

I attended the 2016 BC Federation of Labour Convention held November 28, 2016 to December 2, 2016 at the Vancouver Convention Center as a delegate. I was also a member of the balloting committee. It was a productive and informative convention.

The guest speakers were very inspiring, especially Cindy Blackstock who discussed the disparity between the care provided to first nations children versus the care provided to non-first nations children. She also discussed the sad history of residential schools.

The debate on resolutions was a highlight and the resolutions included a few that directly affect my local members including one on increasing Employment Insurance sickness benefits. A major storyline of speakers was the common theme of how the government and employers are trying to erode the rights of workers and how it is a constant struggle to maintain what we have gained over the years. Members specifically brought up the attacks on wages, pensions and sick plans.

One of the most important parts of this convention is the networking opportunities with other union members from across the province. It is beneficial to all delegates and these contacts are a valuable resource for local members who have an interest in a specific issue as it allows them to be connected with people that are knowledgeable on those issues.

I have a number of actions planned for our local as a result of the BC Federation of Labour convention. While there I had the opportunity to speak with Barb Nederpal who is the NDP MLA candidate for Kamloops North and the Kamloops District Labour Council president. We contacted her after the convention and she has agreed to be a guest speaker at our local AGM in February. We will also be contacting the Bob Kingston to get the number of the member who is an asbestos removal specialist to ask for advice on asbestos history in our building and following up on some Health and Safety Committee issues including the employer's obligation to provide training to the committee members.

As a result of the networking opportunities provided by the convention I had was able to discuss the future of our regional leadership with other members of my component and have decided to run for the CEIU BC/YT Alternate National Vice-President position.

Thank you.