

BCIT FSA
VOICE



President's Message
**Get Involved.
Be Heard.**



Colin Jones, President

There are two great opportunities on the horizon to get involved with your association: FSA elections and bargaining preparation.

Upcoming Elections

I want to invite each of you to be involved in our upcoming elections. In these elections you will be electing a Treasurer, five Directors-at Large, and two Directors, Associate Members. Consider running yourself. When I first sat as a Director in 2009, it gave me a glimpse at not only the great work done by our association, but a different perspective on the inner-workings of BCIT. It was my first real opportunity to see the bigger picture of our diverse membership, and the valuable influence we can have as both individuals and collectively. If it's not possible for you to run yourself, talk to your colleagues and nominate someone. Finally, and a way in which we can all be involved, vote in April! If you have any questions about the commitment involved and what it means to be a Director in your Faculty and Staff association, reach out to me or anyone else on our [Board of Directors](#). Watch for the call for nominations in the coming months!

Bargaining... Again!

While it may feel like we just finished our [last round of collective bargaining](#), our current Collective Agreement's term ends in 2022!

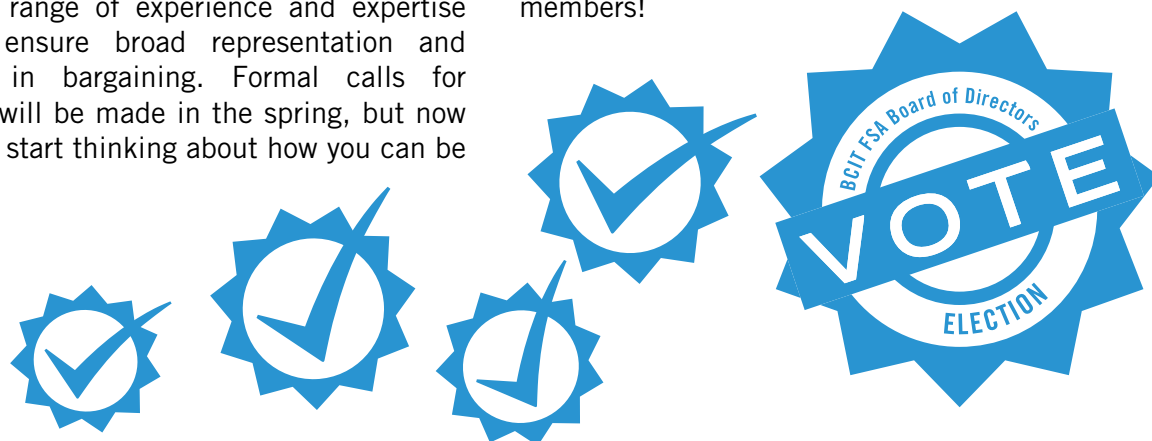
The first thing I ask of all of us, is to utilize the provisions in our [Collective Agreement](#). Without testing the language, we don't know what works, and what doesn't. Second, please keep track of issues and opportunities each of us encounter in our daily work related to our agreement and don't hesitate to [send us an email](#) letting us know about ideas for future bargaining improvements.

Finally, as we approach the fall, we will spin up the more formal preparations for bargaining, starting with the formation of our [Collective Agreement Committee](#) (CAC). The outcomes at the bargaining table are a direct result of our preparation and we need a wide range of experience and expertise involved to ensure broad representation and perspectives in bargaining. Formal calls for participation will be made in the spring, but now is the time to start thinking about how you can be involved.

The last round of bargaining presented a number of challenges, but we [achieved](#) fair wage increases, substantial gains on our extended health benefits, and long-sought improvements for our members in Part-Time Studies (PTS) by establishing pooled sick leave and PD funds. While we always advocate for a fair mandate for our members, the next round will certainly be a challenging one due to both the projected provincial deficit and the government's decades-old approach to bargaining in BC. [PSEC](#) and [PSEA](#) are involved in every aspect of bargaining and have final say over BCIT's negotiations. For example, though we have been able to make the gains mentioned above for members working in PTS, PSEA has made it clear they are opposed to any equalizing of the pay formula for PTS instructors and expressly forbid post-secondary institutions within their jurisdiction from fairly compensating part-time and contract faculty. In addition, PSEA has banned any extra compensation related to workload during the pandemic. These realities make it even more critical to have member involvement in the bargaining process.

