

CUPE3287

University of Saskatchewan Sessional Lecturers

News From Nowhere

Year 36, Number 1

March 2025, Newsletter

Become a Member in Good Standing

CUPE 3287 represents all of its dues-paying members in collective bargaining and protects the interests of all of its members in their interactions with the University.

In order to vote in union elections or referenda or to hold office in the union, however, dues-paying members must submit an application in order to become [members in good standing](#). If you plan to attend or to vote or to stand for office at our upcoming membership meeting on April 5th, and you haven't already done so, please [submit a membership application](#) beforehand.

The rule that only members in good standing are eligible to vote in union elections or hold union office has been part of the [CUPE National Constitution](#) from its inception. Until recently, however, our local has not actively enforced this rule. It will do so going forward, however.

On a related note, it has been brought to our local's attention that some dues-paying members who may have voted in the elections held at our 2024 Annual General Meeting may not have submitted an application to become members in good standing. Those individuals have now been contacted and requested to submit a membership application.

William Buschert
CUPE 3287 President

In This Issue

Become a Member in Good Standing	p.1
President’s Report	p. 3
Sessional Profile: Laura St. Pierre	p. 5
Congratulations to our March 2025 AP/PD Grantees	p. 8
SDLC 65 th Annual General Meeting 2025	p. 9
Spring/Summer Parking Sales	p. 11
April 5 Members Meeting	p. 12
Agenda	p. 13
Equality Statement	p. 14

By-Elections

At the upcoming members meeting on April 5, we’ll be holding by-elections for:

- **One Member at Large**
- **One Additional Member of our Bargaining Committee**

Descriptions of the duties of each of these positions can be found in our [Bylaws](#) [pdf].

If you are interested in standing for election for any of these positions, please [contact our Recording Secretary](#), Eleni Arvanitis-Zorbas, to communicate your nomination at least one week prior to the meeting.

Please note that only members in good standing (i.e., members who have submitted a membership application and had it approved by the membership) are eligible to vote in our local’s elections. You can [submit a membership application online](#).

President's Report

"May You Live in Interesting Times"

In the thirty-five years that our local has been in existence, there likely hasn't been a single president's report that couldn't have begun by referencing that old (and, yes, [apocryphal](#)) curse. Yet, as I'm sure you've noticed, we definitely are living in "interesting times" and they are likely to become still more "interesting" in the coming months.

The (pointless and economically self-sabotaging) tariffs either threatened or already imposed by the Trump administration in the United States will all but certainly have an impact on provincial government revenues. And that impact will all but certainly flow downhill to post-secondary institutions. The Saskatchewan government recently released its budget for 2025-26. That budget includes no specific provisions for addressing the U.S. tariffs, but it does promise to continue the 2.2% base operating budget increase for the University of Saskatchewan implemented in 2024-25, with an additional 1% increase for 2025-26. That is, I suppose, better than nothing, but it is obvious that this will barely keep pace with inflation and already agreed-to wage increases and does not allow for any significant expansion of University operational spending. Add to that the dramatic decrease in international student tuition revenue created by the federal government's restrictions imposed in 2023 (and tightened further in 2024) and, well...the fiscal picture for the U of S looks rather sombre.

This matters to our local for obvious (and, in some respects, slightly less obvious) reasons. Our current [Collective Agreement](#) expires on August 31, 2025 and, around that time, we will be heading into a new round of collective bargaining. The University always (and I do mean *always*) pleads poverty when it comes to negotiating fair wage increases for sessional faculty. I expect that the University's lamentations will be even louder this time around, making the work of our Negotiating Committee that much more challenging.

On the slightly less obvious front, the College of Arts and Science (which the employs the great majority of our members) has again been tasked with addressing its (in my view, but not only my view, largely fictional) "structural deficit." The University's new(ish) Chief Financial Officer has apparently dictated that college budgets showing a deficit henceforth will no longer be approved. In the case of Arts and Science (but not only there), this has provoked a flurry of cost-cutting initiatives leading up to the end of the current fiscal year meant to appease central administration. According to documents recently circulated by the Dean of Arts and Science the total budget allocation for sessional lecturer stipends will remain unchanged (at +/- \$400,000) in 2025-26. Yet, since by far the largest share of every college's budget is taken up with fixed budget lines for regular faculty and administrative salaries, this leaves only so many places for cuts. One of those places, apparently, is going to be sessional lecturer

appointments. So, we can reasonably expect fewer sessional appointments and/or appointments restricted to high-enrollment courses in 2025-26 (and probably for at least a while thereafter).

