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Potential CUPE Strike Update

February 27, 2024

Dear colleagues,

As you likely know, two units within CUPE 3902 recently held strike mandate votes that produced historic turnout and results. Over 50% of members in both Unit 1 (TAs, CIs, & invigilators) and Unit 5 (postdocs) participated in the voting process, with 94.4% and 95.1% voting in favour, respectively. As well, custodians, maintenance staff, technicians, and other service workers represented by CUPE 3261 completed their strike mandate vote last Thursday, with 91-98% support across the various units involved. Members of both locals will be in a legal strike position as of **Monday, March 4th.**

The University of Toronto would not function without the vital work performed by members of CUPE 3902, CUPE 3261, and library workers represented by CUPE 1230, who are also bargaining at this time. In our Winter 2024 update earlier this month, we described the Administration's refusal to engage in collegial governance or enforceable good-faith negotiations. Similarly, the University Administration continues to disrespect workers represented by these CUPE locals by delaying negotiations and failing to provide proposals for fair wages, transit coverage, clearer work standards, and better health benefits.

As a reminder, the money is there: the University "continues to be in a strong financial position," reporting an annual net revenue of $551 million in April 2023. What is missing is a commitment from the Administration to engage in good-faith bargaining. This approach to bargaining is premised in part on the idea **that better working conditions for all campus workers – service workers, staff, instructors, postdocs, library workers, academic librarians, and faculty – means better learning conditions and improved well-being for UofT students**, as well. Just as UTFA has demanded meaningful collegiality in our negotiations, we call on the Administration to stop stalling in their negotiations with CUPE members and offer serious proposals.

UTFA is proud to stand with CUPE members in their fight for better working conditions. We encourage each of you to show your solidarity as well:

1. Add your voice to this e-action organized by CUPE 1230, 3261, and 3902;

2. Join CUPE 3902 and 3261 members in front of Sid Smith Hall on Wednesday, February 28th from 4-5 pm for a solidarity rally;
3. Stop by and support information pickets organized by CUPE 3902 on all three campuses on Thursday, February 29th;
4. In the event of a strike on Monday, March 4th, show your support by joining the picket lines.

Please also review the note we sent to UTFA members last week regarding "Academic Continuity" and the Integrity of our Academic Mission in the event of a strike. We will be holding a special UTFA Council meeting in the coming days (exact day and time TBD) to hear from the lead negotiators from CUPE 3902 and discuss issues surrounding academic continuity, academic integrity, and academic freedom. Stay tuned for more information.

With so many employee groups in the heat of negotiations at the same time, this is a vital moment for us to stand together.

Best regards,

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