Your Association

While it may feel like your union is always asking for more of you, there is a reason... it's your union. Many times I hear comments like, "the FSA should *do this*" and "what does the FSA think of *that*", and I'm forced to remind members that, while it sounds cliché, we are the FSA. You are the FSA. Our collective agreement is just a book – be it physical or digital. Our strength comes from you and I and our colleagues choosing to be involved and committed to the actions of our union. Please consider putting your name forward for one of these important roles in addition to the ongoing ways – such as management selection committees and being a Tech Rep – that are available to all members!



Member Profile



Orrett Morgan

Orrett Morgan is an FSA member and faculty (Program Head) in BCIT's Technology Support Professional (TSP) program in the School of Computing & Academic Studies. Orrett is committed to equity, accessibility, and providing education that meets the needs of today's students.

How long have you worked at BCIT?

12 years

What motivates your work?

The ability to innovate in a flexible environment.

One word to describe the FSA?

Advocacy

What lesson has working at BCIT taught you?

Working here has taught me to adapt. It's an ongoing process.

What motivates you to be involved with the FSA?

At this point there are issues that I feel strongly about that I believe the FSA can address.

Which living person do you most admire?

Eddie S. Glaude Jr. is an American academic. He's a Professor of African American Studies at Princeton University. He speaks with a depth of knowledge on many subjects, and he's a truth teller.

If you could live anywhere, where would it be?

I'm right where I need to be. We enjoy an immense amount of privilege here. There are sunnier and warmer places, and places where your money goes further sure, but we have "world class everything here". I just coined that. Feel free to use it.

What is the greatest issue facing BCIT?

Relevance. If the pandemic has taught us anything, it's that we're going to need to be able to educate students wherever they are. We are going to have to differentiate ourselves by providing something students can't get anywhere else.

What is the best book you have read recently?

Because I'm a rule breaker I'll give the last three: Policing Black Lives (Robyn Maynard), Competing in the Age of AI (Marco Iansiti, Karim R. Lakhani), and 21 Lessons for the 21st Century (Yuval Noah Harari).

What was your first paying job?

Dishwasher at Red Robin. The pay was bad, the fries were good (and free).

One way to make meetings better:

I'm not sure that's a thing.

If you had \$1-million to give to a cause, what would you select?

rapsbc.com jumps to mind. They are a not for profit, no kill shelter that looks after animals in need.

Do you have a non-work related passion or hobby? What is it?

Golf.

What makes a workplace healthy?

Diversity, inclusiveness, flexibility, support, collaboration, respect.

What most inspires you?

This point in time. Right now we are at a moment in history that should be a call to action on so many issues. Everybody can do something.

If you had to choose an occupation other than your current one, what would it be?

Chocolate chip cookie sommelier. Not all cookies are created equal. There are some bad cookies out there. People need guidance!

What's your favourite place on the campus you work at?

My classroom at the DTC. I've got a fancy WebEx camera system in there.

The future of public post-secondary education is...

Uncertain, exciting, and yet to be fully understood. My hope is that at some point we will be able to educate everyone who wants an education, regardless of who they are or what they want to learn.

What is a course/class you would like to take?

Something that would bring together political science, technology and how aspects of those forces have shaped and influenced our world.

What could you use right now if someone would invent it for you?

A holodeck. The Matrix would be great, but you're just an avatar in there. In the holodeck, you get to interact in there IRL.

