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# TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The BCITFSA and its members' workplaces are located on unceded Indigenous land belonging to the Coast Salish peoples, including the territories of the x<sup>w</sup>məθkwəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səlilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: OUR PLACE IN THE MOVEMENT

In late November 2022, I had the privilege of attending two conventions on behalf of you, our members: the BC Federation of Labour (BCFED) Convention and the Canadian Association of Teachers (CAUT) Fall Council. Attending these events hit home where the FSA fits within the broader labour movement and national post-secondary trade unionism. They also underscored the power of the FSA. While we may feel like a somewhat small union in numbers, our ability to influence far outstrips any perceived shortcomings.

At the BCFED Convention, the province's current and outgoing Premiers David Eby and John Horgan, the leader of the federal NDP Jagmeet Singh, and Secretary-Treasurer of the Washington State Labor Council April Sims greeted over 900 delegates from across BC. Each of the guest speakers shared inspiring stories and hopeful words, which revolved around one key theme: We are stronger together! Solidarity, the speakers emphasized, is key to building a better future for working people.

This belief in moving forward together is something that I know our FSA delegates to the Convention and the FSA's BCFED standing committee representatives take seriously. Despite our relatively small size in the provincial union movement, the FSA punches well above our weight class. With representation on almost all of the BCFED's standing committees and a seat on the Executive Council, the FSA influences a broad section of issues and policies important to the provincial labour movement and fosters connections with labour leaders from across BC.

Shortly after the BCFED Convention, I joined over 200 delegates from post-secondary unions across Canada at CAUT's Fall Council in Ottawa to address issues specific to our sector. Some themes overlapped with the BCFED convention, including discussions of solidarity with those suffering in Ukraine and Iran, though delegates focused primarily on post-secondary. The mismanagement and insolvency at Laurentian—in which around 100 faculty were fired from the Sudbury, ON university—was one of



**Colin Jones**  
FSA PRESIDENT &  
CHIEF NEGOTIATOR

many important topics. Delegates vowed to support Laurentian while working to ensure no other institution faces insolvency because of malpractice or the misapplication of the Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act. On this topic, I was pleased to read in December that Dr. Sheila Embleton, the recipient of CAUT's 2022 Bernice Shrank Award for outstanding contributions to the enforcement of academic staff workplace rights through grievance and arbitration, was named interim President of Laurentian beginning in 2023. This is a testament to labour's ability to lead!

Our affiliation with labour organizations like CAUT and the BCFED allow us to learn from their experience and leadership, while ensuring the needs and perspectives of our members are heard within the larger labour movement. Whether provincially or federally, our union siblings take time to listen to what we at the FSA have to say. Of course, our current representatives cannot do it all and there is always the opportunity to do more! I encourage you to make the time to get involved and share your voice. The world needs more FSA!



**Michael Conlon**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S ANALYSIS: BC'S PUBLIC SECTOR SHOULD CAPITALIZE ON BILL 124 RULING

Since 1993, the province of BC, through the Public Sector Employers Act, has managed collective bargaining for public sector-unions in a manner that interferes with the right to free and fair collective bargaining. A recent ruling over Ontario's Bill 124 provides insight into possible changes for BC.

In October 2018, the Ontario Progressive Conservatives under Doug Ford introduced Bill 124. The bill instituted a three-year wage cap, limiting increases to one percent over a so-called moderation period. All agreements would have been subject to this three-year period regardless of when negotiations for a new round of bargaining began. In addition, all agreements between unions and public-sector employers, including those in the post-secondary education sector, would require approval from the Treasury Board.

Bill 124 clearly undermined free and fair collective bargaining, and unions in Ontario quickly mobilized in protest under the umbrella of the Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL). In February of 2020, the OFL and all public sector unions in the province, including the Ontario Confederation of Faculty Associations, launched their winning Charter challenge.

On December 2, 2022, Justice Markus Koehnen of the Ontario Superior Court struck down Bill 124. Koehnen ruled that the bill was unconstitutional because it substantially interfered in the bargaining process and undermined Charter Rights to freedom of association. This is the latest in a string of defeats for the Ford government in its ongoing battle with public-sector unions. However, it is important to note that Bill 124 ostensibly reproduced the Public-Sector Employers' Council (PSEC) model of bargaining in BC, in place for over 25 years. PSEC's intrusion into our collective bargaining processes has ensured that wages in the public sector, particularly in the post-secondary sector, have fallen well-behind comparable colleges and universities in most other provinces. The key difference being most other Canadian colleges and universities must negotiate directly with faculty unions and cannot depend on the government to impose wage settlements.

