WINTER SCHOOL 2020
STUDENT GUIDE

Sunday - At a Glance

1:30 - 5:00 pm  Campaign Fair - East Tower
2:00 - 5:00 pm  Registration - East Tower
4:00 pm        New Delegates Orientation - Forum
5:30 pm        Dinner - Copper Room
7:00 pm        General Session - Forum

CANADIAN LABOUR CONGRESS
CONGRÈS DU TRAVAIL DU CANADA
Greetings,

In recent elections at the provincial and federal levels, Canadians have witnessed an unprecedented rise in far-right extremism, mixing anti-union sentiment with fervent opposition to immigration, climate action, women’s rights, and human rights.

British Columbia has become a vital hold-out for progressive governance in Canada, but without allies in other key provinces, the Horgan government is shouldering an increasingly heavy burden.

With hardline Conservative parties now holding government in the majority of Canadian provinces, there has never been a more concerted attack on Canadian democratic values. Led by premiers Kenney and Ford, Canadian Conservatives are seeking to exploit the financial anxieties of average Canadians to sow the seeds of fear and division.

Their goal is to roll back hard-won social gains and tip the scales of power in favour of private and corporate interests.

Unions are not prepared to give up the victories we have won, or the values we hold dear.

Over the last four years, Canada’s unions have won an historic expansion of the Canada Pension Plan, new protections for victims of domestic violence, billions in new investments in public infrastructure, a national ban on asbestos, pay equity, and new labour laws that raise the bar for every worker.

And our work is not yet finished. We have made universal pharmacare a household priority, we want to end retirement insecurity, we have plans to build a sustainable economy, and we want to power it with good jobs that allow workers to get ahead.

Labour unions are the key to defending workers’ rights in their workplaces, and we also have the power to extend those gains to everyone in Canada through advocacy, lobbying and activism.

The cornerstone of our strategy is labour education.

Challenging the politics of division and championing a fair future requires a legion of activists who are educated, trained and committed to growing our movement. We must share skills and experiences – across affiliates and throughout every region – to build the kind of strength and solidarity that money can’t buy.

That is exactly what labour education is designed to do. And that is why I am encouraging you to support your members and your leadership, past and present, in participating in the upcoming CLC Pacific Winter School.

Together, we are building a rank-and-file movement to fight for a fair Canada for everyone.

In solidarity,

Hassan Yussuff
President, Canadian Labour Congress
**Week At A Glance**

**Monday:**
7:00 - 8:30 am; BREAKFAST
9:00 am - 12:00 pm; CLASS
12:00 - 1:30 pm; LUNCH - Service is from 12:00 - 1:00 pm
1:30 - 4:30 pm; CLASS
5:30 - 7:00 pm; DINNER
7:00 - 7:30 pm; PLENARY; Forum; Political Panel

**Tuesday:**
7:00 - 8:30 am; BREAKFAST
9:00 am - 12:00 pm; CLASS
12:00 - 1:30 pm; LUNCH - Service is from 12:00 - 1:00 pm
1:30 - 4:30 pm; CLASS
5:30 - 7:00 pm; DINNER

**Wednesday:**
7:00 - 8:30 am; BREAKFAST
9:00 am - 12:00 pm; CLASS
12:00 - 1:30 pm; LUNCH - Service is from 12:00 - 1:00 pm
1:30 - 4:30 pm; CLASS
5:30 - 7:00 pm; DINNER
7:00 pm PLENARY & CHOIR CONTEST; Forum

**Thursday:**
7:00 - 8:30 am; BREAKFAST
9:00 am - 12:00 pm; CLASS
12:00 - 1:30 pm; LUNCH - Service is from 12:00 - 1:00 pm
1:30 - 4:30 pm; CLASS
6:00 - 8:00 pm; DINNER
8:00 pm DANCE; St. Alice Pub

**Friday: - Check out time is 11:00am**
7:00 - 8:30 am; BREAKFAST
9:00 - 9:20 am; PLENARY;
9:30 - 11:00 am; CLASS
12:00 - 1:00 pm; LUNCH or take boxed lunch
**12:00 pm; bus leaves.**
The CLC Winter School is committed to providing a working, living and learning environment which gives equal opportunity to students, instructors and staff to participate in and enjoy the school. This supportive atmosphere must be based on mutual respect and be free from all forms of harassment and discrimination. The responsibility for creating and preserving a harassment-free environment is a collective one.