BCIT Graduates Are Downloading My Course Material

Intellectual Property and the Pandemic



George Talbott, Senior Labour Relations Rep

Since forcing a shift to emergency remote teaching, the pandemic has generated concerns for many FSA members regarding intellectual property. Questions such as: What happens if a program shifts its teaching online? Or when a manager demands course materials be placed on the Learning Hub or other similar platforms?

Unlike many other workplaces, at BCIT the materials that FSA-represented instructors create while at work belong solely to the instructors. This is in line with many other academic institutions, and should not come as a surprise to managers at BCIT.

The FSA collective agreement has particularly strong language on intellectual property and new Associate Deans and Deans may need to be reminded of this on occasion. The relevant passage in the collective agreement reads as follows: [emphasis added]:

Article 7.4.1: An Employee's lecture materials, demonstrations, written or graphic materials, audio-visual materials and any other teaching aids which the Employee creates, develops, acquires or introduces into the Institute in support of that Employee's teaching or teaching-related functions **shall be the Employee's sole property and shall not be used by others without the Employee's permission.**

This is a strong and unambiguous property right that defaults to FSA members. The ownership right does not change or vary if students have graduated or are still at BCIT, despite a recent suggestion to the contrary by an Associate Dean suggested otherwise.

Sharing with Others: Get it in Writing!

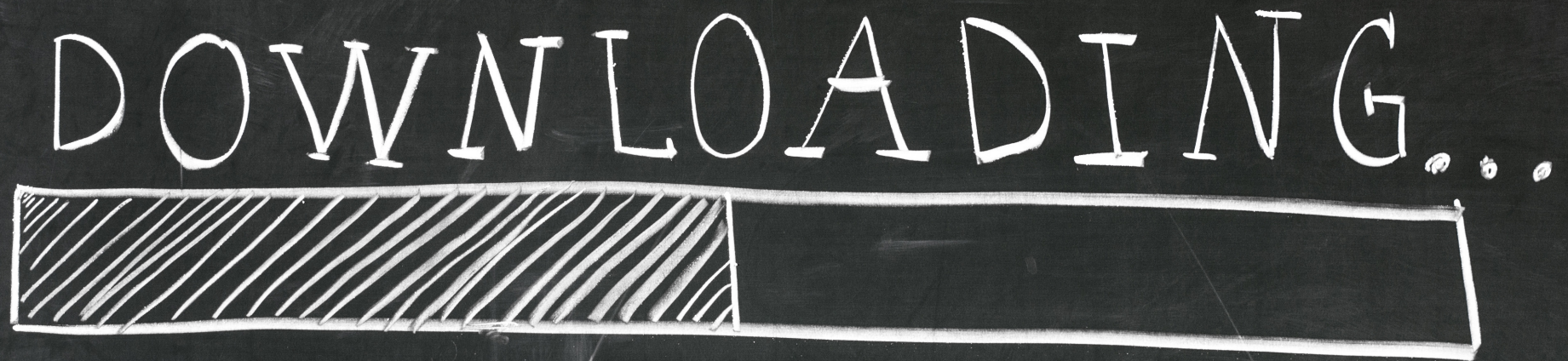
Intellectual property becomes more important where collegial governance and job security are threatened. Where members are on temporary contracts, PTS contracts, or are in positions that pay less than regular instructor salaries, their income and job security may be at stake in disputes over intellectual property. Intellectual property for some may also be vital to the ability to earn a living and instruct at BCIT and other institutions. If you are ever in doubt on these matters are concerned for your job security because you are asserting your right to your intellectual property, please contact the FSA office.

Before you share any material, you should get an understanding in writing (email suffices). Questions worth considering:

1. Am I giving away my entire ownership or just a right to use it? Am I donating it to BCIT? Or gifting it to members of my department? What if I want to use the materials in future at another institution?
2. Am I placing a time limit on the sharing? If so, for how long? One term? An academic year? Forever?
3. What rights do others have to add or modify the materials I've loaned or gifted them? What if those modified materials lead to profit for others? What if those individuals share the materials with others?
4. If asked to place this material on an online platform, does the online platform have a system of copyright labels and restrictions? *The Learning Hub, we are told, has such a feature.*
5. What rights do I have to cancel any understandings with another if I end up in a dispute with them? Have I been clear about when and how I will take my materials back and what will trigger the return?
6. Is it clear when, and how, the materials can be returned to me when I demand or when a time limit has expired? Have I been clear about the duty of the other to delete all copies when the material is returned?

