

BCIT FSA VOICE

President's Message: **Collaboration & Connection**

A lot has been happening since my last message. It has been busy with all of the time needed to support our forthcoming bargaining. Your Collective Agreement Committee has been meeting regularly and is working hard for you. A survey was created to determine your bargaining priorities. Responses have been compiled and analyzed. Departmental, individual, and other meetings have and will continue to take place to gather more information from you. Your comments through the links in our FSA e-bulletins have been informative. Thank you for all of your bargaining ideas. All of the information gathered is valuable and helps us determine what your pain points are so that we can set our bargaining priorities while factoring in the provincial mandate, which includes prescribed wage increases.



We are in the process of setting up a second negotiation workshop for the Collective Agreement Committee. Through our membership, the Canadian Association of University Teachers funds this for us. The first workshop was highly effective. The workshop was based on an experiential learning model.

FSA Vice President Vnit Nath and I regularly meet with BCIT President Kathy Kinloch to share FSA concerns, such as the difficulties some departments have in hiring employees. I have also met with many others in management to share concerns. My goal is to develop trusting relationships that will enable us to collaboratively and constructively solve problems together. In a similar vein, I am also a member of many committees, such as the Employee Engagement Advisory Committee, where the goal is to find out what the employees' concerns are and help determine how to improve employee engagement.

With respect to difficulties in hiring employees in some departments, there are fires now but BCIT needs to ensure that it does not become an inferno. For example, difficulties in hiring can stem from our graduates initially earning more than we can pay them based on their placement on the salary scale. This hiring challenge needs a solution so that we can continue to provide students with the quality of education that they expect.

A related issue is that BCIT needs to provide resources, such as training and time, for us to help BCIT achieve its new strategic plan. If resources are not provided, how many students would not graduate with the skills needed to solve problems in a "complex world"?

I need to know what your issues are. I would be happy to meet with you or your department. My Outlook calendar is fully up to date. You can see when I am available using Outlook's Scheduling Assistant tool.



Peter Fenrich
President

Executive Director's Message: **Renewal & Transformation**



As we enter a new year, we inevitably think of renewal and transformation. In the FSA world, these thoughts are focused on the current Collective Agreement which expires on June 30, 2019.

We know that post-secondary education has evolved dramatically, particularly so in specialized settings like BCIT. Technology is changing at a dramatic pace: be it the applied vocations you are actually teaching your students – from health sciences, computing, library sciences or energy, construction and engineering - to what you use and how you teach.

So too, must our “rules of engagement” or contracts evolve to better reflect the current realities you face. Collective agreements are living documents that transform with use and interpretation under the varying circumstances facing our members. These documents also require explicit transformation at the bargaining table to reflect changing and evolving realities in the workplace.

Yet, we must make these changes without sacrificing the incredibly strong language that exists within the existing contract. This is the fine art and balance; give and take, of collective bargaining.

When I came to the FSA just about this time last year, I marveled at some (not all!) of the provisions that still exist in your agreement. I come to the FSA from many years in the health care sector, where we lived through the times where entire segments of hard-fought for provisions were literally ripped from collective agreements.

We are nearing the end of the Collective Agreement Committee’s consultative cycle in preparing for bargaining. This has included, for example:

- A review of our issues and grievances that have arisen during the life of this and previous collective agreements
- Taking into account legislative changes and mandates including MSP Premium changes, Parental and Adoption leave provisions
- Changes to the Human Rights Code
- The recent Labour Relations Code review
- The current provincial mandate for public sector bargaining
- Consultation with our partner unions such as BCGEU; CUPE; the Federation of Post-Secondary Educators of BC (FPSE); and; notably, the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) and the BC Federation of Labour
- Most importantly, direct consultation with our membership, you: our dedicated faculty and staff members who work at BCIT



Visit the FSA blog to read the ‘The Cycle of Negotiations’: bcitfsa.ca/the-cycle-of-negotiations

This leads us to the next phases of bargaining preparation and execution. Following approval from the membership on the FSA’s proposed overall bargaining approach at our general meeting, your Bargaining Team will continue the task of researching and crafting the actual proposed language changes; which, we hope will make their way into the new contract. Once this is done, the FSA will serve formal written notice to BCIT to commence talks at the bargaining table with them.

