE's work in 2011. We stood up for public services, fought for fairness and equality, and defended workers' rights. In doing so, we made a difference in our communities and right across the country. We truly are building a better Canada.



*Paul Moist.*

Paul Moist  
National President

*Charles Fleury.*

Charles Fleury  
National Secretary-Treasurer



## Campaigns and political action



2011 was the year that shone a spotlight on inequality in a bold new way as the Occupy movement drew a stark contrast between the wealthiest one per cent and the 99 per cent.

Across the country – including a major demonstration at national convention – CUPE backed the occupiers' passionate and articulate call for a fairer, more equitable society.

There's a clear relationship between unionization and equality – and a pressing need to defend unions as inequality worsens. When more workers are unionized, equality increases for the 99 per cent. When unionization goes down, inequality gets worse and the one per cent get richer.

The ongoing recession fuelled cutbacks and anti-union attacks not just federally, but also in some provinces and municipalities. Now more than ever, political action, campaigns and collective bargaining go hand-in-hand for CUPE members.

Federally, the tone was set with the election of a majority Conservative government that wasted no time attacking free collective bargaining and workers' right to strike.

CUPE took action in solidarity with locked-out members of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers as they fought back-to-work legislation, and backed striking Canadian Auto Workers members as the Harper government tried the same tactic.

The Harper government's attack on workers' rights continued with Air Canada flight attendants. After a decade of sacrifices, the 6,800 members of CUPE's Air Canada Component were in bargaining and facing pressure for more concessions – despite the company's improving financial situation and pay raises for top executives. Our



members stood strong against the threat of back-to-work legislation and reached a new collective agreement in arbitration.

CUPE also took a stand with federal public sector unions against public services cuts. The National Executive Board (NEB) resolved to fight austerity measures that cut services and spending in the federal public sector.

### Taking action at the ballot box

CUPE played a key role in the NDP's incredible federal election breakthrough, working closely with the NDP and the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) to win the vast majority of 77 targeted ridings. Countless members and staff volunteered, and

24 ran as candidates. Seven of the NDP's seats are held by present or former members of the CUPE family.

The incredible win was tempered by shock and sadness at the death of federal NDP leader Jack Layton. Jack was a great friend of CUPE, and we will continue to fight for our shared vision of social justice.

In Manitoba, CUPE was central to the NDP winning an unprecedented fourth consecutive majority government. Among those elected are a CUPE 500 member and a former CUPE 3909 member. CUPE Manitoba also led an anti-privatization campaign, supported by the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada (CEP) and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), that successfully made hydro privatization an election issue.

In October, Ontarians elected a Liberal minority government and sent 17 New Democrats to the legislature. CUPE mobilized in targeted ridings and laid out the issues that matter, helping increase the NDP popular vote and blocking a Tory victory. A highlight was Jagmeet Singh's breakthrough win as the first NDP MPP in the Peel Region and the Ontario NDP's first Sikh MPP.

CUPE helped the NDP make a historic breakthrough in Newfoundland and Labrador. The party picked up a record-high five seats in October's provincial election, and placed a strong second in 23 ridings. Four CUPE members ran good campaigns, finishing second in each case.

In Prince Edward Island, CUPE put privatization on the election agenda with a public meeting on P3s. The meeting drew candidates from all parties, including the provincial finance minister.

CUPE BC's Strong Communities working group for the Nov. 19 municipal elections undertook the greatest member outreach ever. CUPE staff and activists called more than 20,000 members. In all, 25 CUPE members, staff or retirees were among more than 200 winning labour-endorsed candidates.

CUPE also mobilized to elect a labour-endorsed candidate in a Winnipeg municipal by-election. The crucial victory takes away the two-thirds council support the mayor needs to privatize municipal services.



### DID YOU KNOW...

ABOUT ONE IN EVERY 30 CANADIAN WORKERS IS A CUPE MEMBER.





DID YOU KNOW...

COLLECTIVELY, CUPE MEMBERS EARNED OVER \$23 BILLION IN WAGES IN 2011, PAID \$3 BILLION IN FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL INCOME TAXES AND ALMOST \$700 MILLION IN GST IN 2011.

CUPE and its allies rallied at the Quebec National Assembly in December, calling for a public debate on CETA and its consequences for public services.

## Making our voices heard

CUPE members were out in force on Parliament Hill and in their communities to save the gun registry and protect public health care. Our members mobilized to lobby their MPs against Bill C-19, which eliminates the federal gun registry and destroys all registry information on gun ownership. CUPE also submitted a brief to a parliamentary committee on the bill.