This is simple — no more complicated than sending an email to the person who is going to receive your materials, explaining what they can and cannot do with the materials, and getting a response from them by email agreeing to the terms.





BCIT Graduates Are Downloading My Course Material

(cont.)

Sharing Materials with Students with Disabilities

Students who are able to substantiate a disability, and where that the disability requires an accommodation, may be entitled by law to various copies or recordings of lecture notes or materials.

Human rights law in this instance would override an instructors' absolute property rights, but only for a temporary period of time and for restricted personal use. Accessibility Services at BCIT can provide instructors with further information about the accommodation of students with disabilities.

Exceptions to Sole Ownership of Teaching Materials

If BCIT compensates instructors beyond their usual salary to produce materials, then BCIT will likely own them. This compensation can come in a few different forms, for example:

1. You are offered a curriculum development contract;
2. You are given specified release time to develop materials; or,
3. You are paid a sum of money above your usual salary to develop materials.

In these cases, BCIT is buying the right to own the materials by giving you something extra in exchange, above your usual pay and hours.

Negotiating these items with your manager requires clarity. Get it in writing! Mixing older materials produced in the past with new materials generated under a curriculum development contract, may lead to a dispute about who owns what, for example. Be clear about the rights to those old materials and specify in writing what it is BCIT is buying. Again if in doubt contact the FSA office for advice.





To Use or Not to Use Temporary Contracts

At the FSA we sometimes receive inquiries along these lines: My Department has a permanent opening for a regular position. Can we hire someone on a temporary contract to see how they work out, and only offer them a permanent job after they've completed their term assignment and shown that they're satisfactory?

The short answer is “no”. Departments should generally hire regular permanent employees. That will permit managers to use probation provisions (Article 12) to assess the new employee's performance. Article 12 provides a year's probation for most new hires, and includes mechanisms for seeking input from colleagues. Those who are unsatisfactory can be released during this year. Temporary hires should only be used for unanticipated circumstances, temporary backfills for members on leave, or temporary increases in workload (see Article 4.2.2). Temporary contracts should not be used as a form of trying out new hires to see if they are satisfactory.



Best Practices

The State of the Sector: Looking In, Looking Out in 2021



Michael Conlon, FSA Executive Director

As the pandemic approaches the one-year mark, the post-secondary education sector has not been immune from disruption. The sudden move to emergency remote teaching taxed our membership and strained the entire system of post-secondary education in British Columbia.

Despite hopes for a quick return to campus, it is far from assured that we will return to 'business as usual' in 2021. However, with a vaccine now on the horizon it seems timely to reflect on some of the challenges directly related to the pandemic and some of the changes that may not be as temporary as first expected.

Emergency Remote Teaching

Despite some initial challenges, the spirit of innovation and collegiality at BCIT was integral to pivoting to remote teaching almost overnight. While it is impossible to recreate the energy and connection of being face to face, FSA members in both teaching and staff roles have delivered high quality education and ensured students were able to continue with their programs. However, the professional and personal disruption for our members has been notable. Prominent among these issues are workload concerns and the pressure of family responsibilities such as childcare. The latter challenge has been particularly acute for single parents and the FSA continues to assist members with unique challenges exacerbated by the pandemic.

Though FSA members have made the best of the imperative for emergency remote teaching, there is growing concern that this may be seen as an opportunity to keep delivery (permanently) online in some areas, even if this change isn't supported by faculty or students. While online learning is a viable, and sometimes preferred delivery model, it should be used strategically and where pedagogically appropriate to advance the "[BCIT difference](#)". Any decisions about keeping a course or program delivery online, should be made within the framework of collegial governance and with adherence to the rights our members hold within Departmental decision-making and consultation. As our members have learned over the past year, this delivery model can be extremely labour intensive and workload, along with the best possible learning outcomes for students, must be considered.

