



In This Issue

Our Wins, Today and Tomorrow
Profiles

Establishing Procedures to
Enhance Collegial Governance

The Right to Union Representation
During Employer Meetings

CALM Awards



A photograph of a forest path. The path is covered in fallen brown leaves and leads into a dense forest of tall trees with green and yellowing foliage. The lighting is soft and natural, suggesting a sunny day. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

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^wməθkwəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səliwətał/selilwitulh (Tseil-Waututh) Nations.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: OUR WINS, TODAY AND TOMORROW

It's so good to be back!

Recent months have been a busy, busy time for the FSA! I want to thank our remarkable staff for pulling up their socks and chipping in to get us through this stretch. Bargaining is complete, so we're set for a 12-month rest before we—*gasp!*—strike our next Collective Agreement Committee and start planning in earnest for our next contract. We have also started the search for our next permanent Executive Director, so reinforcements are on the way!

Back to our recently concluded round of bargaining. In addition to the provincially mandated general wage increases (\$455 annually or \$0.25/hour + 3.24%; 6.75%; 2 to 3% based on inflation), and a one-time, retroactive 3.9% increase to Part-Time Studies rates (before the annual increases), we negotiated some hard-fought—and long-time coming—improvements to our benefits. There are two other enhancements we've been pursuing since 2003 that I'm particularly proud of: maternity and parental benefits and short-term professional development leave for Specialized Faculty.

FSA Bargaining Teams have been fighting for our members to have the same Maternity and Parental Leave (AKA: Supplemental Employment Benefit [SEB] or "top-up") provisions as other workers on campus—whether unionized or excluded. In 2015, we bargained what I've referred to as SEB Lite. Last round, we upgraded to Diet SEB. This round, we were finally able to successfully negotiate Full Octane SEB: an entire year of combined maternity and parental leave, topped up to 75% of wages, for birthing parents.

Short-term PD Leave (Art. 10.6) for Specialized Faculty (known as Non-teaching Faculty before 2015) is another gap in our agreement that we've been trying to fill. This is a prime example of needing to table important proposals and, even when we're brushed off by BCIT, bringing them back over, and over, and over again.

While we left much on the table this round, we will return to the important items next time—and for as many rounds as it takes.

I'm incredibly proud of the work our Bargaining Team accomplished with our new contract and look forward to the gains we'll be making in the future as we negotiate better benefits, wages, and working conditions for our members.

I hope everyone found time to rest and recharge over the summer. This is going to be another amazing year!



Colin Jones
FSA PRESIDENT & CHIEF NEGOTIATOR



Board Member Profile

JUDY SHANDLER

DIRECTOR, ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Judy Shandler has been working in post-secondary as an instructor for 40 years and has completed a Doctorate in Education from SFU, focusing on Educational Leadership. Judy joined IT Services at BCIT after completing a diploma in the High-Performance Technology program in 2000. Judy has recently retired from her full-time work in ITS, however she continues to teach Flexible Learning-PTS courses for the School of Energy. Judy is a Director, Associate Members on the FSA Board.

How long have you worked at BCIT?

Over 30 years.

What motivates you to be involved with the FSA?

I want to make a difference by ensuring a fair and equitable working environment for staff and faculty.

You've worked as an associate member and a full-time regular member. Are there challenges unique to each role?

As a full-time member the challenges were making sure I was up-to-date on campus and member issues. The main challenge being an associate member is honestly making time for my Board commitments.

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

My mother. She was the smartest, most passionate, and most

worldly person I've ever known. Her ability to pull up historical events, dates, and names of famous people continually amazed me while I was growing up. Her philosophy of life and her humour are things I take with me. My mother was an entrepreneur, and, had she been given the opportunity to advance her studies, would have been unstoppable. Unfortunately, World War II had her in hiding for three years, getting married, and bringing up children.

What is the biggest issue facing our members working in Part-Time Studies, now Flexible Learning, at BCIT?

Coming from full-time to flex teaching has me realizing the bumpy road of transitioning, including losing and gaining access to facilities and systems. In the short time I've been

moving from full to part-time, I've had numerous conversations with different departments who send me to other departments for answers. I wonder if new PTS instructors go through this or maybe just those of us who are transferring from full-time.