In December, CUPE health care workers and staff took part in an important Canadian Health Coalition lobby day on Parliament Hill. Activists met with MPs about the renewal of the federal-provincial health accord. Leading up to the lobby, members of CUPE's national Health Care Issues and Political Action committees met for two days of joint preparation and training.

CUPE also brought its message to the premiers during their annual meeting. The "Hey, Premiers!" online campaign urged members to write to their premier on health care, pensions, infrastructure invest-

ment and the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) between Canada and the European Union.

## Standing up for public services

Our members deliver the public services that keep communities strong and make Canada a good place to live. In tough times, we need public services even more. The recession and public sector cutbacks are hurting communities – hitting Aboriginal and racialized workers hardest.

CUPE's long history of fighting privatization and promoting public solutions continued in 2011. The National Executive Board voted to spend \$3,360,272 on 73 cost-shared campaigns for locals and divisions. Other local, provincial and national work was supported through CUPE's \$2.5-million anti-privatization fund. There were many campaign highlights in 2011.

CUPE and the Council of Canadians went across the country in a series of 16 town hall meetings that exposed the implications of CETA for municipalities and public services. The campaign has sparked calls for a full and transparent



public debate, as well as municipal resolutions demanding that provincial and territorial governments negotiate a permanent exemption for local governments from the deal.

The Hospital Employees' Union (HEU) and the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives produced a documentary that is an impassioned call for better seniors' care. *The Remaining Light* is an organizing tool that exposes the reality facing B.C. seniors through the voices of seniors, their families, and workers.

In B.C., CUPE stopped water privatization twice. Fraser Valley locals joined concerned residents and the Water Watch

Mission-Abbotsford coalition to defeat a major water P3 during the fall municipal election. The P3-boosting mayor was also defeated. Vancouver Island CUPE locals worked with the Alberni Valley Water Watch campaign to protect public water. In October, residents voted for the Beaver Creek Improvement District to join the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District, preventing a P3.

Penticton municipal workers (CUPE 608) won big in February when municipal council bowed to public pressure and voted to keep the local community centre public. Key to the effort was an electronic town hall meeting that drew 4,700 callers, most of them opposed to privatization.





Edmonton municipal workers (CUPE 30) convinced city council to keep snow removal services in house. By 9-4, council voted against the mayor's proposal to contract out 20 per cent of the city's snow removal.

Alberta workers also took on the privatization of services in Calgary parks (CUPE 37) and at the Red Deer College bookstore (CUPE 1445).

In Regina, municipal workers (CUPE 21) are pushing for the city's new curbside recycling program to be public. The local's message is that public delivery is more cost-effective and flexible.

In Ontario, long-term care workers in Sudbury (CUPE 148) and Peel (CUPE 966) mounted public campaigns to stop the sale of municipally-owned and operated homes.

Ottawa municipal workers (CUPE 503) worked with the city to compare public and private waste collection options. The study showed keeping the service in house saved the city nearly \$5 million over four years.

The City of Sherbrooke has brought all garbage collection back in house, saving \$750,000 a year. A city study of the costs of privatized and public pickups highlighted the savings. City workers (CUPE



2729) had pushed for the review after leaked documents hinted at the high costs of privatization.

Saint John, New Brunswick also brought all garbage collection back in house. The city had contracted out 19 waste collection routes. But after a financial analysis, the city agreed with CUPE 18 it is cheaper to do it in house, saving taxpayers \$500,000 a year.

Bringing road maintenance work back in house has cut the Nova Scotia government's costs in half. The provincial highway workers (CUPE 1867) campaigned for the three-year pilot project. Under privatized maintenance, contractors were inflating their bids to maintain rural areas, focusing on the profitable main arteries. Now, private bids are coming down.

After 30 years of using a private contractor, the Town of Conception Bay South, Newfoundland and Labrador, is bringing

its residential garbage collection in house. Municipal workers (CUPE 3034) will provide the services on a five-year trial basis, which includes hiring four new employees to do the work.

## Building equality

CUPE worked with the global labour movement to make workplace-based action on HIV/AIDS part of the final declaration of an important United Nations meeting. The declaration calls on employers, unions, workers and volunteers "to eliminate stigma and discrimination, protect human rights and facilitate access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support."

CUPE 951 won a victory at the University of Victoria for people with disabilities. The local filed more than 20 grievances in two years on behalf of 10 members, challenging the employer's failure to accommodate members with disabilities. This led to a mediated settlement where the

union won an expedited dispute resolution process.