Harassment violates two fundamental principles of the labour movement: human rights and solidarity. Sexual, racial, and other forms of harassment such as homophobia will not be tolerated. Harassment includes any behaviour which undermines the dignity or self-esteem of an individual or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment. Retaliation against an individual who has filed a complaint is also harassment. Complaints will be taken seriously and investigated immediately.

For the purposes of this policy, the definition of harassment is as follows:

Harassment is the expression of perceived power and superiority over another person or group, usually for reasons of sex, race, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, disability, family or marital status, social or economic class, political or religious affiliation, or language. Harassment is unwanted and uninvited; it may be verbal or physical; it is coercive, and can occur as a single incident or on a repeated basis. It includes actions, attitudes, language, bullying or gestures which the harasser knows or reasonably ought to know are wrong. It includes comments, statements, slurs, jokes, and graffiti, including articles, pictures, and posters. Sexual harassment includes remarks, jokes, innuendos and taunts of a sexual nature; insulting gestures; the display of pornographic material; leering; demands for sexual favours; unnecessary physical conduct and physical assault.

If you believe you are being harassed, act immediately: If possible, make it clear you do not welcome such behaviour. You can do so either on your own, or with the assistance of another party. This may be done verbally or in writing. Indicate that you will take further action if the behaviour continues. If the inappropriate behaviour persists, approach one or both of the ombudspersons who will investigate the matter.
Things You Need to Know

Student Behaviour
Delegates to the Winter School should understand that a high standard of behaviour is expected of them. The key work is RESPECT - respect for all of the people at the school, guests, and hotel staff.

Specifically, rowdyism, harassment, intolerant acts, derogatory remarks, or hosting parties in your room will not be tolerated. The residential setting of the Winter School does not relieve delegates of the obligation for normal behaviour. Past incidents have been dealt with severely and the CLC reserves the right to send delegates home if their conduct does not meet our standards. All students deserve the opportunity to enjoy the Winter School. Quiet time is designated after 11:00 pm. We thank everyone for your cooperation in the matter.

Name Badges
Badges will be provided to delegates, resources, and instructors. This identifies you as being a participant. Please wear your badge at all times. Your badge or a guest meal ticket is required to eat in the Copper Room.

Winter School Office
The Winter School office is located in Room 206, around the corner (right) at the fireplace and then an immediate left, down the hall. Office hours are 8:30 am to 5:00 pm. The office is closed for lunch between 12:00 and 1:00 pm.

New Student Orientation
An information and Question & Answer session will be held at 4:00 pm on Sunday in the Forum to help orient first-time students. The session normally lasts about a half hour. All participants are welcome to attend.

Facilities
The Harrison Resort is wholly unionized with staff members of IUOE Local 882 and UNITE HERE Local 40. It has been the site of the CLC Pacific Region Winter School since 1974.
Class Schedules
Classes are held from 9:00 am to 4:30 pm daily, except Friday, when they are from 9:30 am to 11:00 am.

There is an opening session at 7:00 pm in the Forum each Sunday. General Sessions are also held in the Forum on Monday and Wednesday evenings at 7:00 pm, and on Friday morning prior to class. General Sessions are an important part of the Winter School and all participants are expected to attend.

Smoking Policy
Smoking is not permitted in hotel rooms or on balconies in accordance with provincial law. Infrctions will result in daily fines levied by the hotel.