Various recent judgments in the Supreme Courts of Ontario and Manitoba show that Justices are growing less tolerant of direct government interference in bargaining. However, there is a mixed record of court challenges to provincial wage restraint legislation. Courts in different jurisdictions have looked at exactly the same facts and come to different conclusions, in some cases upholding the legislation, and in others striking it down as an unconstitutional intrusion in the right to free and fair collective bargaining.

Despite this dichotomy, it is beyond argument that PSEC and the Post-Secondary Employers' Association (PSEA) are aggressive, organized, and government-controlled institutions that ensure that faculty unions in BC cannot negotiate directly with our employers. This is particularly egregious in our sector because post-secondary institutions are supposed to enjoy freedom from government interference.

When provincial bargaining is by fiat, public-sector negotiations are determined by the government of the day. In the current round of bargaining, in which wage increases between 12 and 14 percent over three years are on the table, there is perhaps little appetite to contemplate a legal challenge. However, it was not so long ago that, over a nine-year period, from 2010-2019, FSA members saw a cumulative wage increase of 9.5 percent. Governments come and go, but, as institutions, PSEC and PSEA impede free and fair collective bargaining and undermine the autonomy of BC post-secondary institutions. It is past the time for the labour movement in British Columbia to consider a legal challenge to PSEC and PSEA, and the FSA should be part of any such campaign. If successful court challenges in Manitoba and Ontario are any indication, you don't need a meteorologist to know which way the wind is blowing.



*Photo from cupe.ca*





## Board Member Profile

# SANDRA AMADOR,

## DIRECTOR, ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Sandra Amador is an experienced leader and quality professional with over 30 years in the field of driving improvement while investing in people's development.

A passionate advocate of servant leadership and an honest believer in the basic principles of respect, simplicity, and common sense to unleash oneself and the team's potential, Sandra has worked in a variety of industries, from pharmaceutical to automotive, and has been leading varied teams achieving cohesiveness, enhancing training, and promoting their skills. Her favourite role is being the unofficially named "change agent". She is a Certified Quality Auditor from the American Society for Quality and has taken audits to the level of collaboration and improvement catalyst while ensuring fair compliance evaluation.

Sandra is a Chemical Engineer and a former BCIT student of the Operations Management Certification.

### How long have you worked at BCIT?

Since March 2019, always as a flexible program instructor in the Operations Management program.

### What motivates you to be involved with the FSA?

Ensuring that more voices are heard to improve working conditions for all.

### What lesson has being on the FSA board taught you?

It has brought more clarity to the delineation of BCIT as an employer and as an educational institution.

### Which person do you most admire, living or dead, and why?

My mom. She always made

sure we were raised thinking about fairness and respect for others. Sometimes you don't think much about it being part of your upbringing until you start trying to advocate for others or look at issues from a fairness perspective. My mom worked very hard for her kids' wellbeing, taught us self-sufficiency, and has always been considerate and kind to others.

### If you could live anywhere, where would it be?

It would be anywhere my family decides to be. I love living in the lower mainland, however, if my kids were to move far permanently... likely I would end up moving.

### What is the biggest issue facing BCIT?

At this moment I would say registration volume. However, setting agile processes to manage registration numbers recovery is key to ensuring past issues do not come back to create operational challenges for instructors, staff, and even students.

### What's an issue you're passionate about?

Common sense. It is not that common, organizations need to ensure people engagement, people training, and clear and simple processes to really become effective.

**What is the best thing you've read or watched recently?**

I like reading *Brave New World* by Aldous Huxley every year. Fell in love with that book when I was in college. I always have liked sci-fi and futuristic genres. There is so much in that book of things we see or hear about years back and still do; I was deeply impacted by the “class” system they had, and of course, by the protagonist challenging the system.

**What was your first paying job?**

A co-op when I was finishing my chemical engineering bachelor, in a chemical cleaning agent manufacturing company.

**One way to make things better at BCIT:**

Really listen to all voices and feedback. Often, people stop giving information, ideas, or reporting problems because they feel that there was no point since they never hear back. Even if it is to say that after evaluation the suggestion is not feasible, people would appreciate that so much more than silence.