CUPE Ontario held a successful human rights conference that launched a new employment equity campaign. The campaign will educate members and use collective bargaining as a tool to advance employment equity.

CUPE Manitoba also hosted a human rights conference where delegates learned about changing demographics and participated in workshops on workplace accommodation, First Nations water issues, racial justice, and transgender issues.

In keeping with a resolution at national convention put forward by our National Pink Triangle Committee, CUPE continues to make progress on bullying and harassment problems in the workplace through bargaining, education, and ongoing support for outside initiatives like Egale's *Safe Schools* campaign.







CUPE members celebrated when Saskatchewan's top court ruled early in the year that marriage commissioners cannot refuse to wed same-sex couples on religious grounds. CUPE had lobbied against a proposed law that would have allowed commissioners to cite their religion in refusing to wed couples.

## Ending violence against women

CUPE took on violence against women in many ways last year, including supporting the Native Women's Association of Canada and their Sisters In Spirit program as it faced funding cuts; speaking out and rallying against Bill C-91; and sponsoring and attending the international Women's Worlds 2011 conference.

We also demanded action for missing and murdered Aboriginal women by rallying twice on Parliament Hill, including at

the end of 4,500-kilometer Walk4Justice. Many CUPE members took part in the 91-day walk, which began in Vancouver and ended in Ottawa. CUPE Alberta's Aboriginal Council also launched a post-card campaign calling for an inquiry into the missing and murdered women.

## Solidarity with Aboriginal peoples

CUPE Ontario donated \$5,000 and collected emergency supplies for members of the Attawapiskat First Nation, who are facing a severe housing crisis. CUPE also raised \$5,000 for the Barriere Lake

Solidarity Fund through a raffle and donation from the NEB, and helped promote a benefit concert, all supporting the Algonquins of Barriere Lake in their struggle to regain control over natural resources on their territory.

CUPE members joined the Métis Nation – Saskatchewan (MN-S) in celebrating the 41<sup>st</sup> annual Back to Batoche Days in July. The event celebrates Métis culture and traditions at Batoche, the site of a key battle in the North-West Resistance of 1885. This year, CUPE released *River of Unity*, a documentary that follows CUPE canoeists on their three-day journey to the celebrations in 2010, where CUPE

signed a historic partnership agreement with the MN-S.

## Action on pensions

Activism to ensure everyone has a secure retirement continued in 2011, as members mobilized to expand public pensions and protect their workplace plans.

About 500 CUPE members in Quebec rallied in support of improved public pensions during their division convention, as part of the Quebec Federation of Labour's «Une retraite à l'abri des soucis!» (a worry-free retirement) campaign.



CUPE members and staff teamed up to defend Regina's municipal pension plan. The defined benefit plan covers 3,900 employees (mostly CUPE members) working for five employers. City council had rejected a contribution increase and the employers were pushing to close the plan and replace it with inferior arrangements. CUPE hired an independent actuary, got a second opinion, and continues to work for a negotiated joint solution.

CUPE continues to lead the labour movement as the only union providing yearly training for pension trustees. Thirty plan trustees and committee members representing 15 pension plans attended training in Vancouver. CUPE education staff also played a key role in developing the CLC's new pension training course.

## Child care

CUPE and the community won big in Alberta when the Edmonton Public School Board voted to keep large corporate child care chains out of schools. The board chair credited CUPE presentations for his decision. CUPE worked with the division and school board locals (CUPE 474, 784 and 3550), as well as allies Public Interest Alberta, to deliver the message that public child care works best.

In Newfoundland and Labrador, CUPE kept child care on the front burner by hosting public forums that made child care a provincial election issue, and releasing a poll showing extremely high support for public child care.

Child care was also a hot topic in Nova Scotia, where CUPE released a report showing the economic spinoffs of expanding public child care. The study shows investing in child care is the most effective way to stimulate the economy. The provincial community services minister joined CUPE to launch the report.

## Working for global justice

In March, the NEB adopted the Quality Public Services charter. The charter is part of the Public Services International (PSI) campaign to defend public services that are under attack and establish public services where none exist.

Early in 2011, Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker's attempt to eliminate the collective bargaining rights of state public sector workers sparked a massive uprising and occupation of the capitol building. CUPE took action in Canada and rallied with workers in Madison. National President Paul Moist attended one of the largest rallies in mid-March.

A year after the devastating earthquakes in Haiti, CUPE along with other public sector unions launched a project to provide financial and technical help to the Confederation of Public and Private Sector Workers, including rebuilding the union's headquarters.