This is not the first time that sessional lecturers have been offered up for sacrifice on the altar of “structural deficits,” yet this has always been especially galling to me. If the University of Saskatchewan actually had “activity-based budgeting” (as has been repeatedly promised by central administration over the years, but never actually delivered), it would be apparent that sessional lecturers, are in fact a great bargain. In terms of wage costs per unit of instruction delivered, sessional faculty are a *lot* cheaper than USFA or ASPA instructors. One of the ironies (or, if you prefer stronger language, stupidities) of the financial regime at the U of S is that nearly everyone in the colleges knows this, but it makes no difference, since University revenues (e.g., from tuition) are generally collected by central administration but passed along to colleges not according to the instructional work they actually do, but according to administration “priorities.” That is, colleges and academic units don’t necessarily see any additional revenue from teaching more students, meaning that hiring sessional lecturers appears simply as an expense rather than as a source of net revenue.

This irony (or stupidity) has been pointed out by our local repeatedly over the years, but has always basically fallen upon deaf ears. We’ll be pointing it out again (and again) during the next round of collective bargaining. In the meantime, however, we can expect fewer sessional teaching

opportunities in 2025-26, especially in the College of Arts and Science.

Some Recent Success Stories

On a much happier note, over the last few months our local has had some notable successes in intervening on behalf of our members. In last three months, we have resolved two outstanding grievances in the College of Education and have successfully intervened to avoid potential grievances in at least half a dozen cases in the College of Arts and Science. I’ll be briefing the membership about some of these cases at our upcoming our **End-of-Term Membership Meeting on Saturday, April 5th** (details, including the agenda for the meeting, can be found elsewhere in this newsletter). I encourage all of you to come out (either in person or via Zoom); I especially encourage new members of our local to attend.

As always, though, let me remind you that CUPE Local 3287 is here to help and support you in your work and in your dealings with the University. So, [contact the union](#) if you encounter any problems regarding access to teaching materials, assignment of office space, getting set up with email or printing or other such issues. Similarly, if you have been deprived of benefits or teaching opportunities to which you believe you are entitled to or threatened with disciplinary action, the union can intervene on your behalf.

Hope to see you all (either in person or via Zoom) on April 5th.

William Buschert
CUPE 3287 President

Sessional Profile: Laura St. Pierre



Photo Credit: Jolanta Bird

In her work *Autopark*, Laura St. Pierre converted eight scrapped cars into moveable greenhouses, complete with installed watering systems and the seats removed to make room for soil. She grouped plants in each car specific to the location and plant ecosystem. Green leaves, berries, and flowering plants could be seen through the car windows and along with the work, St Pierre produced a foldout with instructions on how to convert a car into a greenhouse. The transformed vehicles were positively received with the notable exception of an older gentleman who regarded one of the cars used as a greenhouse, a 1978 Cadillac, as a “classic car beauty.”

Ecology and working with our relationship with nature continues to be central to St. Pierre’s artistic practice. She often questions why we often consider ourselves on the top of the food chain and seeks a relationship with nature that is more reciprocal.

St. Pierre is fascinated by native plants and the role they play in nature with their capacity to feed entire ecosystems. Bees and other animals have spent thousands of years evolving to suit specific plants within one location and she appreciates the interconnected relationship between the environment, plants, and animals that can go unnoticed by others.

Raised by a family described by St. Pierre as “crafty,” she grew up with knitters, sewers, quilters, crocheters, and wood turners. Her parents are proud that she’s an artist, and St Pierre considers her mom to be the world’s best studio assistant and would hire her full time if she could.