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

Teaching is my hobby in that I truly enjoy it. I like mentoring and volunteering in a few organizations. Love movies too, all except western and horror.

**What makes a workplace healthy?**

Transparency, communication, and collaboration. People are valued as the most important resource of an organization.

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

I work as a Quality Assurance Manager driving improvement, and I teach in flexible programs to support improvement. I love both. However, I have always wanted to work at an oil rig.

**What's your favourite place on campus?**

I am rarely at the campus for any other reason than to deliver class, and there are a lot of changes with all the construction, so I can't say I have a favourite one. However, I am closely tied to SE6.

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

challenging. Between cost, availability, and sometimes lack of proper career data information that gives a more realistic picture of job opportunities and professional growth for young people, the choice is not easy. Early promotion of trades and their benefits, or science and other disciplines that are lacking demographics, is essential.

**If you could learn something new, what would it be?**

Playing piano.

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

Teleportation, I have a long commute. 😊

**What's one thing that you'd like the members reading this to know about you?**

I am a very practical person, I like having fun environments at work and at school, and I never shy away from opportunities to learn.

**What's the most important thing for the FSA membership to know about working at BCIT?**

I consider working at BCIT an opportunity to contribute indirectly to the improvement of our communities in that we are helping people to develop professionally and personally. The better-equipped individuals are, the better chances we all have to see more effective processes anywhere they go and therefore, better communities as a whole.

**Would you like to add anything?**

I like this quote: “Don't let your learning lead to knowledge. Let your learning lead to action”

– Jim Rohn.



## Member Profile

### ADRIANNA D'ILIO

I started my nursing career in Alberta when I graduated from the UofA. I moved to Vancouver and worked at Lion's Gate hospital then switched to teaching. I've been teaching at BCIT for 18 years now. I started teaching in Mental Health Nursing (which is my background) but have moved all over the program. I currently teach in term 1 of the program and have a lot of fun with beginning students. I'm always amazed how much growth they go through in 12 short weeks and love seeing them start to understand the role of a Registered Nurse.

#### **How long have you worked at BCIT?**

18 years.

#### **What motivates your work?**

I work with beginning level BSN students and seeing them start to grasp a complicated concept is very rewarding. I also work with an amazing group of people which helps to keep going when I'm feeling pressured or tired.

#### **What's your proudest accomplishment at BCIT?**

Being here 18 years, I've seen a lot of change and have learned to quickly adapt and how to positively contribute.

#### **What lesson has working at BCIT taught you?**

I've learnt to be patient and to realize that I can't teach learners everything at once. I have to trust that with time and support, they will learn what they need to be successful.

#### **What is the greatest issue facing BCIT?**

I think the face of education and learners' expectations have changed since covid. We were able to teach and connect online which is something we thought we'd never be able to do. There are definite pros and cons to each position and we're still trying to find a balance between the two. I'm also finding that post-covid learners are more vulnerable to burn out and am not sure if that's because of everything they went through with covid or if this the new learner.

#### **One word to describe the FSA?**

Empowering.

#### **Which person do you most admire, living or dead, and why?**

My father. His father came from an immigrant background and had to leave school early to support his family. Because of that, my father learned to really value education and put himself through night classes to get his degree. He instilled that love of learning in me.

#### **If you could live anywhere, where would it be?**

I love anywhere in Hawaii.

#### **What is the best thing you have read or watched or listened to recently?**

We've been enjoying *She-Hulk* as a family lately.

#### **What was your first paying job?**

I worked as a housekeeper in a motel.





## **One way to make meetings better at BCIT:**

People are really busy so make sure the meeting needs to occur and the time is used efficiently.

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

I love to cook.

**What makes a workplace healthy?**

Being able to ask questions and respectfully disagree with others.

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

I'd love to open a bakery.

**What's your favourite place on the campus?**

The new health sciences building is beautifully lit, and the student energy is great to be a part of.

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

...going to have a different learner than we're used to.

**If you could learn something new, what would it be?**

How to make perfume.

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

Ha, a time machine.

**What's one thing that you'd like the members reading this to know about you?**

I'm usually very quiet and reserved and never imagined I'd be actively involved in a union.

**What's the most important thing for the FSA membership to know about working at BCIT?**

Your colleagues are your greatest resource and support.