# CUPE National Office

## Departments

## Activities

### National President's Office

Assists CUPE National President Paul Moist in carrying out his responsibilities as primary spokesperson for the union, raising CUPE's profile by strengthening relationships and taking the lead in developing policy. This year, Moist traveled to 25 communities. He attended over 40 CUPE events and 27 other labour-related events, as well as many other meetings.

### National Secretary-Treasurer's Office

Handles the planning and day-to-day operation of everything financial and administrative in CUPE. As National Secretary-Treasurer, Charles Fleury is committed to keeping CUPE's finances strong so members have the resources and support they need to defend public services.

### National Services Department

Coordinates and oversees the work of the communications, equality, legal and research, job evaluation and health and safety branches, as well as CUPE's international solidarity, economic analysis, anti-privatization and political action work.

### Communications Branch

Provides consultative and strategic advice, as well as hands-on communication support to CUPE's national officers and other branches and, through regional departments, to CUPE divisions, regions and locals. Advises on cost-share campaigns.

### Equality Branch

Advises CUPE national and regional committees on issues related to women, workers of colour, Aboriginal workers, people with disabilities and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual and intersex (LGBTTI) members. Helps committees advise their executive bodies on equality issues and takes action nationally, regionally and locally.

### Legal Branch

Provides advice, assistance and legal representation to CUPE locals, members and staff. Represents local unions and members at arbitration, labour boards and court hearings.

### Research, Job Evaluation, Health and Safety Branch

Has the largest research capacity of any union in Canada, providing expert analysis and advice on a wide range of issues facing our members. Provides members with resources to prevent and eliminate workplace hazards.

### Organizing and Regional Services Department

Coordinates the organization of new members. Oversees the work of CUPE's national representatives, and provides services to CUPE locals and members.

### Union Development Department

Offers a wide variety of workshops to help CUPE members develop the knowledge, skills and confidence to improve our workplaces and our society.

### Finance and Administration Department

Oversees CUPE's operating budget, which was \$162 million in 2011. The department also oversees the National Defence Fund, which had a 2011 budget of \$7.8 million, as well as total assets of about \$50 million in the National Strike Fund. Human Resources handles all staff relations, including hiring and relations with staff unions, and the Technology Unit designs and maintains CUPE's national information technology systems.

# CUPE coast to coast

CUPE has 618,000 members in 2,392 locals across the country.

## British Columbia

- Nearly 120,000 members in CUPE and its health services division, the Hospital Employees' Union. There are 171 CUPE locals and 291 HEU locals.
- Main sectors: health care, municipalities, K-12 education, libraries, post-secondary, paramedics, social services, transportation and airlines.

## Alberta

- More than 32,000 members in 107 locals.
- Main sectors: municipalities, school divisions, long-term care and airlines.

## Saskatchewan

- More than 28,000 members in 121 locals.
- Main sectors: health care, K-12 education, municipalities, universities, libraries and community-based organizations.

## Manitoba

- Nearly 27,000 members in 101 locals.
- Main sectors: health care facilities, municipalities, school divisions, social services, child care, public utilities and post-secondary education.

## Ontario

- More than 242,000 members in 711 locals.
- Main sectors: health care, municipalities, school boards, universities, social services and airlines.

## Quebec

- More than 108,000 members in 513 locals.
- Main sectors: municipalities, health care and social services, energy, universities, education, communications, public transit, public corporations and agencies, mixed sectors and airlines.





**LEGEND**

- Offices CUPE owns
- Offices CUPE is leasing to own
- Offices CUPE rents

**DID YOU KNOW...**

CUPE CONTINUES TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF OFFICES WE OWN, AND IS USING ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION AND RENOVATION PRACTICES. THIS YEAR, WE BOUGHT A BUILDING IN MARKHAM THAT WILL BECOME THE NEW ONTARIO REGIONAL OFFICE IN SPRING 2012. PLANS ARE UNDERWAY FOR A NEW, ACCESSIBLE, CHARLOTTETOWN AREA OFFICE AND AN ANNEX TO THE NATIONAL OFFICE, WHICH WILL HOUSE THE OTTAWA AREA OFFICE WITH ROOM FOR FUTURE GROWTH.

**New Brunswick**

- Nearly 26,000 members in 177 locals.
- Main sectors: health, education, nursing homes, social services, transportation and municipalities.

**Prince Edward Island**

- More than 2,800 members in 17 locals.
- Main sectors: health care, education, municipalities and universities.