After completing her first degree in psychology from the University of British Columbia, St. Pierre returned to Saskatoon and worked at Art Placement, a gallery, art store, and frame shop. Surrounded by art supplies, she was soon buying paints and making artwork. Bob Christie, owner of Art Placement at the time, encouraged her to enroll in the BFA program at the University of Alberta where she taught by Sean Caufield, Allan Ball, and Roy Mills.

St Pierre moved to Montreal for her MFA at Concordia University. While in graduate school, she worked in painting and installation with color and studied with Janet Warner, and Eleanor Bond. During the summer, MFA students enrolled in an interdisciplinary class and St Pierre had the opportunity to work with photography with Canadian artist Evergon.

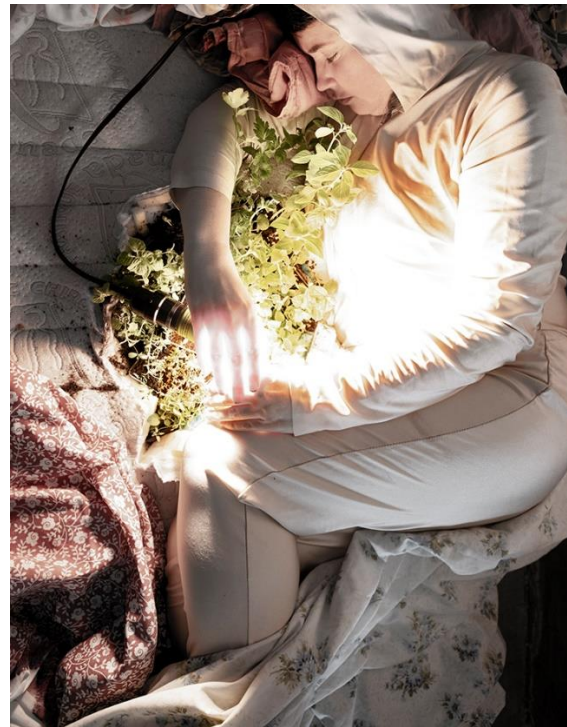
After her MFA, St. Pierre held an administrative position at Hexagram, an interdisciplinary network dedicated to research-creation between arts, cultures and technologies. During this time, she attended a residency in a remote area of Quebec. After finishing her installation of found objects in the woods she photographed the work as documentation, recording work that would have otherwise not been seen by practically anyone. This began her work in constructed photography.

At first, St. Pierre's photos of objects constructed from everyday debris existing in a world left devastated by ecological disaster, remained unpopulated, leaving it up to the imaginations of those who saw her work. But later, she realized that she needed someone present in the photos after many questioned who was there and created the objects.

In 2018 she created several characters that live in her constructed world including the Scavenger, who is never seen, but is responsible for building the constructed objects, the Sower, a character played by Laura herself, and more recently, Les Porteguse.

The character of the Sower tends garden when there is nothing and she goes to extremes to protect and nurture her plants including planting seeds in a mouthful of dirt, carrying plants on her back, and sleeping with her body wrapped in increasingly uncomfortable positions around the plants. Her comfort and ease of her life is less important than the life she is trying to maintain. The Sower is ultimately trying to make human life easier.

Based on a French-Canadian folktale, Les Porteguse (French for carriers) is a group of women from the future that travel back in time in a flying transparent canoe to collect plant samples of species that don't exist in their own time.



Heat and Light, Laura St. Pierre, 40 x 32", Archival inkjet on Hahnemuhle Photo rag, 2022

Everything from constructing the objects to setting up lights is all done by St. Pierre. Industrial sites, parkades, and other

locations set apart from populated areas are used as the settings for her constructed world. Usually, St Pierre doesn't have permission to work on these locations and just goes ahead and uses them. Sometimes, if a location is "dodgy," St. Pierre will have someone on hand for security while she works.

St. Pierre avoids too much post shot editing and everything is done on site as much as possible to have the work be more authentic to what was in front of the camera at the time. She limits editing to what absolutely is necessary, for example digitally removing a building so that the shot looks less populated. She finds the quality of light at sunup and sundown is ideal for her photographs. When St. Pierre works with large panoramas, she had to stitch hundreds of multiple shots and the light changes quite a bit from the beginning to the end of the shoot, so digital editing is used to make the light consistent throughout the final photograph.