## Staff Profile

# MATT GREAVES

MEMBER ENGAGEMENT OFFICER

Matt lives in Sechelt with his partner Ashley and their kids Nolan and Marigold. He's been involved in union and community organizing since the mid-2000s, holds a PhD from SFU, has published internationally, and taught in the areas of labour history and communication.

### **How long have you worked at the FSA?**

My first day was March 23, 2022.

### **What motivates your work here?**

A few reasons, I suppose. I've been involved in the post-secondary union movement in one form or another for well over a decade, I greatly appreciate the work we do at the FSA, and I decided a few years ago I wanted to leave teaching for union work. I also like being around the membership and my co-workers. It's a good place for me to work.

More abstractly, I guess, I believe strongly in the power of working people to create a better world. Being able to intervene and stop the labour process—be it in the classroom, in room scheduling or IT, on the assembly line, or in a fishing boat—gives us tremendous if latent power.

### **One word to describe the FSA?**

Ours.

### **What lesson has working at the FSA taught you?**

My skills and experiences need to be adaptable.

### **Which person do you most admire, living or dead, and why?**

I don't know if there's a particular individual, but there are a great number of people who dedicate their lives to interrupting the most ghastly institutions, often because they have little choice. I find that inspiring.

### **If you could live anywhere, where would it be?**

I just moved to the Sunshine Coast, which is basically paradise. I'll say there. I don't want to move again.

### **What is the greatest issue facing the labour movement?**

How long do you have? The labour movement is in resurgence now—polls show that unions are historically popular in the US and once difficult to organize industries are seeing unions make inroads. Canada is lagging a bit behind the States in this regard but we'll get there soon.

Yet the current moment is a response to decades of union decline and I think that the reasons for that persist and they're what I worry about. There are internal and external factors that caused the union movement to stagnate. Governments have been attacking unions under the umbrella of what we now call neo-liberalism since the 1980s. If you look at work stoppages from the 1940s onward, for example, they plummet through the '80s and '90s and are now

well under 10% of what they were in the post-war years. Union density is also comparatively abysmal, especially in the private sector. This is less true in Canada than the US but that's a low bar. Unions played a part in their own decline too. This has its roots in a number of post-war compromises that large unions made with large employers and governments to cease what was a torrent of strike activity immediately follow the end of World War II. Part of this involved creating less active union members. The best union organizers were effectively blacklisted in a number of jurisdictions. So, disengagement, apathy, aggressive anti-union legislators are all threats.

**What is the best thing you've read or watched recently?**

*Harrow* by Joy Williams— incredible writer telling a story of purgatory at the end of the world. It's the best novel I've read in years and I read a few other of Williams' books because of it. None were as good but I liked *The Changeling*.

**What was your first paying job?**

Paper delivery for the Windsor Star newspaper on Dandurand Ave. in Windsor, Ontario, in between the Grand Maris ditch and Norfolk St.



**One way to make meetings better at BCIT:**

Get involved in your union.

**Do you have a non-work related passion or hobby?**

I play hockey a few times a week (in a good week) and like hanging out with my toddlers.

**What makes a workplace healthy?**

So, so much: respect, autonomy, and proper boundaries to name a few things.

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

I really like what I do for a living. I don't have a fantasy job.

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

I've always loved reading a great Historian and the late Eric Hobsbawm might be my favourite. If I could go back in time and take a course on world history in the modern and early-modern periods with Hobsbawm I would do that.

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

Hobsbawm time machine.

**What's one thing you'd like members to know?**

That I'm dedicated to working with them to create the best workplace we can at BCIT.

## Labour Relations Advice

# FSA COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT AND UNION WEDNESDAYS

The FSA / BCIT Collective Agreement (CA) is, in many ways, an oddball. We have robust language when it comes to collegial governance and academic freedom as well as intricacies around professional development, salary placement and related processes. One tremendously beneficial aspect of the CA, at least from a union organizing perspective, comes in Article 2.1.8.

“Each Employee shall be entitled, at no loss of pay, to a total of three (3) hours per week during regular hours of operation of the Institute, for the purpose of participation in Union activities... The three (3) hours for participation in Union activities shall be scheduled during the Wednesday break period (1430 – 1730), unless the Parties mutually agree to another time or times which allow greater participation by

the Employees while minimizing interference in the operation of classes.”