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

The best book I've read recently is *Lessons in Chemistry* by Bonnie Garmus. The best thing I've watched is the Netflix series *Little Bird*.

Do you have a hobby outside of work? What is it?

I paddle outrigger and Dragonboat competitively. I also work in clay, either creating on the potter's wheel or hand-building sculptures.

What's your favourite place on campus?

Anywhere outside to enjoy the amazing grounds and landscape on the BCIT Burnaby campus.

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

focusing on technologies, the trades, and health.

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

My friends and family tell me I need to learn to say NO. Other than that, I'm always up for learning something new. I think Spanish or French is my next goal, after relearning the guitar.

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

Additional hours to each day. There just isn't enough time to do what I need/want to do.



What's the most important thing for the FSA members working in PTS to know?

I'd like them to know that they can contact me anytime. I will be their advocate should they need one. I'm learning more and more about the issues facing Flex instructors and would love to hear from them.

What makes a workplace healthy?

Making sure staff and faculty are feeling heard and that the work they do is valued and makes a difference.

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

That's a big question, because I really want to do it all. Most recently, I would work in healthcare.



FSA Profile

THE CAUCUSES

The FSA has three internal caucuses: the Caucus on Part-Time Studies (COPTS), the Equity Caucus, and the Caucus on Applied Research and Advanced Studies (CARAS). These groups help inform the Board of Directors, staff, and members of FSA on issues related to their expertise. The FSA’s Equity Caucus helps to guide the implementation of the FSA’s Equity Policy; CARAS provides leadership in defining the vision for, and value of, applied research and advanced studies (including graduate studies) at BCIT; and COPTS provides direction on how best the union can articulate and support the interests of our members working in PTS. Membership in each caucus is open to any FSA member with an interest in the issue(s). Materials for each caucus are available in the Member Portal (login required) of bcitfsa.ca. Reach out to FSA Member Engagement Officer Matt Greaves to join or for any additional information.

Shannon Kelly (SK), the FSA’s Vice President, and Zaa Joseph (ZJ), an FSA Director-at-Large, act as Board liaisons to our caucuses. In the summer, Shannon and Zaa were kind enough to answer a few questions about the caucuses and their value to the union.

What value have the caucuses provided the FSA in your experience?

SK I’ve been on the caucuses since their inception and I have found them to be effective forums for receiving feedback from members, highlighting issues of concern, providing direction to the FSA, and creating a sense of community among the members involved.

ZJ I’ve been a member of the Equity caucus since its inception and have been its co-chair in the past as well as its current Board liaison. What I’ve found is a welcoming and inclusive space where members can speak

openly about struggles, hopes, and actions—and where we support each others’ journeys.

Are there any particular issues that come to mind as examples where the union benefitted significantly from the guidance of the caucuses?

SK Over the years the caucuses have provided important feedback and perspectives to inform the union on various issues. For example, CARAS has delivered expert perspectives on many topics including Canada Research Chairs’ and other research funds’ selection criteria and processes, along with producing an important and influential report on the

state of graduate studies at BCIT. COPTS has been an active caucus for many years, providing critical insights about inequities in the working conditions of PTS members, resulting in action on several fronts including issues such as tax forms (T2200), the need for PTS PD funds, and the impetus for BCIT to conduct a “PTS Review”.

ZJ As a member of the FSA Bargaining Team for the first time this round, I was struck by how much member consultation informs our bargaining work. The FSA caucuses were consulted for feedback on bargaining, along with wide consultation through many

channels with our membership. About the Equity Caucus specifically, several years ago I helped to draft the FSA's Equity Policy, and the Equity Caucus was created soon after that—as a group which can help guide and inform the FSA on equity, diversity, and inclusion issues. It's very important and helpful to hold a space where members can share experiences, articulate solutions, and reflect. Examples of specific initiatives include providing advice to the Diversity Circles' Steering Committee and to BCIT's Respect, Diversity, and Inclusion Office, recommending to the Board that FSA conduct an Accessibility Audit, and supporting the launch of two FSA affinity groups, one for Black members and one for Indigenous members.