Guests/Spouses
Students are welcome to bring spouses or guests if they are registered in single accommodation. Guests may choose to participate in the optional meal plan for an additional charge of $415.62 per week, which includes Friday lunch. Guests attending the school with delegates must register with the Front Desk, whether or not they participate in the meal plan. Guests are entitled to attend all school functions (excluding classes). Arrangements and/or payments for guests and meal plans are to be made through the Front Desk of the hotel.

Dining
All meals are taken in the Copper Room. Dinner is served at 5:30 pm every night except Thursday when dinner is served at 6:00 pm. Participants must wear their name badges for entry to the dining room. Spouses/guests must pay for their meals or sign them to the participant's room at this time.

A detailed list of the week’s menu is outlined in this guide. Vegetarian and alternate menu items are available for dinner. Students wishing to order an alternate dinner meal must check with the Matre d’ during the lunch hour that same day. There are vegetarian and gluten-free options at the breakfast and lunch buffet, which are labeled.
No Fragrance Policy
Due to the number of people who have a sensitivity/allergy to fragrances please be aware that the Winter School is a "Fragrance-Free Zone", and refrain from wearing fragrant shampoo, lotion, soap, bodywash, cologne, perfume, aftershave, etc. Check the ingredients label for “fragrance/parfum”.

Family Friendly Environment
Many participants choose to bring their family members with them to the Winter School. To assist families with children during lunch hour, please allow parents with children to go to the front of the buffet line, so that they can have additional time with their children before returning to class.

For the safety of the Copper Room staff please supervise children while on the dance floor and do not let them run through the aisles.

The Choir Contest is not a child-friendly event. The childcare facilities are open for this event to parents who have children registered in the childcare program.

Alcohol-Free Social Networking
A social networking space is available Monday to Thursday (after the General Session) for delegates who wish to socialize with other delegates in an alcohol-free setting. The location of this space will be posted on the corkboard outside the registration area each week. Cards, games, and non-alcoholic beverages are provided.

Ombudsperson
Each week, two instructors are Ombudspersons, and their names are posted on the bulletin board. Their role is to help students encountering problems at the school, and to help administer the school’s Anti-Harassment Policy. We want to make your stay at the Winter School as enjoyable as possible. You are encouraged to discuss any issues or concerns with your instructors or with one of the Ombudspersons. They will keep your conversations confidential or direct your concerns through the appropriate channels.

Gender Neutral Washroom
There is a gender neutral washroom upstairs by the Lakeside Cafe.
Boxed Lunches
For those students who must leave immediately after the General Session on Friday, and who will not be staying for lunch, boxed lunches will be available for the ride home. Be sure to be included in the boxed lunch count in the class. Tickets for these boxed lunches will be given out during class on Friday. The boxed lunches can be picked up outside the East Forum on Friday.

NO BOXED LUNCHES WILL BE HANDED OUT WITHOUT A TICKET!

Transportation
The Winter School bus leaves the Harrison Hot Springs Resort, with stops in Surrey, Coquitlam, the Vancouver Airport, ending at Pacific Central Station in Vancouver. If you did not reserve a spot when you registered, see the CLC office in Room 206.

Bus Schedule
- Harrison Hot Springs Resort - Arrives: 11:45, Departs: 12:00 pm
- Guildford Public Library Lot - Arrives: 1:30 pm
- Coquitlam Stop - Arrives 2:00 pm
- Vancouver International Airport - Arrives 3:00 pm for flights departing after 5:00 pm onward
- Pacific Central Station (Vancouver) - Arrives 3:45

*Please note all times are approximate.

ATM Machine
There is an ATM Machine in the lobby, to the right of the front desk.

International Activities Fund
The International Activities Fund was created more than 30 years ago to aid trade unionists outside Canada in their efforts to organize, educate, and develop their own membership.

The fund provides assistance to central labour bodies and their affiliates. Through the Fund, the CLC supports various solidarity activities including those of international organizations such as the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and the Commonwealth Trade Union Group (CTUG). The fund also directs trade union humanitarian aid for natural disasters throughout the world.
Student Council
A student council representative will be chosen to represent each class. Responsibilities of student council representatives include:

• Acting as liaison with the administration, dealing with issues of general concern, and distributing information to the class.