2019 is somewhat unique in that there are many layers of novelty facing us as we inch ever closer to commencement of formal bargaining to renew the Collective Agreement. The faces at the FSA have changed dramatically in some of our key positions, not unlike the changes that have occurred with our counterparts in the BCIT’s Labour Relations and Human Resources as well as in academic and non-instructional leadership positions. While we remain severely constrained by the “2% - 2% - 2%” annual increase mandated by the BC Government, we believe there exists opportunities that may cost little, but will improve key parts of our membership’s working conditions. This presents us with some key ingredients for an opportunity to effect some of the transformation needed to keep pace with our changing applied post-secondary environments.

We have seen a vast creep of reliance upon Part-Time Studies (“PTS”) Instructors at BCIT, as a pool of relatively cheap labour to draw from. This is to the detriment of students and the rigor of the programs themselves.

The Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) advises that the number of Contract Academic Staff employed by BCIT rivals most other post-secondary institutions in Canada. When we speak of precarious labour, a good portion of our members in PTS live this reality each and every day. While they contribute fully in terms of expertise, dedication and energy to the Institution, they do not enjoy the same level of remuneration, benefits, professional development, or job security that regular and even temporary employees do.

If we set a course to meaningfully address some of the issues facing our members in PTS, we believe we will see a benefit for BCIT’s students as well as for FSA members. This supports BCIT’s long-held reputation as a leader in applied and vocational, job-ready graduates. The investment in this invaluable group of employees will not only bring some security to them, but will maintain BCIT as the leader it is and needs to be in our ever-evolving, complex world.



Jude Morrison
Executive Director

Creating An Inclusive Institute: What You Need to Know for the Classroom

In our October 2018 newsletter, we explored the rights you have to work in a setting free of discrimination and to be accommodated should there be barriers that unreasonably prevent you from doing your job. We looked at how we each have a responsibility to be respectful of those who may require changes within their work setting to allow them to participate and contribute fully, which, may in turn affect you.

In this piece, we look at your rights and responsibilities to extend the same inclusivity to the students you serve and teach. At the core, we accommodate difference, including those based on physical and mental difference, because we have come to learn – from those who have had to overcome the normative barriers we have set up based on our own ableism - that it is the right thing to do.

Further, by changing how our institutions deliver education, we broaden the potential for greater scholarly activity and outcomes.

Background

An inclusive workplace includes ensuring barriers based on biases are addressed: both for our members and for the students and others in our community with whom we engage. While not always simple, engaging in this way can often mean the entire learning and teaching environment is broadened and strengthened.

Dr. Shannon Kelly, Faculty, FSA Board Member and Co-Creator of Diversity Circles, has shared her own personal and professional experiences:

“Because my son has Autism, I studied ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorders) extensively on my own, in particular regarding learning and education in relation to ASD. One day, I realized that I was regularly adapting my teaching at BCIT to support students with learning differences in my classes. Very small changes to the way I delivered my labs made a big difference - not just to those students who identified as having learning differences, but to the entire class. But more than just curriculum delivery, it was the social and interpersonal aspects of the student group dynamics where I really noticed how a little healthy facilitation on my part went a long way to securing better interactions and better results with diverse groups of students.”

What may not be a barrier to you, may present as a substantial barrier to others. Our goal as a Union is to try to both inform you of some of those barriers and to assist you in navigating how to address them for yourself and others in a manner that is meaningful, sensitive and complies with the law. We also strive to accommodate difference and equity in our work as FSA staff and elected board members.



Why and How Should I Accommodate Students with Disabilities?

BCIT has a policy to address student accommodations (Policy 4501) and Accessibility Services exists to support requests for accommodations from students. The support is not only for the student themselves, they exist also to guide and work with you to shape the accommodation in question.

Policy 4501 states in part: “The provision of reasonable accommodation to students with disabilities requires cooperation and collaboration among students, administrators, faculty, instructors and staff and involves certain mutual responsibilities.....”