**Nova Scotia**

- Nearly 18,000 members in 125 locals.
- Main sectors: school boards, health: long-term, community and acute care, highways, universities, municipalities, social services and child care.

**Newfoundland and Labrador**

- More than 6,200 members in 44 locals.
- Main sectors: municipalities, health care, school boards, universities, libraries, housing, child care and social services.

**Airline Division**

- More than 7,900 members in 14 locals.

# Building solidarity and making gains



Organizing and collective bargaining are the foundation of our union's work. Ensuring workers have the security of a fair contract and a decent job doesn't just protect them, it sustains our communities.

Good jobs support the local economy, and strong public services build vibrant, stable cities and towns where everyone can work, learn and thrive.

The effects of the 2008 global recession continue to be felt in our communities and at the bargaining table. In a sign of a tough bargaining climate, more and more CUPE members are taking strike votes to back up their negotiating committees.

In 2011, CUPE funded 18 strike-averting campaigns for a total of \$2,605,012. Five CUPE locals were on strike or locked out. The longest conflict was CUPE 4576, municipal workers in the village of Sainte-Anne-de-Madawaska, New Brunswick. Workers there were locked out from June 16, 2010 to April 15, 2011. The other conflicts were:

- CUPE 2729, Sherbrooke municipal workers, went on strike to renew a contract that expired Dec. 31, 2007. They ratified a new agreement in early September.
- CUPE 7498 members, support staff at the University of Sherbrooke, waged a creative strike that lasted three and a half months. Their new contract includes gains on the key issue of wage parity with other universities.
- Locked-out CUPE 3338 members, Simon Fraser University student services support staff, used Facebook (217,000 page viewings), Twitter and other social media to put pressure on their employer. The lockout ended after three months.
- In Nova Scotia, the 22 members of CUPE 2330, vocational workers at Summer Street Industries, went on strike for two days in October.



Workers at Queen's University (CUPE 229, 254 and 1302) stood together in bargaining to defend their pension plan from employer cuts, winning breakthrough security language that ensures all future contribution or benefit changes be negotiated.

## Bargaining highlights

Over 2011, more than half of CUPE's collective agreements were open for renewal. Bargaining highlights include:

A tentative agreement in B.C.'s K-12 sector, one that promotes a skills enhancement agenda, enshrines a stable bargaining environment, and makes no concessions. Among its provisions is \$7.5 million in new, ongoing funding to finally recognize unpaid work for education assistants.

Flight attendants at Air Transat signed a new five-year agreement after a long and difficult round of bargaining. The final deal includes wage and pension improvements.

In Saskatchewan, CUPE K-12 members in Good Spirit School Division (CUPE 4784) went to the bargaining table determined to achieve wage parity with other school workers in the province. The new deal gives members parity in the first year, with increases ranging from 5.5 per cent to 15.84 per cent over the three-year contract.

When 60 HEU members working at a Penticton seniors' home got layoff notices during bargaining, they fought back. The pressure forced the for-profit facility to cancel the layoffs and demands for a wage rollback. Workers now have a three-year contract with modest wage increases and contracting out protection.

A Saskatchewan group home that caused a seven-month strike in 2007 for refusing to recognize seniority rights negotiated one of the best CUPE agreements in 2011. Improvements in CUPE 4552's contract with Deer Park Villa in Ituna include the removal of the cap on sick leave, improved call-in rights for part-time



and casual employees, a shorter time frame for increment steps and the extension of bereavement leave to cover the death of an Aboriginal elder.

Town workers in Maple Creek, Saskatchewan (CUPE 2714) voted 100 per cent to ratify their new agreement in November. The new deal includes huge increases in standby pay and boot allowances, an

additional stat holiday, moving all employees to the top of the pay grid and removing increment steps, an employee bonus of \$300 per year and a general wage increase of 11 per cent. The new agreement was negotiated before the existing contract expired.

Early childhood educators (CUPE 5200) at the Halton Catholic District School



### DID YOU KNOW...

ALMOST ONE-THIRD OF THE 2,100 DELEGATES AT NATIONAL CONVENTION WERE FIRST-TIME DELEGATES.





In September, 900 striking University of Sherbrooke workers (CUPE 7498) held a mock funeral procession to symbolically bury their pride in working for the university.

improvements to sick days, long-term disability insurance, as well as to night and weekend bonuses.

lifts the wages of most LPNs by about 18 per cent. LPNs account for one of every four nurses in Saskatchewan. CUPE represents 1,500 of the province's 3,000 LPNs.

Brock and Toronto university locals stood firm and achieved contract settlements without strikes.