• Coordinating the class collection for the International Activities Fund.

• Meeting daily at lunchtime with other student council representatives to discuss any matters of concern or interest.

• Collecting completed travel claim forms from the students in the class. These forms must be accompanied by receipt of travel. Your council coordinator will elaborate on the process during your daily meeting.

• Collecting the number of lunch boxes required and the total number of people, including guests, who will be sitting with your class for Thursday night’s dinner.

• Helping to match up people needing rides with those with vehicles.

Shopping
Located in the hotel lobby, the Sticks and Stones Gift Shop is pleased to give 10% off purchases or gifts and clothing to attendees of the CLC Winter School. Please show your name badge before purchasing.

Travel Subsidies
Subsidies will be paid to unions for students travelling from East Kootenays, Northern BC, and Yukon. Receipt of travel is required (flight invoice, gas receipt, etc). Travel forms will be distributed by the Student Council Representative and must be submitted to the CLC office (Room 206) before you leave the school.

Checking Out - Check out time is 11:00 am
Please ensure that you check out of the hotel in the usual manner, and pay any extra charges billed to your room. Any disputed charges can be much more easily dealt with at that time.
Political Panel Session (mandatory)
Join us for a lively discussion on current political issues. Panelists will include provincial cabinet ministers, MLAs, and provincial labour leaders.

The discussion will kick off with brief statements from the panel with ample time for Winter School participants to join and ask questions. Bring your questions for the politicians!

Choir Night - So You Think You Can Sing
One of the traditions of the CLC Winter School is the choir contest. On Wednesday evening at 7:00 pm each class will have a chance to demonstrate their musical ability to the rest of the school.

One song is required per class and each song must be original. (As well as witty, harmonious, and melodious!). Choir practice is allowed (Although it has traditionally been very painful!) and will be arranged by the class choirmaster.

The winners are awarded a small memento and are not required to perform an encore at the Social Night on Thursday evening.

You won’t want to miss the unbiased, expert, and often intriguing judging. You haven’t heard or seen anything until you’ve seen the choir contest!
Recreation

Swimming Pool
There are several outdoor heated pools and two indoor pools. The outdoor pools are open daily from 8:00 am to 11:00 pm for adults and until 10:00 pm for children. Bathing suits can be purchased at the hotel gift shop.

The hotel will be distributing a letter outlining the pool policy at registration. It has been developed in conjunction with the CLC, and we request that everyone comply with it.

WATER SAFETY RULES:
• Pools are used at your own risk.
• No lifeguards are on duty.
• Use extreme care when diving into the pool and ensure the area is clear of other swimmers.
• NO GLASSWARE, of any kind, is allowed anywhere in the pool area. Anyone doing so will be required to leave.
• No horseplay of any kind on pool decks.

St. Alice Pub & Islands Bar
The St. Alice Pub is available to CLC Winter School participants, open Thursday evening.

The Islands Bar is located in the lobby and is open daily. Discounts are available to CLC participants on Sunday, Tuesday, and Wednesday evening.

Walking/Jogging
For those of you enthusiastic about the early morning hours, coffee and tea will be available before breakfast in the hotel lobby. The walk along the lake shore is very “refreshing” and is reasonably well lit. It’s not an organized activity, however, so you may want to organize your own walking or jogging partners for companionship and safety.

Fitness Room
There is a fitness centre/weight room available, open at 6:30 am daily. It is located off the hallway leading from the Lobby area to the Copper Room.
Menu

Please be on time for dinners - they are sit-down service, and service does not begin until enough people are in the Copper Room. Your lateness may impact on others. Your timeliness will be appreciated.