FSA members have a duty to educate students about the right to an accommodation, if needed, and how to reach BCIT Accessibility Services. Once the need for an accommodation has been established and validated by Accessibility Services, the affected FSA members are made aware on a “need to know” basis and must facilitate the given accommodation.

The most standard accommodations are either the need for more time or a private and quiet setting to write examinations. However, some students may have mobility restrictions that may change how they engage in the class, study or practicum setting.

As faculty and staff, you are not required to assess the need for an accommodation for your students, nor are you required to set up the accommodation itself. In fact, in the vast majority of cases, it is the student themselves who knows what they need. Should a student self-identify, or, should you believe a student may benefit from the supports of an accommodation, you simply refer the individual to Accessibility Services. Accessibility Services will work with you to create the solutions that meet the core requirements of the course curriculum.

While the process can take time, you have the right to timely notification of accommodations. If this does not occur, ensure you contact Accessibility Services immediately to clarify if there is an Individual Accommodation Plan in place and when you can expect it. If you encounter challenges, do not hesitate to contact the FSA to assist in the process.

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The Council of Canadians with Disabilities (CCD) has played an active role in Canadian courts in an effort to promote a judicial understanding of equality that:

1. Recognizes the historical disadvantage and discrimination experienced by persons with disabilities; and
2. Supports the need to remove disability-based barriers and create an inclusive society.

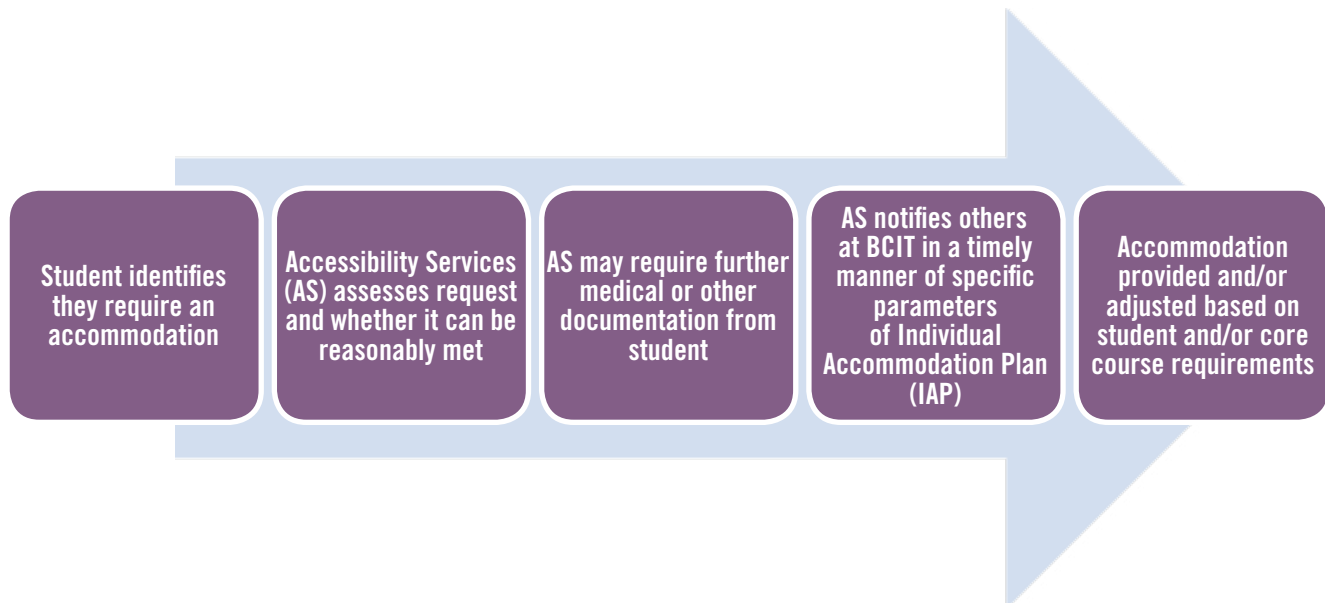
Twenty Years of Litigating for Disability Equality Rights: Has it Made a Difference?
Yvonne Peters, for CCD, 2004



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CREATING AN INCLUSIVE INSTITUTE

The Student Accommodation Process



Once established, people who interact with the given student, are given information in the form of an Individual Accommodation Plan (IAP) on a “need to know” basis.