White collar workers of Montreal (CUPE 429) reached a settlement with their employer following the highly visible *Montreal, pull yourself together!* campaign that advocated for a less fragmented city.

CUPE 1305, Huron County Health Unit, achieved pay equity settlements for 27 female workers. The workers achieved retro compensation dating back to 2008.

In the most difficult conditions, City of Toronto inside, outside, library and community centre workers (CUPE 79, 416, 4948 and 2998) defended public services, their jobs and their working conditions against deep cuts pushed by the mayor and his right-wing allies.

A new partnership between Montreal outside municipal workers (CUPE 301) and the Mercier-Hochelaga community improved public services. Highlights of the agreement include: establishing work schedules that meet the need for services while preserving the principle of the four-day workweek.

In September, CUPE 4881, representing City of Gatineau aquatics workers, celebrated the impressive results of its pay equity struggle. The 14 job categories in the pay equity review were predominantly female and 10 were subject to a pay equity adjustment ranging from 9.56 per cent to 75.88 per cent, retroactive to November, 2001.

CUPE 79 rolled out a campaign on the importance of public services. *Taking Care of Toronto* highlights the many ways CUPE 79 members make the city a better place to live. CUPE 4948, with the assistance of Margaret Atwood's tweets, mounted a successful public campaign against library closures and cuts in hours. CUPE 416 used advanced technology to connect with the community through virtual town halls, urging residents to protect important public services from cuts.

Years of work to close the wage gap between security police at the University of Prince Edward Island, (CUPE 501), and other PEI police officers have paid off. Security workers negotiated pay increases and other adjustments that close the gap with the Summerside Police.

## New members in the CUPE family

In a climate of open attacks on unions and a strong push to cut or privatize public services by anti-worker and right-wing groups, CUPE continued to be the union of choice for workers this past year. In 2011, 3,330 women and men became the newest members of CUPE. They are members of 52 new locals. Welcome to CUPE!

Board achieved their first contract in October. The contract recognizes the workers' skills and experience and the important educational role they play in schools.

Ontario's university sector continued to face tough rounds of bargaining. However, Guelph, Queen's, McMaster, Carleton,

Bus drivers in Laval (CUPE 5959) and Longueuil (CUPE 3333) ratified new collective agreements. The Longueuil workers showed flexibility to improve service for commuters. In return, drivers will see

## Pay equity – gaining ground

Saskatchewan's licensed practical nurses received a significant pay boost in 2011, as a result of the union's pay equity/job evaluation plan. The long-awaited increase







DID YOU KNOW...

CUPE WAS A FOUNDING SUPPORTER OF THE NEW GROUP *CANADIANS FOR TAX FAIRNESS*. LAUNCHED IN JUNE, THE ORGANIZATION PROMOTES A FAIRER AND MORE PROGRESSIVE TAX SYSTEM – ONE THAT COULD GENERATE TENS OF BILLIONS OF DOLLARS TO PROVIDE PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROTECT OUR ENVIRONMENT.

# Building our union and our community



CUPE is Canada's community union. Our members care about the cities and towns they live in, and show it in countless ways every day.

CUPE is a strong union, and in 2011 we worked to develop even stronger, more connected members who are ready to fight for good jobs and public services. One focus was a series of sector meetings where members shared experiences and strategies.

About 300 municipal activists gathered in Toronto in February for CUPE's first-ever national municipal sector meeting. Under the theme "Building Community," members adopted a powerful declaration on municipal services.

Energy workers from Quebec, Ontario and Manitoba used a national sector meeting in Winnipeg to tackle issues affecting the production and distribution of electrical energy. Although the situation varies by province, privatization and deregulation are constant threats.

CUPE home care and home support workers met in Ottawa in June to share information and strategize about improving their working conditions and the services they provide. Home care work is undervalued and wages and benefits are among the lowest in the health care sector, with some earning minimum wage.

CUPE continues to have a strong presence at the annual meetings of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and the Canadian Library Association, and this year added the annual conference of the Association of Canadian Community Colleges.





CUPE and its partners broke ground in July for Station 20, a community development project in Saskatoon's inner city. When the provincial government cut promised funds, the city came together to keep the project alive. CUPE National contributed \$400,000 in grants and loan guarantees.

In 2011, CUPE members took many actions that build stronger communities. Some highlights include:

In February, CUPE BC launched the Ten Percent Shift, a bold new campaign that supports community economies by embracing a "local first" approach to household needs, shifting at least 10 per cent of budgets to locally-produced goods.