Fair Employment Week is coming up in the fall. Can you talk about that event's history at BCIT?

SK Since affiliating with the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT), the FSA has leveraged national resources from CAUT, such as a national survey on contract academic staff (i.e., sessional or “PTS” faculty) and CAUT's annual October national campaign, “Fair Employment Week” (FEW). For FEW in the past, we have created short videos to highlight the issues of BCIT PTS members, run special events and panels, created a poster campaign on campus and a postcard campaign

delivered to BCIT leadership, and joined with other local post-secondary institutions' sessional/PTS members to run events. We have also sent our members to participate in the national committee and conference. COPTS has helped to guide and inspire these initiatives for FEW. I'm told a poster for this year's event is included on page 10 of this Voice issue.

CARAS released a report on Graduate Studies last year. What insights did it provide?

SK The CARAS report on graduate studies generated important data and was shared (and well received) by BCIT leadership and our members. There were several helpful findings and two key takeaways. Firstly, many of our members are passionate about supporting students with advanced academic or applied research projects; many are excited to be part of new and planned programs at the graduate level. Secondly, however, so far BCIT has taken an ad hoc approach, trying to graft graduate studies onto the existing diploma and undergraduate framework for delivering education at BCIT, when in fact much more robust and cohesive graduate studies infrastructure and resources are needed.

The Equity Caucus is overseeing an accessibility audit. Can you talk about that experience?

SK The Equity Caucus has worked on several initiatives and the most recent one was a recommendation to the FSA Board that the FSA

conduct an Accessibility Audit of FSA facilities and services. The Audit was coordinated by Member Engagement Officer Matt Greaves and oversight was provided by a sub-committee of the Equity Caucus. The audit, performed by SPARC BC, just recently wrapped up and the final report went to the Caucus and the Board for review, to be followed by sharing with the FSA membership. While the FSA “scored” very well overall on the majority of the measured dimensions of accessibility, the process provided additional areas of improvement and served as a reminder to continuously assess how we're doing.

Zaa, you helped found the FSA's Indigenous Affinity Circle. It's a new group, related to the Equity Caucus. Can you talk about your hopes for that group?

ZJ I have heard from Elders that the longest journey is from the head to the heart and back again. I felt for some time and heard from Indigenous colleagues at BCIT that it would be beneficial to create a space for Indigenous members to connect and share, balancing our everyday work with reflection on what it means to be Indigenous in our BCIT community and in our wider communities. Leading from the heart is perhaps not the norm at BCIT. But, a heart-centered approach can help with healing, with discussions about difficult topics such as experiences of racism and discrimination, and can help us collectively envision ways to move forward as a community.



Member Profile

JUSTIN PERRY

Justin has worked across the province in natural resource management, specializing in RPAS (drone) technology, silviculture, plant identification, and wildfire, and he holds a private pilot's license for fixed-wing aircraft. Justin is a member of Métis Nation BC and often shares his knowledge of the traditional use of plants as medicine. Justin is currently BCIT's Program Lead for the Indigenous Internship Program, which opens applied research projects to Indigenous youth across Canada. Justin graduated as valedictorian of BCIT's School of Construction and the Environment in 2018 and attributes his success to his instructors and Elder Alf Dumont.

Is there anything in addition to your bio that you'd like people to know about you?

I'm working towards full-time permanent employment as an instructor.

How long have you worked at BCIT and in what position(s)?

1.5 years as instructor, assistant instructor, and program lead for the Indigenous internship program.

What motivates your work?

Becoming a better person and helping others.

What's your proudest accomplishment?

Getting 93% on my pilot's license practical exam. You train hard for years and then having a strong showing meant a lot to me. The Global News interview I did in summer 2023 is a close second.

If you could do one thing, what would it be?

Travel around the world on sabbatical for a year.

What lesson has working at BCIT taught you?

There's no single lesson. But if I had to pick one it's that the quality of the people you surround yourself with is very important. This is the best job I've had so far and it's because of the people around me.