As an instructor or staff member, you do not have the right to any medical diagnosis or other private information.

What you do have the right to know is what, on a practical level, a student requires in order to access educational information and engage fully in the learning process. This does not mean the student gets “an automatic pass” or “a leg up” in any of the course curriculum. There may be instances where there is a clear rationale for an attendance requirement, and there is no other means of meeting the course requirements other than through class participation. In these cases, there may be no appropriate accommodation that will allow the disabled student to meet course requirements. All students must meet the core requirements of the course in question.

The FSA has been involved in a number of cases where students have taken exception to their grades where the Instructor and Accessibility Services have properly met the accommodation request of a student. You are not obliged to treat a student differently if they have an accommodation. In fact, you should treat this person the same as others. You must provide equal access to the materials and the learning environment.

In turn, the course requirements that you establish, must not be arbitrary or discriminatory. There may need to be creative alterations to the physical or pedagogical environment to allow equitable access to the education. Full access to the learning experience cannot be unreasonably withheld. On a practical level, if the student is deaf or hard of hearing, it may mean the student brings an interpreter or course materials are provided in advance of class. If there are physical barriers to getting into the class environment, facilities management may make alterations to facilitate attendance in person or remotely. It is not your responsibility to come up with the solutions to meet the specialized learning needs of the student (although you may certainly contribute to it and provide feedback if it appears to be breaking down).

It is your responsibility to participate and to meet those learning needs via the accommodation particulars set out by the Instructional Accommodation Plan. Having said this, and echoing the experiences of Shannon Kelly, often the solutions that assist one student make the learning environment more engaging, creative and inclusive for all.

MEMBER PROFILE

Colin Jones is a former FSA board member and the Chief Negotiator for the FSA's current round of bargaining, bringing his experience as a member of the FSA's last two bargaining teams. A certified Lean Master Blackbelt, Colin has worked in BCIT's ITS Department as a Solutions Architect, Project Manager, Business Analyst, and Continuous Improvement specialist.

How long have you worked at BCIT?
I started September 17, 1997 - 21 years ago.

What motivates your work?
Seeing people move from being frustrated by their everyday realities at work, to inspired and empowered to try something different.

One word to describe the FSA? Recently? *Change.*

What lesson has working at BCIT taught you?
How much impact one person can have on our day – positive or negative.



Which living person do you most admire?
Bill Gates. He has used his fortune unselfishly and to the benefit of those who need help the most.

If you could live anywhere, where would it be?
Japan. From the food to the people, I love it! The language would be a challenge, though.



What is the greatest issue facing BCIT?
Attracting and retaining the best employees. I hear more and more stories of postings "open until filled" or having to lower the qualifications. Without the best staff, we risk our reputation.

What motivates you to be involved with the FSA?
I've been supported and assisted by the FSA over the years, and it feels good to give back. It doesn't take much time – well, until bargaining!



One way to make meetings better:
Take a lesson from our classes – start at :00 and :30, and end at :20 and :50.

If you had \$1-million to give to a cause, what would you select?
Some friends of mine run a program for street girls in Cairo to educate, train and, in many cases, parent them. I have never seen better return on investment.



What was your first paying job?
A garbage man. I drove around in a pick-up truck, collecting the garbage that was missed by the big truck – and had been sitting in the summer heat for days.



What is the best book you have read recently?
Dog Man Lord of the Fleas.

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

Do you have a non-work related passion or hobby?
In my free time, my wife and I run conferences all over the world. Recently we've held 2-5000 participant conferences in Egypt, Jerusalem, Munich...

What makes a workplace healthy?
Balance. Remembering what matters most to you, and making time for it. You'll never find time.

What most inspires you?
Is it cliché to say my kids? I have come to realize that parents all over the world have the same aspiration – to position their kids for a better life than theirs.

What could you use right now if someone would invent it for you?
A transporter. Sure, life's a journey, but I don't enjoy the commute.

What is a skill or talent you would like to learn?
Piano or guitar.

The future of public post-secondary education is...in our hands! If we don't take responsibility for shaping it, who will?