CUPE 4728 members volunteered their time, labour, and expertise to install the water and sewer services for a multiplex housing unit for people in need. The project combined the efforts of CUPE, the City of Grand Forks, B.C., and Habitat for Humanity.

CUPE municipal workers (locals 126, 504 and 1833 representing inside, outside and library workers in Peterborough) joined forces with local firefighters, the United Way and the Peterborough and District Labour Council to promote and protect public services.

CUPE Nova Scotia ran province-wide radio and TV ads profiling more than 30 CUPE members and the public services that build strong communities. The division also launched its "My Wages = Your Profits" campaign highlighting the central role the public sector and its workers play in the provincial and local economies.

The summer of 2011 saw both major disasters and inspiring responses. CUPE National donated a total of \$60,000 to the Red Cross in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta in response to natural disasters including floods and the fire that devastated Slave Lake. CUPE locals and the Saskatchewan division raised a further \$20,000 for provincial Red Cross flood and tornado relief efforts.

Municipal workers in Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu (CUPE 3055) made heroic efforts around the clock to help their flood-ravaged community. Nearly 800 Montreal outside municipal workers (CUPE 301), also travelled to the Montérégie region to clean up and rebuild after the floods.

Inside municipal workers in Terrebonne (CUPE 2326) worked with the city and community partners to throw a community bazaar in September. Residents were invited to the giant garage sale, which had activities for children and live music. The event raised money for a local organization that helps families in need.

Office and technical workers at Hydro-Québec (CUPE 2000) waged a year-long



### DID YOU KNOW...

ABOUT 57 PER CENT OF CUPE'S LOCALS ARE SMALL, WITH MEMBERSHIP OF 100 OR LESS



campaign against the installation of “smart meters”. Their publicity campaign cleverly skewers the crown corporation’s move to spend \$1 billion on questionable “golden meters,” while showing the real impact: the loss of more than 1,000 jobs—800 direct and 200 indirect—in communities across Quebec.

CUPE worked with its coalition partners to promote public drinking water through Bottled Water Free Day in March. Members organized events on campuses and in their communities, gathering pledges to drink only tap water and helping defend the City of London’s decision to phase out bottled water use.

CUPE and the Council of Canadians also celebrated the City of Burnaby becoming Canada’s first “Blue Community” by phasing out bottled water, supporting public water services and recognizing water as a human right.

## CUPE takes the fight online

In 2011, we used a combination of communications tools including social media, websites, videos, emails and town halls to take action and share information about Aboriginal issues, renewal of the health accord, workplace-based responses to HIV and AIDS, bottled water, human



rights protection for LGBTTI members, and a ban on asbestos. CUPE also went online to show support for trade unionists in other countries, helped promote CUPE members and staff who ran for political office, and supported New Democrats in federal and provincial elections.

The week of convention was the highest-traffic week ever in the history of cupe.ca, and the #CUPE2011 hashtag was used to make more than 3,500 tweets.

Our year online, by the numbers:

- Over 4,300 Facebook followers and two million post views
- About 2,700 Twitter followers and over 3,500 tweets made by @cupenat
- Nearly 32,000 viewings of our videos on YouTube
- Over 20,000 emails sent asking members and allies to take action

## Learning from each other

In 2011, about 15,000 members attended a CUPE education program, building their capacity as powerful advocates in their workplaces, locals and communities and strengthening the entire union.

CUPE’s Union Development Department has developed a new anti-bullying workshop, drawing on the health and safety, equality and legal expertise of members and staff. In October, CUPE Equality staff facilitated a workshop on bullying and harassment in the Aboriginal workplace for the Kwanlin Dūn First Nation’s band council, management and staff.

The department also helped divisions plan strategically to strengthen their political work and recruited and trained ombudspersons under the new Code of



Conduct, ensuring we have trained members and staff in every region.

The department trained 80 new member facilitators. They join over 200 others across the country who facilitate the national education program.

Over the past year our literacy program has developed Lullaby Mission, an interactive clear language computer game. We



# CUPE firsts

Our union continued to break new ground in 2011, including:

## **Our first carbon-neutral national convention.**

With the help of CarbonZero, CUPE calculated that convention would generate 3,061 tons of carbon emissions and compensated for these emissions by investing in energy-efficient upgrades to Montreal social housing – work done by CUPE 429 members.

## **Our first youth council.**

During the 2011 national convention, children of delegates aged nine to 14 witnessed first-hand the decision-making process in Canada's largest union, learned about issues facing workers, made links with issues facing young people at school and in the community, and made a presentation to convention delegates.