In plain language, BCITFSA members have three hours each week set aside for union activities, scheduled on Wednesday afternoons. We have had language like this in our CA for about 50 years now. The language is both uncommon and useful. It means that we have time set aside during the workweek to gather as FSA members to build collegiality and conduct union business. This is why General Membership, Tech Rep, and Board meetings—as well as Departmental Rights presentations—are generally on Wednesday afternoons. This is our time.

Yet Wednesday afternoons are arguably under-utilized. For members holding no elected FSA positions, there

## PLACEMENT AND ADVANCEMENT

Your placement on the salary scale at hiring will significantly affect your take-home pay, lifetime earnings, and, eventually, pension. Your placement should reflect your knowledge, experience and abilities. In this sense, the placement should apply equally to any person applying for and successfully attaining a technological faculty or staff position.

The placement process itself weaves through several groups. Selection committees play an important role in a new employee’s salary (Collective Agreement Articles 5.2.3.3.5, 11.2.1, 11.4.1, and 11.6.1), recommending initial salary-scale placement. When working on a selection committee, FSA members need to exercise this language and recommend the step at which new employees sit at hiring, preventing

management alone from making that decision. Under the FSA Collective Agreement, the Dean or equivalent will then review the new employee’s placement on the salary scale (Articles 11.2.5, 11.4.3, and 11.6.4). If disagreement occurs, the Dean or equivalent is required to provide a rationale.

It is imperative new workers pay attention to their initial placement. This can be accomplished by an analysis of where you have been placed on the salary scale, details of which should accompany your appointment letter via the placement form for your respective job classification. Examine your placement form closely and question anything you think is incorrect. There is a six-month time limit from the date of appointment to appeal your initial.



are only three General Meetings—October, January, and April—that consistently occupy that time.

Over the years, union representatives have had to fight to retain the three-hour Wednesday break. In 2013, for example, the FSA exercised our Union rights to reject scheduling that conflicted with our Article 2.1.8 language. Importantly, nothing within the contract language in Article 2.1.8 stipulates that union events during this time cannot be moved to other times, so long as there is agreement between the FSA and BCIT. Where a Wednesday afternoon union break cannot be honored due to conflicts with scheduling, the Department members affected should receive another union break *in lieu*. The FSA and BCIT signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MemAg) in 2008 which

states in part that although “circumstances may arise which prevent a Department from scheduling the Three Hour Break between 1430 and 1730 hours... the parties agree to meet and to agree on alternative Break Period arrangements for that Department.”

How would you propose to use your Union Wednesdays to improve things for FSA members? Please reach out to your Member Engagement Officer.



placement (Articles 11.2.6 for Faculty, 11.4.4 for Assistant Instructors, and 11.6.5 for Technical Staff), so act quickly if you believe a mistake has been made. Contact your Human Resources Advisor to have your placement reviewed.

If you are not satisfied with the response, please contact the FSA and remember that you have the right to appeal to the Institute Placement Committee (IPC) for review.

As you progress in your time at BCIT, so too, generally speaking, does your salary. Full-time members advance an additional step on their anniversary date each year. Part-time employees advance on the first of the month following the completion of the equivalent

of an annual workload of a full-time regular faculty member. Additional steps may be granted for external achievements, including obtaining a Master’s degree, professional credential or instructor’s diploma. BCIT also awards a step increase to members for bringing recognition to the Institute. This could be through one’s professional activities, research, publishing and/or community profile.

New FSA members should apply as soon as possible to the IPC if they wish to appeal their initial placement, or if they believe they qualify for a step increase due to additional education or other achievement. Do not delay, and encourage new colleagues to examine their placement!



## Vision

A dynamic and supportive educational community.

## Mission

Excellent working conditions for all members through representation, negotiation, and advocacy.

## Values

- **Integrity:** We are transparent and accountable in our decisions and actions.
- **Solidarity:** We stand together to protect our rights and achieve collective change.
- **Empowerment:** We equip our members to understand and advocate for their rights.
- **Equity:** We recognize diversity and pursue inclusion and justice for all members.

## Board Members

**Colin Jones**  
PRESIDENT / CHIEF NEGOTIATOR

**Shannon Kelly**  
VICE PRESIDENT

**Terry Gordon**  
TREASURER

**Trish Albino**  
DIRECTOR

**Sandra Amador**  
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**Jackie Pierre**  
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\*Positions at time of publication



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