

Vancouver Area Council – President’s Report 2009-2010
Respectfully submitted by: Jamey Mills VAC President
October 27, 2010

To say the least my first year as President of the Vancouver Area Council has been a learning experience, figuratively and literally. I have been lucky enough to be selected for the most comprehensive Union education the PSAC provides, this being the Union Development Program. For those not familiar with the program it is a course split into three one-week sessions spread over approx 6 months. It involves PSAC activists from many locals and branches from all over the province. We covered many topics such as labour history, building locals, effective communication and convention procedures. I took a lot from this course and have been applying what I learned in the most effective ways I can.

Additionally I was able to be involved with the PSAC Leadership Level 2 as were many in the room. My own Component afforded me with the opportunity to take a great course on CRA Staffing as well as training on OHS as I am now the Union Co-Chair for my local.

Lastly, I was recently afforded an opportunity to work at the PSAC RO for a few weeks to assist Rob as a member organizer. I must say this is some of the most difficult work we do as Union Activists. If you think it’s difficult to speak with our own members, try convincing unorganized areas that unionization is the way forward.

I look forward to the next year to be able to apply much of what I have learned in supporting my UTE Local, Component, Area Council and PSAC regionally at meetings, speaking with members, speaking with MPs and other political figures and hopefully applying my knowledge at conventions during the upcoming cycle.

The past 12 months have also been a very busy time both as an activist and as a resident of the Vancouver Area. The Olympics, a once in a lifetime event, came and went with much fanfare in early 2010. I personally feel the city was shown in a positive light and that community activists particularly supporting awareness around homelessness and poverty were well received by the global community. I again thank this body for supporting the Red Tent Campaign by our donation of 3 tents. I feel that much of the world is now aware of what is going on in our Province under its’ current leadership.

We also saw the Federal Government come forward and state that our pensions are not safe. Although there were no immediate attacks we are now very aware that things may change. The PSAC ran a federal campaign to keep their “Hands off our Pension” and also created a Workplace Watch campaign to ensure that reductions in workforce or services would be fought. I would like to thank all of the activists in the Vancouver Area for supporting these campaigns in you workplaces and in your

communities. It's important that we continue having these conversations in order to keep the issues in the forefront.

I'm going to be very brief on H1N1 as I'm sure Sam has a lot to say about it. HINI became a huge Health and Safety issue not only in the workplace but our communities in general. Pandemic is a scary word and luckily the impact was not as dreaded as thought.

In, what I believe is a first, we saw the Treasury Board Bargaining units go back to the table to negotiate a new collective agreement, currently awaiting ratification. I'm hoping that Megan will be here later to expand, if not Sister Wiese will discuss.

In another first we saw the bargaining team from UTE negotiate a 2 year collective agreement with our employer, the Canada Revenue Agency for the unheard of, second time in a row. Our Red Bracelet campaign was well received by members and many are still wearing them.

Ratification votes end soon and I would like to thank the bargaining teams in all areas for their diligent attention in this difficult work. They work hard to make the Union stronger. It's a pleasure to see activists from many components in our region be representatives on these teams.

I'm going to keep this brief as I'm sure that many of you would like to report on your own prospective area. I would like to thank you for your support in the past year and hope I can receive it again this year as I plan to run for re-election as President.

In Solidarity,

Jamey Mills.