## **Our first videoconference committee meeting.**

CUPE's National Environment Committee took this important step in May, using videoconferencing facilities in CUPE's national and BC regional offices. This format cut CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from air travel by 48 per cent and reduced waste.

## **Our first Eastern municipal conference.**

Workers from about 50 locals from the Atlantic and Maritime regions came together to discuss the challenges of privatization, CETA, municipal underfunding and attacks on their pension plans. A delegation of Quebec municipal workers were special guests, building even greater solidarity.

## **Our first clear-language constitution.**

Delegates at national convention adopted the new constitution, which is easier for all members to read, understand, and interpret.

## **Our first guide to providing on-site child care.**

CUPE's National Child Care Working Group released *Children Welcome* to help the national union, divisions and locals set up high quality, inclusive child care at all CUPE events.

also developed a computer-based literacy quiz game and a short animated film about our literacy program in the workplace and in our communities.

## **Defending our rights**

In 2011, the NEB approved 37 requests from locals and divisions for legal assistance, for a total of \$1,166,156.

In addition to day to day advice, CUPE's lawyers in the regions worked on approximately 600 new matters this year. In the national office, the Legal Branch dealt with 145 new matters in 2011.

Some highlights of CUPE's legal advocacy include:

CUPE won a significant case on the duty to accommodate in Nova Scotia. In December, a prominent arbitrator in the province agreed with CUPE arguments defending a municipal worker in the town of Windsor (CUPE 1089). The decision reinforces the far-reaching obligations employers have to accommodate people with disabilities, and underscores that employers must take the lead in initiating steps to accommodate a disabled worker. The ruling establishes precedents that protect vulnerable workers from unfair dismissal.

CUPE also had a successful trip to the Court of Appeal in Nova Scotia. The court agreed with workers in the Town of Port Hawkesbury (CUPE 2434) that an occupational health and safety complaint made by a member had to be investigated, even if a grievance filed as a result of the same incident could not be arbitrated.

In New Brunswick, CUPE went to court to defend job security based on seniority. Provincial social work, rehabilitation, psychology, therapy, recreation and culture workers (CUPE 1418) won an arbitration affirming that their collective agreement allows laid-off workers to bump workers with less seniority.

In Saskatchewan, CUPE took legal action to defend workers' rights to organize and bargain collectively. CUPE is one of four union interveners in a Charter challenge launched by the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour against the Saskatchewan Party government's essential services legislation and trade union act amendments.

# Moving forward

It's been a tough but inspiring year – one we can learn from and build on.

The energy and solidarity at our national convention clearly set the tone for 2012. CUPE members are united and determined in their commitment to defend workers' rights, protect and improve public services, and work for social justice.

At our national convention delegates thanked retiring National Secretary-Treasurer Claude Généreux for his leadership and commitment to our union and elected Charles Fleury as the new National Secretary-Treasurer.

We have a solid plan in our *Strategic Directions* document that was developed and adopted by convention delegates. We will follow this blueprint to develop our internal strength, to make gains in bargaining, to build stronger alliances in the labour movement and in the community, and to defend public services – all to make our communities better places to live.



# CUPE National Executive Board

Our work to close the gap between rich and poor, challenge discrimination and inequality and fight for a living wage and decent pensions will continue at the bargaining table and in our communities. Members are never alone when they take on this work – they have the backing of the members of Canada’s biggest union.

We will join forces with the many Canadians who believe in public health care to resist the Harper government’s plans to underfund and dismantle Medicare. And we will stand up to attacks on all workers, defending our rights to organize and bargain collectively.

Whether it’s taking on the Harper Conservatives, keeping vital services public or standing together during a difficult round of bargaining, CUPE members have what it takes to make a difference. We have each other.

Together, we will make a difference in 2012. Together, we will keep building a better Canada, and we won’t give up until we’re done.



## National President

Paul Moist

## National Secretary-Treasurer

Charles Fleury

## General Vice-Presidents

Daniel Légère

Lucie Levasseur

Fred Hahn

Tom Graham

Barry O’Neill

## Regional Vice-Presidents

NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

Wayne Lucas

NOVA SCOTIA

Danny Cavanagh

NEW BRUNSWICK

Sandy Harding

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Lori MacKay

QUEBEC

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Candace Rennick

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Henri Giroux

MANITOBA

Mike Davidson

SASKATCHEWAN

Judy Henley

ALBERTA

Marle Roberts

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Mark Hancock

Ken Robinson

## Diversity Vice-Presidents

Yolanda McClean

Brian Barron



**CUPE** / Canadian Union of Public Employees