Breakfast: 7:00 to 8:30 am  
Lunch: 12:00 - 1:00 pm  
Dinner: 5:30 pm

Special meals are available for vegetarian, diabetic, or health related diets. Please contact the Maitre d’ in the Copper Room at lunchtime for dinner arrangements. Breakfast and lunch buffets have gluten free and vegetarian option and are labelled.  
Note: Some menu items may change due to availability.

Sunday

Dinner; Buffet

Fresh market greens, selection of dressings, Caesar salad, marinated vegetables, corn & bell pepper salad, roasted beet salad, Asian slaw, Cous Cous salad with green beans, potato salad, tomato & red onion salad with feta.

Salmon bellevue with medallions of salmon & peppered mackerel, smoked turkey breast, cranberry sauce, honey ham, mustard & apple sauce, European deli meats, vegetable tray with pesto dip, assortment of olives & pickles, rolls & butter.

Carved roast baron of beef, chicken breast & chicken thighs with mushroom sauce, tri-colored fusilli with onions, peppers & spicy tomato sauce, rice pilaf, roasted potatoes & fresh vegetables.

Sliced fresh fruit platter, gluten-free cookies, gluten-free sorbet, English trifle, baked cheese cake, fresh fruit flan, double chocolate torte, pecan pie, black forest cake, assorted mousses & squares, bread pudding, coconut cream pie. Fresh coffee, herbal tea.
Menu - Continued

Monday

Breakfast; Buffet

Omelette Station
Fruit danish, muffins, croissants, jams, marmalade, honey, butter, seasonal fresh fruit, low fat yogurt, hot oatmeal, grain cereal, scrambled eggs, Spanish salsa, bacon, ham, pork sausage, turkey sausage, hash-brown, pancakes, maple syrup. Fresh coffee, herbal tea & assortment of fresh juices. Soy Milk available on buffet.

Lunch; Buffet - Create Your Own Burger

Split pea soup

Frise salad with asparagus & Parmesan cheese, green salad selection of dressings, roasted pepper salad, potato salad, fennel & orange salad, green bean salad, romaine, artichokes & black olives salad, tomato, cucumber & feta salad, roasted beet salad and arugula, ginger grapefruit dressing, and olive oil & vinegar dressing.

Beef, chicken, & Beyond Meat patties; condiments, French fries, sliced domestic cheeses, butter lettuce, cucumber, tomato, fresh vegetables, pesto mayonnaise, blue cheese dip, bacon, sautéed mushrooms, sautéed onions & pickles, hamburger buns.

English trifle, strawberry chocolate mousse, fresh fruit salad, gluten-free cookies, gluten-free sorbet, squares & fresh baked cookies. Fresh coffee & herbal tea.

Dinner; Plated

Heritage greens, roasted peaches, puffed quinoa, citrus dressing carved strip loin, mushroom jus, roasted potatoes, fresh vegetables.

Vegetarian: Roasted cauliflower panisse, beluga lentils, sautéed squash, marinara sauce.

Lemon cheese cake, blackberry coulis, fresh coffee, herbal tea.
Menu - Continued

Tuesday

Breakfast; Buffet

Omelette station.

Fruit danish, muffins, croissants, jams, marmalade, honey, butter, seasonal fresh fruit, low fat yogurt, hot oatmeal, grain cereal, eggs Florentine, fresh herbs, bacon, ham, pork sausage, turkey sausage, hash-brown, cinnamon French toast, maple syrup & fruit syrup.

Fresh coffee, herbal tea & assortment of fresh juices. Soy Milk available on buffet.

Lunch; Buffet - Mediterranean Theme

French onion soup

Fattoush salad, roasted fennel & white bean salad, roasted beet salad, tossed salad, chickpeas, Caesar salad, chicken & beef kabobs, tabbouleh salad, baba ghanoush, rice pilaf & fresh herbs, hummus, dolmades, tzatziki, assortment of olives & pita bread.

Baklava, assorted pastries, whole fruit, gluten-free cookies & gluten-free sorbet.

Dinner; Plated

Artichoke hearts & roasted pepper salad, bibb lettuce, feta cheese & Greek dressing.