2021 Fiscal Picture

The biggest financial liability in the pandemic for most institutions, including BCIT, was the immediate drop in international student enrolment. On the whole, BCIT has weathered the fiscal storm relatively well, with robust domestic enrolment balancing out substantial declines in international numbers. However, the reality is that BCIT has become reliant on the market-driven tuition fees paid by international students. Senior leadership is expecting a deficit in the range of 4% for 2020/21, though several variables remain before a final projection becomes available. Not surprisingly, the effect across the campus is varied, with those programs most dependent on international students feeling the most acute effects. It is also important to keep in mind that 2018/19 saw unprecedented growth in international student enrolment at BCIT. However, the slow roll out of vaccines and continued travel bans could stall the recovery until September 2022.

Funding

With the province facing a substantial deficit and even though the BC economy and employment rates have fared much better than most provinces, there is no doubt that the BC economy is facing contraction in the short-term. Concurrent with that fiscal reality is increased pressure for spending in the health sector. Taken together, these factors will make it difficult to do more than hold the line on government grants in the coming years. However, there is a robust argument to be made for reinvestment in the sector and the role post-secondary education can play in a post-pandemic economy. These arguments will form the core of our strategy with the provincial government. A review of the provincial funding formula is currently underway and at this stage the government is not seeking feedback from stakeholders but we will monitor this process closely and intervene as needed.

In addition to funding, free and fair collective bargaining will also form the core of our government relation strategy moving forward. The unique mandate of BCIT calls for a specific strategy that highlights our common goals with the rest of the sector while also highlighting the fact that BCIT has both challenges and opportunities that no other BC institution has.

Conclusion

As we move into a new year, we are hopeful about a move out of this pandemic but realistic that it may not come as quickly or completely as many of us hope. In the meantime, the FSA will continue to advocate for working conditions that put faculty and staff at the heart of BCIT and ensure our members' voices are heard as we continue to navigate these fraught times.



Board Member Profile



Tom Lane

Tom Lane joined the FSA board of directors in 2020. He has served as a Tech Rep for a number of years and is a vocal advocate for the working conditions of members across BCIT. Tom brings perspectives to the board as a teaching faculty as well from serving on committees that cross various BCIT functional areas and Schools/Divisions.

How long have you worked at BCIT?

16 years.

What motivates your work?

I like to think that I'm contributing to students' lives and helping them learn to be critical thinkers. My hope is that they apply these thinking skills to the broader questions in life, outside of the bounds of the technologies they study.

One word to describe the FSA?

Us.

What motivates you to be involved with the FSA?

While teaching is a social activity it can be deceptively isolating in many instances as there isn't a large amount of peer interaction built into the job. Instructing is also open ended and can feel overwhelming in the sense that there is always more to be done, or a better way to do it. My hope is by being involved in the FSA I can build a sense of community to alleviate this sense of isolation. I also hope to contribute working conditions at BCIT in a way that helps instructors do "better" and "more" but with reasonable levels of personal commitment.

What lesson has serving on the FSA board taught you?

Though diverse, FSA members have more in common we care to admit. Our ability to shape the vision and operation of BCIT is only limited by our inability to recognize and act on this common interest.

Which living person do you most admire?

I have to go with someone I know well. My mom, she was a pioneering woman educator and a tireless advocate for public education whatever the personal cost.

If you could live anywhere, where would it be?

Here in Vancouver.

What is the greatest issue facing BCIT?

There are several and I'm reticent to rank them. A big one is the difference in working conditions between full time and part time faculty, or the fact that there is a difference between these groups at all.

What is the best book you have read recently?

It's a tie between, Behemoth: A History of the Factory and the Making of the Modern World by Joshua B. Freeman and The Secret Life of Groceries by Benjamin Lorr.

