



Hi my name is Leslie MacDonald-Hicks and I am standing for the position of President of CUPE 2424.

I am proud to have been an active unionist for much of my life. At age 20 I joined a union during a summer job at Labatt's Brewery in St. John's New Brunswick. Although the union at the time didn't want "girls" on the brewery floor, after a couple of summers I proved I belonged and worked hard to change attitudes about what women could do. Years later as a graduate student at the University of Ottawa I worked with my fellow students to organize a part time Professors Union, challenging the attitude of "you should be grateful we let you teach". I proudly served as the first Secretary-Treasurer of this newly founded union.

I came to Carleton as a contract instructor in the early 90s at a time when the women's bathroom had just been labeled as "no longer a men's bathroom" and my TA was making twice my pay! As soon as my contract was renewed I began serving the union. My last act before leaving Carleton was to see the contract instructors merge with CUPE 4600 and become Unit 2.

I then moved to Saskatchewan where I became an active member of CUPE Local 3287 (Sessional Lecturers) at the University of Saskatchewan. When I returned to Ottawa in 2002 I was fortunate enough to find a position as administrative support and became a proud member of CUPE 2424.

My years in the university sector at Carleton University have taught me much about how the university sector operates. My job has afforded me an opportunity to learn about our faculties, programs and funding. I have served our union as a Zone Officer, VP External and most recently as VP Internal. During that time, I have been part of three rounds of bargaining, two strikes and several info pickets. I have acquired knowledge and training to serve our membership, including the Stewardship Series, Pay Equity Training, Equity and Diversity, preparing for Bargaining, Strike preparation and Mental Health First Aid. In 2019, I was asked to be a session presenter at CUPE Nationals' Mobilizing for Bargaining Conference.

As President, I would continue to build on the experience and on the relationships I have established with our members and with the employer. We will need a president who will stand firm and who will

work fiercely to defend and advance the rights, benefits and privileges for our members. I believe that effective unions not only represent their members but also work with the membership and with our Executive Board to build on our collective strengths.

I would like to end by thanking you all for your continued support of our union during this unprecedented time. You have shown up for meetings, voted and brought your concerns to your Zone Officer and Executive members throughout the year, and I am grateful that the Union has been there to help. As we begin to adjust to a life post-pandemic there will be many challenges to how we work, live and recover economically. We as a Union and employees in the university sector will need to work together to surmount these challenges and I am committed to this Union and to the work at hand.

Together we listen, we learn and we build.