Roasted chicken breast, corn, mushroom and bacon hash, butter milk mashed potatoes & fresh vegetables.

Vegetarian: Potato gnocchi, sautéed mushrooms, arugula, marinara sauce.

Dessert:

Warm raisin bread pudding, vanilla custard. Fresh coffee, herbal tea.
Wednesday

Breakfast; Buffet

Omelette Station.

Fruit danish, muffins, croissants, jams, marmalade, honey, butter, seasonal fresh fruit, low fat yogurt, hot oatmeal, grain cereal, scrambled eggs, Spanish sauce, bacon, ham, pork sausage, turkey sausage, hash-brown, Belgian waffles, maple syrup & fruit syrup.

Fresh coffee, herbal tea & assortment of fresh juices. Soy milk available on buffet.

Lunch; Buffet - Pizza & Pasta

Curry lentil soup

Green salad, ranch dressing, chickpeas, Caesar salad, orange & red onion salad, bean salad, roasted beet salad, tomato & mozzarella in a balsamic vinaigrette.

Tri-colored cheese tortellini, gluten free penne, fusilli with tomato basil sauce or meat sauce & simply macaroni and cheese. Assorted pizzas: pepperoni, Hawaiian, shrimp, artichoke, cheese & vegetarian. Focaccia & butter.

Ice cream bar, chocolate dipped biscotti, fresh fruit salad, gluten-free cookies & gluten-free sorbet.

Dinner; Indian Buffet

Naan & raita.

Fresh market greens, selection of dressing, cucumber salad & mint yogurt, Moroccan couscous, yogurt & coriander dressing, chickpea, mango, apple & curry dressing.

Vegetarian Indian Dahl (lentil curry), cauliflower & chickpea curry, butter chicken, tandoori chicken skewers, aromatic rice & seasonal vegetables.

Assorted cakes, tortes, mousse, fresh seasonal fruit.
Thursday

**Breakfast; Buffet**

Omelette Station.

Fruit danish, muffins, croissants, jams, marmalade, honey, butter, seasonal fresh fruit, low fat yogurt, hot oatmeal, grain cereal, eggs Florentine, bacon, ham, pork sausage, turkey sausage, hash-brown, pancakes, maple syrup.

Fresh coffee, herbal tea & assortment of fresh juices. Soy milk available on buffet.

**Lunch; Buffet - Make your own Taco**

Vegan chili

Couscous salad & feta cheese, green salad, selection of dressings, chickpeas, potato salad, bean salad, carrot & raisin cole slaw, roasted beet salad, spinach & mushroom salad, assorted rolls & butter.

Hard and soft taco shells, seasoned ground beef & chicken, shredded iceberg lettuce, diced tomatoes, diced onions, jalapenos, refried beans, rice, shredded cheese, salsa, guacamole & sour cream.

English trifle, strawberry & chocolate mousse, fresh fruit salad, gluten-free cookies, gluten-free sorbet & assortment of pastry squares. Fresh coffee, herbal tea.

**Dinner; Plated**

Caesar salad, focaccia croutons.

Roasted Prime Rib, Yorkshire Pudding, Baked Potato & Fresh vegetables.

Vegetarian: Polenta Ratatouille, Red Pepper Coulis.

Chocolate Mousse Cake. Fresh coffee, herbal tea.
**Menu - Continued**

**Friday**

**Breakfast; Buffet**

Omelette Station.

Fruit danish, muffins, croissants, jams, marmalade, honey, butter, seasonal fresh fruit, low fat yogurt, hot oatmeal, grain cereal, scrambled eggs, Spanish sauce, bacon, ham, pork sausage, turkey sausage, hash-brown, cinnamon French toast, maple syrup & fruit syrup. Fresh coffee, herbal tea & assortment of fresh juices. Soy milk available on buffet.