What is a course/class you would like to take?
Motorcycle riding. First my mom forbid it, and now my wife and daughter.



For this feature, the FSA borrows from Marcel Proust (and others who have popularized the French author's questionnaire), as a way for you to get to know our members, board members, and staff.

2019 FSA ELECTIONS

5 Directors-at-Large, 2 Directors - Associate Members, and 1 Treasurer

Wednesday, February 6 (noon)

- Formal call for nominations

Wednesday, February 27 (noon)

- Nominations close
- Deadline: candidate statement submissions

Friday, March 1

- Candidate names released to membership
- Candidate statements posted to website

Wednesday, March 6

- All Candidates Meeting

Tuesday, March 19 (noon) to Tuesday, April 2 (noon)

- Electronic voting

Thursday, April 4 (noon)

- Election results to membership

Election Eligibility

- Be a member in good standing,
- Be nominated in writing by a Regular or Associate Member,
- Consent to the nomination, and
- Not be disqualified from being a director of a company under Section 124 of the Business Corporations Act.

Who can vote? All current FSA members!

We are pleased to announce that our Returning Officer for 2019 is William Oching.



BOARD PROFILE

Vnit Nath was elected as the FSA's Vice President in spring 2018. Since joining the FSA board Vnit has contributed his knowledge and insights in planning, analysis, and strategic thinking. A faculty member in the School of Business' Financial Management program as well as an Instructor in Part-Time Studies, Vnit is dedicated to high-quality post-secondary learning opportunities for BCIT's students.

<p>How long have you worked at BCIT? Since 2012.</p>	<p>What motivates your work? Students and Faculty.</p>	<p>One word to describe the FSA? Essential.</p>	<p>What lesson has working at BCIT taught you? Genius comes in many different forms.</p>	
<p>What motivates you to be involved with the FSA? FSA members.</p>	<p>Which living person do you most admire? I'll pick two - my wife and my mother.</p>			
<p>What is the best book you have read recently? The Tao of Pooh by Benjamin Hoff.</p>				<p>If you could live anywhere, where would it be? I'm fortunate to already be living there. :-)</p> 
		<p>What was your first paying job? Sales associate at a sporting goods store.</p>	<p>One way to make meetings better: Have less of them? ;-)</p>	<p>If you had \$1-million to give to a cause, what would you select? BC Children's Hospital.</p>
		<p>Do you have a non-work related passion or hobby? I love following the NBA and hoops in general when time allows.</p>		
<p>What's your favourite place on the campus you work at? I have my daughter's artwork up in my office, so....</p>	<p>What makes a workplace healthy? Positivity, integrity, inclusiveness, and transparency are always good starts.</p>	<p>What most inspires you? Selfless acts.</p>		
<p>The future of public post-secondary education is...often driven by market demands.</p>		<p>What is a course/class you would like to take? I've always wanted to learn how to play an instrument.</p>	<p>What could you use right now if someone would invent it for you? I'm sitting in the PTS instructor room in SE6 and could really use a power bar to plug my laptop into...</p>	
				

For this feature, the FSA borrows from Marcel Proust (and others who have popularized the French author's questionnaire), as a way for you to get to know our members, board members, and staff.

There is no denying that lack of access to PD funds for members in Part-Time Studies (PTS) is very frustrating and generally perceived as unfair. This issue is one that the FSA continues to press with the employer. In the meantime, departments should bring their PTS members' attention to the existing "free" training opportunities that do exist for them. These include:

- Annual BCIT PD days and other special events
- The 2-week flex delivery Fostering Learning Online course offered by the Learning and Teaching Centre (LTC): bcit.ca/ltc/workshops/flo
- The 10-week Blended Learning Seminar offered by the LTC: bcit.ca/ltc/workshops/bls
- Various Instructional Skills Workshops and Educational Technology Workshops offered by the LTC: bcit.ca/ltc/workshops
- Access to the Instructional Enhancement grants which can be used for certain eligible PD expenses: bcit.ca/idc/grants/enhancement
- Access to the Learning and Teaching Framework grants which can be used for certain eligible PD expenses: bcit.ca/ltc/ltf
- Tuition reimbursement for courses taken in the Provincial Instructor Diploma Program: bcit.ca/idc/tuition

In addition, some Departments can help members in PTS with fee waivers for taking BCIT PTS courses that have available seats.