Bringing in living plants into a gallery space in St. Pierre's more recent work has proven to be a challenge, out of the concern for maintenance of the plants and the potential risk of insect infestation damaging stored artwork. So far, only the College Building Gallery at the U of S and the Art Gallery of Sudbury in Ontario have allowed St. Pierre to have living plants inside the gallery space. She finds the opposition to the extra labor involved in tending to the plants interesting and views the art as a living thing to take care of within the environment of the gallery rather than the art occupying space as an inanimate object.

Two ongoing works by St Pierre involve plants interacting with their environment. First, she is growing plants in a house in King George that is planned to be torn down, allowing the roots of the plants to grow into the walls, becoming part of the architecture of the house. More information can be found at <https://deviousplot.com/>

In the other work, St Pierre studies plants watching movies through connecting them to a device like a lie detector that measures changes in conductivity response. When the plants respond to different stimuli, the recorded response is converted to music. She discovered that animated movies and movies with strong visuals and deep sounds are the plants "favorite" and invoke the greatest response.

St. Pierre loves teaching and finds that it informs her work in the studio. Currently she is teaching Environmental Art Practices in the School for the Arts. Every student in the class has created distinctive work in response to environmental change, everything from microplastics and sowing rare seeds to how climate change affects the future of housing. St. Pierre supports her students and recognizes that they are brilliant, hopeful and heartfelt.

The question, "Can art make a difference?" is often posed to artists. In response, St. Pierre knows that science is important in understanding the world around us, but art allows us to connect to it on a deeper emotional and creative level.

Patrick Bulas
CUPE 3287 News & Communications Officer

Congratulations to our March 2025 AP/PD Grantees

We are pleased to announce the recipients of the March 2025 AP/PD (Academic Professional/Professional Development) grants! This cycle, we received 15 impressive applications totaling \$31,025.91 in requested funds. With a budget of \$24,062.33 for this round, we fully funded 12 applicants, while one application was ineligible and two received slightly reduced amounts. Funding decisions were based on factors such as how much a request exceeded the round’s average.

Congratulations to all our grantees! Your commitment to professional growth strengthens our union community and drives meaningful progress.

Thank you to everyone who applied. We encourage all members to consider applying in future rounds.

Grantees	Grant Amount	Grant Purpose
Ebenezer Barnes	\$3,240.00	Conference attendance
Gregory Boldt	\$475.09	Conference attendance
Patrick Bulas	\$2,657.53	Conference attendance
Adam Epp	\$1,080.00	Conference attendance
Manuela Facci	\$1,730.00	Conference attendance
Kenzie Friesen	\$221.85	Software license
Camila Ramos Bernardes	\$1,555.00	Conference attendance
Jordan Raymond	\$1,893.00	Conference attendance
Francis Robson	\$2,750.00	Artmaking expenses
Palash Sanyal	\$2,068.39	Directorship certification
Jacob Semko	\$960.00	Artmaking expenses
Eleanor Shia	\$2,068.39	Study abroad program
Laura St. Pierre	\$1,133.00	Artmaking expenses
Wendy Verity	\$1,000.00	Conference attendance

SDLC 65th Annual General Meeting 2025

The 65th Annual Saskatoon and District Labour Council (SDLC) Annual General Meeting was held February 7 & 8, 2025 at the Masonic Temple, Saskatoon. A total of 91 people – 65 delegates and 26 guests – representing 14 unions and 25 locals, attended the event.

Guests included representatives from the City of Saskatoon, Elder Judy Pelly, Carla Beck (NDP Leader of the Official Opposition) and a number of NDP MLAs, Ashlee Hicks (CLC), Lori Johb (SFL), Kurt Wintermute (United Way of Saskatoon and Area), and Kent Peterson (CUPE Saskatchewan President).

SDLC President Don MacDonald served as the chairperson for the AGM. Don MacDonald and Kurt Wintermute served as emcees for the Friday evening Labour Community Service Award Dinner and Ceremony.

The 2025 Labour Community Service Award marked the 25th Anniversary of this Award so the 2025 award was presented collectively to the twenty-five recipients from 1999 to 2024, on behalf of the SDLC and United Way. Andrea Howe put together an excellent slide presentation featuring each of the recipients, many of whom were in attendance.