What is the greatest issue facing BCIT?

The cost of living in the Lower Mainland, affecting both retention with staff and recruiting new students.

One word to describe the FSA?

Supportive.

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

I can't pick just one here.

1) Elder Alf Dumont. He continues to teach me many

things including "Wasaa Inaabidaa" looking in all directions. To me one component of this teaching means looking inside for insight and areas I can improve upon. But at the same time, it means looking outside to see how we can work with and help other people.

2) Flight instructor Francois Leh. So many people become anxious by pursuing wealth and status. Francois didn't instruct for these reasons, he did it because he was genuinely interested in observing the world and helping others. I benefited not only from his aviation instruction but by watching how he instructed others.

If you could live anywhere, where would it be?

Squamish, where I live now. No reason to leave.



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

The Stormlight Archive by Brandon Sanderson. The series is epic immersive fantasy and continues to be my favourite media. Period.

What was your first paying job?

Delivering papers for the North Shore News.

One way to make meetings better at BCIT:

Let people know it's okay to end meetings early if all items have been discussed.

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

Tai Chi. As instructors our minds are very stimulated, sometimes overly so. Balancing this through quiet reflection lets me be more effective and find insights.

What makes a workplace healthy?

Management should aim to lead. Be someone that people can

look up to, not feel anxiety towards. It is less effective to boss people around than it is to support, nurture, and encourage others. The difference between these two mindsets can make or break a team.

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

Commercial Airline Pilot

What's your favourite place on the campus?

Indigenous Initiatives. Its like an oasis in the desert. The city can be overly stimulating, so its nice to just sit around the circular table at the Gathering Place, and have a chat with Zaa, Celeste, or any of the elders and students who are doing the same. During a circle, everyone is on the same level and can speak. Here we can let down our masks and just be human instead of worrying about bureaucracy and

hierarchy. The Gathering Place is open to all staff and students.

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

instructors going to meet people in their communities for condensed programs, something akin to a micro-credential.

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

The next thing on my list to learn more about is cultural (Indigenous) burning. I'd like to travel to a few workshops across North America to observe and participate in these.

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

From your date of hire, you have six months to re-assess your wage assessment. This is something that is often swept under the rug, but you can do it.

Labour Relations Advice

ESTABLISHING PROCEDURES TO ENHANCE COLLEGIAL GOVERNANCE

For the better part of the past two years, the FSA has been conducting training across the Institute to better inform our members of their collegial governance rights and responsibilities. Our members have robust rights when it comes to Departmental planning, including but not limited to coverage/workloading, vacation scheduling, and processes for assembling selection committees. In practice, however, asserting these rights requires Departments have established operational conventions. The governance practices of BCIT Departments are not dictated by external statutes in the way that, say, a non-profit society in BC may be governed by the provincial Societies Act. Departments are instead defined by the Collective Agreement (CA), which does not contain programmatic procedural details. As a result, your Department can be guided by ‘commonsense’ or ‘reasonableness’ when making procedural decisions. In transitioning from understanding rights in principle

to using them in practice, there are some basic steps a Department may take. This Labour Relations tip will focus on calling and then conducting a reasonable Department meeting.

Calling a Departmental meeting:

- Make the timing convenient
- Include any specific language for a decision known ahead of time
- Ensure that all Department members are invited and that a reasonable amount of notice is provided—say two weeks or more
- Consider using Zoom, either as a hybrid option or fully online, especially if Department members are spread out geographically
- Remember that your manager is a member of the Department, so be sure to include them in the invitation

THE RIGHT TO UNION REPRESENTATION DURING EMPLOYER MEETINGS

You have been asked to attend a meeting with your manager and wonder, “do I get to bring a union representative?” There are instances when you absolutely have the right to union representation and others where you don’t or where bringing a representative wouldn’t make sense. Each situation is case-specific and governed by your Collective Agreement language. Your FSA Collective Agreement is robust in this regard. Article 19.1.4 states that:

An Employee shall have a representative of the Union present at any meeting called by the Employer under the provisions of Article 19.

