

BC Federation of Labour Convention ~ 2014 Nov 24th – Nov 28th ~ Vancouver, BC

I am grateful to the PSAC for facilitating my attendance to the BC Federation of Labour Convention. It was an amazing experience that has had a significant impact on me.

First and foremost – to have been able to connect at a conference with thousands of other members who seek positive and necessary changes was a very motivating experience. It exposes one to a great energy and sense of determination that is required to move forward.

I am glad to have gained insight into the pertinent issues facing my fellow Canadians, my brothers and sisters, in other sectors. There is a connect that strengthens when the realization occurs that although different on the surface, we all face similar challenges when it comes down to it. Health and safety, old age security, fair wages etc. are all a part of the socio-economic justice sought by us all. The convention was a glimpse into how vital it is that we must be willing to fight for and defend our rights together, in solidarity.

There were many memorable moments for me – some of them include: The energy in the room when the new president was announced!; the integrity displayed by the candidates; some of the guest speakers; the *Fight for 15* rally. I learned a lot from the discussions regarding: the concerns over health care; the dangerous working conditions for transit employees; the alarming rising costs of education etc.

Since my teenage years – whenever I walk by a picket line – I stop and get involved! At a young age, I became interested in why and how people stand up for justice. And I'm glad that I did. I'm curious and active by nature. I've always been one to see the bigger picture. For me – it will never be just about me and what happens in my department, but rather what goes on in the world around me for everyone, as I realize this is the same world that people I care about live in. And I know that it's up to me, and everyone around me, to create the changes we seek for a better tomorrow.

This convention has helped motivate me to be even more involved in my community. I will be actively involved in the *Fight for 15* campaign etc. I intend to do a report out at our AGM in April on the BC Federation of Labour convention in hopes to continue to really encourage our members to get more involved too. I have been using the topics and discussions raised at the convention to start discussions with colleagues, neighbors, family and friends with the intent to raise more awareness to the relevant issues that need attention and support from the people.

Again – I thank the PSAC for this great opportunity.

In solidarity,
Mandy Chahal
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