The 65th SDLC AGM reminded the participants that the SDLC and United Way partnership, in its 30th year, continues to be a fruitful one to work together to make Saskatoon a better community. Four

ongoing initiatives, among many others, reflect this partnership: the *Summer Snacks* program, Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools and United Way Saskatoon and Area's *Summer Success Literacy Camp*, the Saskatoon Public Schools system's *Summer Reading Camps*, the Annual Labour Day Barbecue in September, and the Annual *Labour Community Service Award*.

On Saturday morning, Andrea Howe, Director of Provincial Labour Partnerships, United Way of Saskatoon and Area, moderated a 30th Anniversary of the *Labour-United Way Partnership Panel*. The panel members consisted of Carol Cisecki, Arla Gustafson, Don MacDonald, and Kurt Wintermute. Five topics were presented for the panelists to respond to: (i) the impetus for the formation of the partnership; (ii) challenges; (iii) benefits and value of the partnership; (iv) contributing supporting factors; and (v) relevancy.

Key points made by the panel were that this partnership provides an opportunity for organized labour to focus on community building, organized labour serves as a change agent, partnerships can work, and support from unions makes a difference to the community.

On Saturday afternoon, Don MacDonald, SFL President, moderated a panel on *Violence in the Workplace*. The panel members consisted of Barbara Cape, Nicole Neufeld, Darcy Pederson, Kent Peterson, and Tracey Sauer. Four topics were presented to the panelists to respond to:

(i) extent of violence in the workplace; (ii) impact of the issue on bargaining; (iii) workplace measures to address violence; and (iv) involvement of OHS committees. Key points made by the panelists were that workplace violence takes many forms (e.g., verbal, physical, psychological, threats, intimidation), there is an increase of in-house violence (workers turning on each other rather than on those in charge), workplace violence is becoming normalized, and workers need to stop being observers but step in and do something (i.e., education is good, observation is nice, but action needs to be taken).

SFL President Loro Johb spoke to the assembly on Saturday, reaffirming the SFL's commitment to and assistance with putting pressure on the government for workplace fairness and equity. She reiterated SFL's OHS focus to build a work-focused economy, stressing that workplace safety regulations need to be adhered to. NDP Leader of the Official Opposition Carla Beck reminded the assembly of the turbulent times we are currently living in. We need to look out for each other, address what is harming our communities, and protect our communities and our jobs. CLC representative Ashlee Hicks brought greetings and reminded the assembly that

political action is the cornerstone of organized labour activities.

An overview of the 36th *Summer Snack Program* (2024) was presented by Dani McLaughlin and Madeline Palko, program leaders. This initiative was started by 2 teachers in 1988, 36 years ago, and continues to operate with volunteers and generous corporate and union donations. About 13,501 children and adults received lunches and snacks 7 days a week in 8 city parks in 2024. There has been a noticeable increase in the number of adults (1,633) who are being served by this program as well as halal options (1,255). 3,861 free breakfasts, lunches, and snacks were made available to the *Saskatoon Public School Foundation Summer Reading Camps* and the *Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools and United Way Saskatoon and Area's Summer Success Literacy Camps*. 240 lunches were provided to youth attending the St. Mary's Youth Drop-in Centre.

The 2025 SDLC Executive remains unchanged. One Trustee 3-Year Term and seven Executive Members positions were filled.

William A. Gulka
CUPE 3287 Member at Large

Spring/Summer Parking Sales

Parking spaces for the 2025 Spring/Summer session will go on sale beginning **Monday, March 31, 2025**.

The union makes a limited number of parking spaces available to sessional lecturers on a cost-recovery basis. The union purchases parking spaces from U of S Parking and Transportation Services (PTS) and resells them to members in smaller portions than would otherwise be available. This also allows sessional lecturers to purchase parking in 'choice' lots where the waiting list for parking through PTS is often more than a decade long.

13 spaces are available (11 in F Lot and 2 in V Lot). Locations of these lots can be viewed on the Campus Parking Lot Map.