What was your first paying job?

Besides odd jobs, during high school I worked as a prepress technician making plates for printing presses. This was before the process was digitized and used a large format camera and a darkroom.

One way to make meetings better:

Have more for members to do. I think information can be shared in a number of ways but the opportunity for FSA members to work together in person is a precious thing. In person interaction is best used for small group collaboration on specific issues of concern to members.

If you had \$1-million to give to a cause, what would you select?

It would depend on the gravest concern of the day: at the moment - COVID research and treatment.

Do you have a non-work related passion or hobby? What is it?

Pre-COVID I played water polo but I've taken up ocean swimming since I can't get in the pool.

What makes a workplace healthy?

Avenues for employees to determine the real structure and practices of a workplace.

What most inspires you?

My son.

If you had to choose an occupation other than your current one, what would it be?

I used to be a bike mechanic and given the time would like to do it again. Though, lately I've been enjoying hanging out with four-year olds, so I'd like to give being an early childhood educator a try as well.

What's your favourite place on the campus you work at?

I primarily work at the DTC, but I always enjoy stopping by Media Works when I get a chance.

The future of public post-secondary education is...

in flux and its up to us to shape it. There are demographic trends that are changing our student population, economic and educational trends have the potential to modify the core assumptions of BCIT including our cohort model. As faculty we to need assume stewardship of these matters to make sure that the changes that are enacted are in the interests of students, faculty, and the broader community.

What is a course/class you would like to take?

I would like to study machine learning and refresh my statistics.

What could you use right now if someone would invent it for you?

I don't ask for much: bulk upload and download access to the learning hub. I'll write it, if I can get API access.



Best Practices

Want to Get Involved in Research at BCIT?

While some FSA Members are full-time researchers at BCIT's [Centre for Applied Research and Innovation](#) (CARI), many FSA members are not designated in the full-time researcher category but are still pursuing research at BCIT. You have many options to explore some aspect of research work as part of your career here at BCIT, if you are interested.

Your first step is to check out the BCIT Research pages on the website for more information. BCIT Research has a dedicated [Applied Research Liaison Office](#) (ARLO) offering a wide range of support services and guidance to BCIT faculty, researchers, students, and industry partners. ARLO can likely answer your pressing questions about research.

For example, they can point you to various funding sources for which you may be eligible to apply. [This page](#) lists numerous sources including opportunities to collaborate with outside organizations and companies.

Did you know that BCIT has a [large internal fund](#) supporting research projects, sometimes for multiple years? These internal research funds can fund release time for faculty in order to carry out research activities. Many of our Members may also be eligible to apply for federal research funds, such as Tri-Council funding from [SSHRC](#) and [NSERC](#).

Members teaching into Masters level programs as well as members teaching into degree programs are also leading their own research projects and supervising student research here at BCIT; for example, in the [Master of Engineering in Building Science](#).

It's amazing how many of our members are supporting [student research projects](#) in some capacity. BCIT Research has information on different funds for student opportunities, also listed on the [Funding Sources](#) Page.

The FSA has recently made it easier and more streamlined for Members to get approval to hire a student as part of a research project. The FSA's guide for use of student employees can be [found here](#). An [online approval form](#) for hiring students has helped to standardize and streamline the process. The person who fills in this form needs to be a BCIT manager, but by reviewing the form you can see the information that's required to make the hire.

Participating in research in some capacity at BCIT is appealing to many of our members. Over the years the FSA has led several initiatives to support our Members engaged in research. We have a research caucus, CARAS ([Caucus on Applied Research and Advanced Studies](#)) open to all members, for information exchange and advocacy. You can also find lots of information about FSA research initiatives posted in the [Members Portal](#) (login required).