**Best
Practices**

STAFF PROFILE

Maria Angerilli is the FSA's Operations Director providing extensive expertise and skill to the many business and creative functions involved in the FSA's operations. In addition to many of the systems-related functions that Maria performs, the FSA benefits from her artistic talent as the designer of much of our publications and visual content.

How long have you worked at FSA?
Since October 2011.

What motivates you to work at the FSA?
A pay cheque! But in all seriousness, the FSA is the first non-profit I've worked at. I like that our work isn't motivated by hitting revenue targets but rather to offer support and make the working lives of our members better.



What makes a workplace healthy?
Open communication. Respect amongst colleagues. Laughter.

What's your favourite place on the campus you work at?
The big tree between SE16 and SE14 on a sunny day in the fall...the colour the leaves turn is pretty spectacular.



What motivates your work?
Knowing that I'm part of a bigger picture.

Which living person do you most admire?
My mom. All my life I knew that my mom left her family quite young, but somehow never realized how much she went through until my son did a project on immigration. That's when I really learned of all her hardships as an immigrant in Canada.



What was your first paying job?
Sandwich maker at Pastels in the Lougheed Mall food court.

Do you have a non-work related passion or hobby? What is it?
Up until last year, I operated a small photography business. Photographing others began to really feel more like work rather than something that used to bring me joy so I took down my website, stopped taking clients and am now trying to regain my love of documenting my family's life through photographs.

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

One word to describe the FSA?
Supportive.

One way to make meetings better:
Treats. Always Treats.

If you could live anywhere, where would it be?
For one year, it's a toss-up between two opposite sides of the spectrum - either NYC or a small, rural town where everyone knows everyone's business.



What is the best book you have read recently?
Here's a thing about me, I don't like sharing my thoughts on books. Which is why I'm a terrible participant at book clubs!

What most inspires you?
Kindness.

What is a course/class you would like to take?
Skiing or snowboarding. Only because my kids are learning and I want to be able to do this with them.

What lesson has working at the FSA taught you?
Change happens; you have to just go with the flow...

What is the greatest issue facing BCIT?
Attracting and retaining exceptional faculty and staff.

If you had \$1-million to give to a cause, what would you select?
Lately I have huge anxiety about global warming – so any organization related to fighting climate change.

If you had to choose an occupation other than your current one, what would it be?
Pastry Chef - but without the pressure. Creating something pretty to look at, delicious to eat, and the science and preciseness required in baking - satisfies my right and left brain.

What could you use right now if someone would invent it for you?
Eye drops that would give me perfect vision.



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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 Kyla at 604.432.8569 or kepstein@bcit.ca

Upcoming Events

Feb 13 Tech Rep Meeting
2:30-4:30pm
Town Square D

Feb 20 Board of Directors Meeting
2:30-6:30pm
SE16-114

Mar 3 Board of Directors Meeting
9am-4:00pm
TBD

Mar 13 Tech Rep Meeting
2:30-4:30pm
Town Square D

find out more on bcitfsa.ca/calendar

Contact Us

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search 'BCITFSA Group'

loop.bcit.ca/groups/BCIT-FSA
BCIT internal only

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.

the FSA Team *at time of publication*



Peter Fenrich
President



Vnit Nath
Vice-President



Terry Gordon
Treasurer



Chas Bains
Director, Associate Members



Karl Hildebrandt
Director



Zaa Joseph
Director



Shannon Kelly
Director



Nancy Knaggs
Director



Paul Mills
Director, Associate Members



Silvia Raschke
Director



Colin Jones
Chief Negotiator



Jude Morrison
Interim Executive Director



Heather Neun
Sr. Labour Relations Rep



Christie Nagy
(On Leave)



Tess Rebbitt
Labour Relations Rep



Jazz Sandhu
Labour Relations Rep



George Talbott
Labour Relations Rep



Kyla Epstein
Member Engagement Officer



Maria Angerilli
Operations Director



Debbie Kinequon
Operations Assistant