

Convention report 1st Triennial convention of UHEW
August 21-24, 2017
Toronto Ontario

August 20th: I travelled to Toronto on the 20th as I had a number of meetings to attend on the Monday with the National President and his campaign team, I was acting in a co-chair position with Rotha Lennox from local 70743, and we met the rest of the campaign team and discussed strategy.

August 21st: As mentioned there were a number of strategy and campaign meetings during the day and evening and there were various get together by some of the regions, it was a good chance to socialize and meet our new brothers and sisters from the old NHU, and reacquaint with our brothers and sisters of the former UEW.

August 22nd: The first day of actual business of the convention, there were a lot of introductions, an opening Aboriginal ceremony, convention call to order, adoption of convention hours of sitting, rules of order, election procedures, ratification of committee appointments, ratification of regulations and policies and adoption of the agenda. The next order of business was an address by the National President of the PSAC, Sister Robyn Benson who spoke passionately about her union work the successes and the struggles that are still ahead of us as union activists. Sister Benson also told us that she will be finishing up her term as President and then stepping down as she is at the time in her life where she wants to relax and enjoy life without the pressures of the job, as much as she did love what she was doing. The next item on the agenda was the Presidents report and the adoption of it and the vice presidents report, before lunch break. The convention continued after lunch with convention committee reports, the discussion around resolutions was very respectful and there was not a lot of debate on most issues. The convention broke for the day and in the evening there was a wine and cheese, which I skipped in order to visit family.

August 23rd: Call to order, and then right to business of committee reports and discussion of resolutions, I am not going to go into much of the specifics of the resolutions as they will be posted on the UHEW website, but it is always fun for me to discuss these and hear differing and dissenting opinions on them. The keynote speaker after lunch was Maude Barlow, who gave a very passionate and informative speech on water, the human right to water and sanitation throughout the world, which I found riveting, and got a chance to meet her afterwards and purchased a copy of her latest book. The rest of the afternoon was more of the same resolution discussion, and the evening was the banquet and dance.

August 24th: The final day of convention is reserved for elections, National President, Vice President, National Human rights representative for the PSAC, followed by regional caucuses for election of RVPs, and alternates, and then delegates to the PSAC convention. I had been busy this week with campaigning For Todd Panas for President and Shimen Fayad for Vice President, and they were elected fairly easily to their positions, from our region Jayne Powers was reelected as RVP and Rubin Kooner was elected as the alternate RVP. Rubin was also elected to be a delegate at the National PSAC convention in 2018 by the delegates at convention which is a pretty good accomplishment for her first convention as a delegate! The total attendees for the convention with a slight variation each day was: 118 delegates, 33 observers and 4 guests. I found the convention to be very fun as I love the politicking and discussion around resolutions, it is also awesome to see delegates grow as activists, which I also saw, the main complaint I had was the ineptitude and disorganization of the elections committee, but overall everything came together and we had a successful inaugural convention of the new UHEW

Sincerely, Michael Lister
Vice President Local 70712