The 2025 Spring/Summer Session Rate is \$95.00 per quarter.

Quarter dates are set outside the term dates to provide some end-of-term flexibility.

Q1: May 1 – May 30

Q2: June 2 – June 27

Q3: June 30 – July 25

Q4: July 24 – August 22

Parking spaces are made available on a **'first come, first served'** basis; spaces are not reserved until payment has been received. Please note that the available number of spaces is relatively small, and they tend to sell out quickly.

To arrange for parking, please contact the CUPE 3287 Parking Coordinator, Roberta Campbell-Chudoba:

cupe3287parking@gmail.com or mobile: (306) 222-5781.

Payment is by e-transfer or cheque.

End-of-Term Membership Meeting

2:00 PM, Saturday, April 5, 2025

Health Sciences 1B11 (and via Zoom)

Zoom invitations and meeting materials will be distributed via email leading up the meeting.

Reminder: by-elections will be held at this meeting for:

One Member at Large

One Additional Member of our Bargaining Committee

Descriptions of the duties of each of these positions can be found in our [Bylaws](#) [pdf].

If you are interested in standing for election for any of these positions, please [contact our Recording Secretary](#), Eleni Arvanitis-Zorbas, to communicate your nomination at least one week prior to the meeting.

Agenda on following page



END-OF-TERM MEMBERSHIP MEETING

April 5, 2025, 2:00 PM

Health Sciences 1B11 and via Zoom

AGENDA

1. Acknowledgement of Indigenous Territory
2. Adoption of the agenda
3. Roll Call of Officers
4. Reading of the Equality Statement
5. Motion: Acceptance of New Members in Good Standing
6. Adoption of Minutes, AGM, December 12, 2024
7. Matters Arising from the Minutes
8. Secretary-Treasurer's Report
9. News & Communications Officer's Report
10. Correspondence & Communications

Workers Local 824 (Saskatoon) which has been on strike since November 15, 2024.”

11. Executive Committee Report
 - a. Case Work/Grievance/SJUMC Report
 - b. Report on AP/PD (/TW) Fund
 - c. Changes Re: Member in Good Standing Status
 - d. LOU on Change in "Support" from Labour Relations to Faculty Relation
12. By-Elections: Member-at-Large (one); Member of the Negotiating Committee (one)
13. New Business
14. Adjournment

Acknowledgement of Indigenous Territory

As we gather here today, we acknowledge we are on Treaty 6 Territory and the homeland of the Métis. We pay our respect to the First Nations and Métis ancestors of this place and reaffirm our relationship with one another.

Equality Statement

Union solidarity is based on the principle that union members are equal and deserve mutual respect at all levels. Any behaviour that creates conflict prevents us from working together to strengthen our union.

As unionists, mutual respect, cooperation and understanding are our goals. We should neither condone nor tolerate behaviour that undermines the dignity or self-esteem of any individual or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

Discriminatory speech or conduct which is racist, sexist, transphobic or homophobic hurts and thereby divides us. So too, does discrimination on the basis of ability, age, class, religion, language and ethnic origin.

Sometimes discrimination takes the form of harassment. Harassment means using real or perceived power to abuse, devalue or humiliate. Harassment should not be treated as a joke. The uneasiness and resentment that it creates are not feelings that help us grow as a union.

Discrimination and harassment focus on characteristics that make us different; and they reduce our capacity to work together on shared concerns such as decent wages, safe working conditions, and justice in the workplace, society and in our union.

CUPE's policies and practices must reflect our commitment to equality. Members, staff and elected officers must be mindful that all persons deserve dignity, equality and res

Contact the Union

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Newsletter Editorial Board

Editor:

Patrick Bulas

Committee Members:

Will Buschert, Jeffrey Klassen,
Eleanor Shia

If you would like to submit an article to our newsletter or would like to join our committee, please contact news.cupe3287@gmail.com

How Are We Doing?

Is there something you want to see published in the newsletter?

Have something related to what we do as sessional lecturers that you want posted on Facebook, Instagram, or Blue Sky?

Is there an event or news that would be of interest to sessional lecturers?

Please let us know.

Contact the [News & Communications Committee](#).