Staff Profile



Michael Conlon

Michael Conlon joined the FSA in August 2020. Michael's career includes a variety of roles over 15 years in post-secondary labour relations. Michael's unique blend of experience from the post-secondary and faculty association sectors within BC and across Canada brings a wealth of knowledge to our FSA office. With half of his first year at the FSA completed and many months on his Zoom "ED Road Show", we can assure you that Michael is settling in well to his new-ish role!

How long have you worked at the FSA?

6 months

What motivates your work here?

Bringing my skills and passion to defending members who are being treated unfairly.

One word to describe the FSA?

Committed

What lesson has working at the FSA taught you?

The importance of a strong, committed team.

What motivates you to be involved with the FSA?

See #2

Which living person do you most admire?

Beyond my parents...the Dalai Lama.

If you could live anywhere, where would it be?

Paris. It's one of those rare places that never disappoints!

What is the greatest issue facing the labour movement?

The need for the inclusion of diverse, innovative approaches and voices to social justice. Also...PSEC meddling in collective bargaining. Sorry I cheated with two, but the movement is facing many challenges!

What is the best book you have read recently?

Karl Ove Knausgaard, The End. The very long, last book in a series. It was an act of endurance and love to finish The End. The whole series was an inspiring, powerful, and, at times, infuriating experiment.

What was your first paying job?

Sears Warehouse.

One way to make meetings better:

Clear objectives and deliverables before a meeting is called.

If you had \$1-million to give to a cause, what would you select?

Free schooling and social supports for children in rural Nepal.

Do you have a non-work related passion or hobby? What is it?

I love hiking and trekking. In 2017 I did Everest Base Camp and when the pandemic is over I would love to do some climbing/trekking in the Hindu Kush.

What makes a workplace healthy?

A healthy workplace integrates the individual need for growth and fulfilment with the needs and direction of the organization.

What most inspires you?

People who inspire resilience in others by how they live (vs what they say!).

If you had to choose an occupation other than your current one, what would it be?

General Manager of the Toronto Maple Leafs

What's your favourite place on the campus you work at?

TBD! I've been working largely remotely since I started in my role.

The future of public post-secondary education is...

always worth fighting for.

What is a course/class you would like to take?

Any course Pierre Bourdieu taught....alas impossible now.

What could you use right now if someone would invent it for you?

A 100% waterproof phone.

We acknowledge that the BCITFSA and its members' workplaces are located on unceded Indigenous land belonging to the Coast Salish peoples, including the territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations.

Vision

Outstanding careers through outstanding employment conditions.

Mission

To create an outstanding workplace: engage, celebrate, protect, and make gains for all our members.

Values

- Empowerment
- Influence
- Principled Action
- Social Justice
- Solidarity
- Strength


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BCIT internal only



Affiliation Spotlight: CAUT Affinity Program



Because of the strength of CAUT's membership and their national scope, CAUT has been able to negotiate special rates and services with selected businesses that will give our members substantial savings when they need to travel or get insurance products. For the day when travel is a reality again, check out the benefits of the program at caut.ca/membership/affinity-programs.

The FSA TEAM

At the time of publication

BOARD

Colin Jones	<i>President</i>
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Vanessa Barron	<i>Director, Associate Members</i>
Joe Boyd	<i>Director-at-Large</i>
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Michael Conlon	<i>Executive Director</i>
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Kyla Epstein	<i>Member Engagement Officer</i>
George Talbott	<i>Senior Labour Relations Representative</i>
Kristie Starr	<i>Labour Relations Representative</i>
Michael Thompson	<i>Labour Relations Representative</i>
Steve Kwon	<i>Junior Labour Relations Representative</i>
Pierre Cassidy	<i>Information Officer</i>
Debbie Kinequon	<i>Operations Assistant</i>

Currently on leave:

Christine Nagy	<i>Labour Relations Representative</i>
Tess Rebbitt	<i>Labour Relations Representative</i>

Contribute to the FSA Voice!

Do you have news or a story that you think other FSA members would be interested in?

Consider contributing to the FSA Voice! Contact us at 604.432.8695 or fsa@bcit.ca