**Lunch; Buffet OR Boxed Lunch**

Potato leek soup

Green salad with chickpeas, selection of dressings, grilled pepper salad, potato salad, fennel & orange salad, bean salad, romaine, artichokes & black olives salad, tomato, cucumber & feta salad, roasted beet salad with basil balsamic & olive oil dressing.

European deli meat platter, condiments, sliced domestic cheeses, butter lettuce, cucumber, tomato, sprouts, fresh vegetables, pesto mayonnaise, blue cheese dip, tuna salad, salmon salad, assorted olives & pickles, selection of bread, rolls, baguette & butter.

English trifle, strawberry chocolate mousse, fresh fruit salad, gluten-free cookies, gluten-free sorbet & squares. Fresh coffee & herbal tea.

**Boxed Lunch:** Smoked turkey, tomato, cucumber on croissant, butter, mayonnaise, mustard, carrot & celery sticks, banana bread, chocolate chunk pecan cookie, orange juice, napkin, knife, fork roll-up.

*Boxed lunches may be made to accommodate dietary needs. Please note your dietary need on the boxed lunch sign-up sheet.*
**Why Politics?**

Political Action - It’s a phrase that inspires some union members with visions of a better future. It also sends many others running for the doors at membership meetings. Some argue that unions have no place in politics and that political decisions are best left up to individuals. They resent being told who to vote for. Others are just plain cynical. They say all politicians are the same - that nothing changes no matter who is in power. These are legitimate points of view that deserve to be addressed honestly.

Unions are heavily involved in politics as a result of hard experience. That experience has taught us that political parties that are financed primarily by corporations and the wealthy have not promoted or protected the interests of working people. Unions have learned that the labour movement can get results. - e.g., better minimum wage laws, health and safety regulations - by being political.

Experience has made it clear that governments don’t always promote legislation that improves our workplaces. We cannot win gains by sitting on the political sidelines. Struggles have to take place both at the bargaining table and within the political arena. We can learn some important lessons from history. Only sixty years ago, wages were so low that many working families found it hard to keep food on the table, let alone afford their own home. There was no such thing as retirement because there were no pensions. And paid holidays? Forget it. To make matters worse, working people often went without necessary medical treatment because there was no publicly funded system of health care.

Today, the lives of working people are much different. Most working families can afford to rent or mortgage a home, or access health care without worrying about bankrupting the family. We have pensions, paid holidays, and unemployment insurance. All these gains were made through legislative changes after long campaigns, i.e. through union political action!

During your week there will be many occasions where politics and political actions are discussed, in both formal and informal sessions. We urge you to get involved in those discussions, share your opinions with other delegates. Our work in the 'political arena' will have a profound effect on our lives.
**The Union Advantage**

Having a union on your side makes your job and your workplace safer and fairer. Your employer pays you better and is more likely to provide benefits that help you balance work with life at home. Your health and ability to do your job become important, and your right to fair treatment gets enforced.

Unions make a difference both at work and in the quality of life you earn. *We call that difference the union advantage.* In Canada unionized workers earn almost $5 more an hour than non-union workers. All together, that union advantage is worth $785.8 million each week to the country - money that gets spent in communities and supports our economy.

But this advantage doesn’t just belong to union members. It benefits everyone.

Workers in unions are an important part of the local community and economy because that’s where they spend their paycheques. Their incomes support local businesses (who create local jobs) and bolster the local tax base, which supports public works and community services that add to everyone’s quality of life.

The benefits enjoyed by unionized workers (dental insurance, extended health care coverage, and legal insurance, to name a few) attract and support dentists, opticians, chiropractors, therapists, health specialists, and family lawyers whose services are available to everyone in the community.

When unions stand up for fairness, they raise the bar for everyone. Many of the things first won by unions are enjoyed by all workers today - minimum wages, overtime pay, workplace safety standards, maternity and parental leave, vacation pay, and protection from discrimination and harassment.

Communities with more union members enjoy relatively higher incomes overall. They support a richer mix of business and services that diversify the local economy, and add to the quality of life. They are better places to work and live.