Where there is a possibility of discipline, most employers will ensure that the employee has union representation to guard against the discipline imposed (if any) being set aside at a later date by an arbitrator. The fifth edition of *Canadian Labour Arbitration* by Brown and Beatty (available as an online resource with the BCIT Library), recognized as the authority on the issue, indeed states:

One of the most important ways that collective agreements shape the structure of the disciplinary process is by guaranteeing that employees will be able to call on their unions for help when faced with the threat of discipline.

- If one sends out a message to everyone in the Department, providing all an opportunity to participate at a fairly convenient forum, Departmental business can be said to have proceeded reasonably

During the meeting:

- Keep a written record of any decisions, noting at least:
 - Attendees
 - Exact language of decision
 - Date
 - Result
 - Time
- Typically, a decision is made by vote, and it is perfectly reasonable to use 50 percent as a threshold for that vote, especially where a decision of 'yes' or 'no' must be made
- It is good practice to keep notes regarding the preceding discussion



We've noted that the FSA agreement has strong language to protect you in these meetings, yet it is not absolute and applicable across the board. Not every meeting with your manager will offer you the opportunity for union representation.

This being the case, when are you not entitled to union representation? There are many occasions, but some examples include general staff meetings and annual performance reviews. Insisting on union representation or refusing to attend such meetings could lead to perceived insubordination and potential discipline. There are exceptions to this, and as mentioned above, each situation is case-specific. If you are unsure,

- In general, group decision making requires that everyone have an opportunity to speak to the proposal in question
 - Let individuals that haven't spoken speak before those who have spoken twice or more already
 - If the language is available ahead of time, provide individuals who cannot attend the meeting the opportunity to submit their comments
- After the meeting, share the record of the decision with the members and your manager, noting where the record will be stored permanently so that all parties can refer to it as needed

These points constitute advice on how to successfully establish protocols through which strong collegial governance practices may follow. By instituting these practices, it becomes very clear that your Department has made a decision together, which in turn supports claims to democratically established protocols.



contact the FSA (fsa@bcit.ca) and we can guide you to the appropriate response.

Your rights stemming from Article 19 of the Collective Agreement are powerful yet pragmatic. To be used effectively requires the application of this language in proper situations and in consultation with labour relations professionals at the FSA.

Michael Thompson
BCITFSA LABOUR RELATIONS REPRESENTATIVE

“I can't make long term plans in my work or my life because I never know if I'll have a job next semester.”

MAKE IT FAIR

Are you a BCITFSA member working in Flexible Learning / Part-Time Studies? Join the FSA's Caucus on Part-Time Studies (COPTS) at the Steamworks Brew Pub (Uber Lounge) in Gastown on October 17, 2023, 4:30pm-7:30pm, to celebrate your work and discuss common issues with other contract faculty from across the Lower Mainland. RSVP to matthew_greaves@bcit.ca or use the QR coded provided.

COPTS



OPPORTUNITY. SECURITY. RESPECT.
MAKEITFAIR.CAUT.CA





In June, the FSA won the Canadian Association of Labour Media's Morden Lazarus Prize. The award recognizes the best writing in the country that argues for labour's position.



CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF LABOUR MEDIA

Monday, June 12 2023

Dear President Colin Jones,

Your union has won at the 2023 Canadian Association of Labour Media awards. Congratulations!

We received hundreds of entries in from 37 unions in 40 categories. The 2023 awards highlighted the very best in union communications this past year, and you should be proud that your union's communications work was honoured.

We asked each of the judges to share with us their reasoning for each of the winners. Here is what was said about your union's winning entry:

BCIT Faculty and Staff Association

Bill 28 and Union Fightback: BCIT Faculty and Staff association's piece highlights the power of mass mobilization up-to and past the limits of the law, reinforcing the significance of a moral demand collectively expressed. As demonstrated through the piece, the public support for Ontario teachers, against the position and policies of the provincial government, reminds us that the pro-social aspects of society - and the notion of collective well-being itself - are continually under assault by those who believe the world should be a playground of impunity for the wealthy.



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.



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*Positions at time of publication

 **BCITFSA** | **VOICE NEWSLETTER**

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